Partner Overview: Fundación Kara Solar

The ancestral territory of the Achuar people is a vast rainforest divided by the Ecuador-Peru border, and is among the most biodiverse places in the world. Remarkably, about 2 million acres of the Achuar territory in Ecuador is still free from oil development, mining, industrial agriculture, and timber extraction. Gas and diesel-powered canoes are the primary modes of transportation for the Achuar, but they pollute the waterways, and the motor noise repels the animals that the Achuar rely on for food.

Organization Overview:
Fundación Kara Solar is transforming how people move in the Amazon, reducing reliance on diesel fuels and supporting indigenous guardianship of the rainforest. Their team designs and builds solar-powered passenger boats to replace the currently available diesel-powered alternatives. They co-create their work with the communities they serve, and are committed to ensuring local management of ecosystems in a socially, economically, energetically & environmentally sustainable way.

Project Summary:
Working with the Achuar Nation, Kara Solar is creating a community owned enterprise that meets the transportation needs of nine villages. Two small solar powered boats, seating 4 - 6 people, are being designed to complement the two existing larger boats. To accompany the boats, Kara Solar is installing a solar powered charging station at the community center that is owned and operated by Achuar women. To build additional capacity in the community and ensure the maintenance of the boats and charging station, Kara Solar is designing a solar technician train-the-trainer curriculum that equips a team of Achuar trainees with the knowledge they need to train additional community members. This training curriculum will eventually become a permanent technical institute in the community.

Total Award Amount: $65,000