



The Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) March 15, 2019

What is the purpose of the Catalyst Fund?

The purpose of the Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund is to accelerate the pace and effective practice of place-based, collaborative landscape conservation across the United States. The Fund specifically seeks to build effective capacity and forward momentum in landscape conservation partnerships by supporting the key building block activities and collaborative processes that move partnerships forward. For further information on collaborative landscape conservation and the purpose of the Fund, see Section II of the [Catalyst Fund Program Description and RFP](#).

What is the geographic emphasis of the Catalyst Fund?

The Fund welcomes applications from across the 50 U.S. states. Landscape conservation partnerships that cross the U.S. border into Canada or Mexico are eligible to apply for activities within the U.S. portion of their partnerships.

Who is eligible to Apply?

1. Applicants must be U.S. based non-profit organizations with approved IRS 501(c)(3) status.
2. Applicants must apply on behalf of a landscape conservation partnership as defined, for purposes of this Fund, in the RFP Eligibility Requirements section.
3. Applicants who represent a landscape partnership that is Indigenous-led and primarily serving an indigenous community(s) are eligible to apply through the separate [Catalyst Fund Indigenous Community RFP](#) and application process.

Applicants should read the additional details on Eligibility Requirements in the applicable RFP.

Does my landscape conservation partnership have to be a 501(c)(3) organization?

Grants can be awarded only to non-profit organizations with approved IRS 501(c)(3) status. However, as many partnerships are informal collaboratives, we anticipate that in many cases eligible applicants will apply *on behalf of* a partnership because they are the fiscal sponsor organization of the partnership; the recognized lead convener of the

partnership; or a recognized partner organization within the partnership. Other involved partners (e.g., tribal governments, public agencies, academic institutions, for-profit entities, and other non-profit organizations) may work on funded grant activities as paid contractors.

Why are there two RFPs and what is the Indigenous Community RFP?

The Catalyst Fund is pleased to have a portion of the Fund dedicated to Indigenous-led partnerships that serve Indigenous communities working on landscape conservation. Indigenous collaboratives are often rich with qualities that embody and enhance landscape conservation—including a multigenerational approach, the use of traditional knowledge, the integration of other important societal issues, and a value system that prioritizes symbiotic health between the landscape and its inhabitants. A specific Request for Proposals ([Indigenous Community RFP](#)) invites Indigenous-led partnerships focused on the long-term health of their landscape to apply for funding to the Catalyst Fund. There are minor differences between the two RFPs and application processes, but the program objective is the same. Potential applicants should read the Indigenous Community RFP carefully to see if they are eligible, and contact NLC staff if they are uncertain.

Is my initiative a landscape conservation partnership per the Catalyst Fund Eligibility Requirement definition?

The [Program Description and RFP](#) specifies that applicants must apply on behalf of a landscape conservation partnership, defined for purposes of the Catalyst Fund as: place-based; focused on a shared, long-term vision; collaboratively led; inclusive; and informed. (The [Indigenous Community RFP](#) language is identical.) Please read the Eligibility section of the applicable RFP for a more detailed description of these terms. We recognize that there is a wide spectrum of landscape conservation initiatives emerging and underway across the country, and not all initiatives—regardless of their broader importance or relevance—will meet the landscape conservation partnership definition of the Catalyst Fund. Please read the Eligibility section of the applicable RFP carefully. The following Q&A offers some additional partnership eligibility guidance.

1. *Is your partnership boundary specific enough to be understood as a defined landscape?*

If the answer is no, you will not meet the RFP definition of a place-based landscape. For instance, if you are working on a conservation issue across the “western United States” or across the “Northeast,” your initiative will lack the specificity of place (generally defined by a specific geography and its ecological and cultural values) to qualify under this definition.

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2. *Is your partnership built around a single, short-term project?*

If the answer is yes, you will not meet the RFP definition. For instance, if your partnership is focused solely on a single land acquisition, your initiative will lack the long-term, enduring characteristic in the RFP definition.

3. *Do you have a collaborative decision-making process and inclusive culture?*

If the answer is no, you will not meet the RFP definition. For instance, if you have one or two organization(s) making all decisions and dictating the direction of the initiative, you will lack the collaborative process characteristic of the RFP definition. If you are employing a “top-down” or “parachute in” approach instead of a more collaborative and horizontal one that meaningfully includes the stakeholders that live on the landscape, you will lack the community-grounded inclusivity central to collaborative landscape conservation.

4. *Do your partners come together wholly for information-sharing—to stay in touch and network on various individual partner activities and landscape information?*

If the answer is yes, you will not qualify for the Catalyst Fund. The Fund is focused on action-oriented partnerships that are collectively working toward a long-term conservation vision for the health of the landscape and its inhabitants, and focused on achieving tangible conservation objectives additive to what the individual groups could achieve alone.

How much funding may I request?

The Fund will provide approximately \$335,000 in funding through competitive grants in 2019. Applicants may request a one- or two-year grant of \$10,000 - \$25,000.

Can I apply for multiple grants?

Applicants may apply for a one- or two-year grant. Applicants may apply for additional grants in future annual grant cycles, but the total amount a single partnership may receive in the first three years of this new program is capped at \$25,000.

Are matching funds required?

Applicants must demonstrate a funding match of at least 1:1 (except for Indigenous Community applications, where match is desired but optional). Up to 50 percent of the 1:1 match requirement may be made through in-kind support by the applicant and other partnership organizations. At least 50 percent must be made through direct funding commitment—from the applicant, partnership organizations, agency grants, and/or other philanthropic sources. Previously expended funds cannot be used as direct match. If matching funds have not yet been secured, applicants need to indicate the anticipated sources of other funding and a time frame for securing them. The purpose of the match requirement is in part to encourage applicants to

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reach out to local and regional funders and build longer-term support for the partnership. Second-year grants will not be awarded if the first-year match has not been secured.

What can the funding be used for, and what are the funding restrictions?

Funding must be used to advance your landscape conservation partnership vision and goals in specific, strategic ways. Funds may be used for staff/contract support and/or direct project costs. General applicants should read Section IV (Fund Priorities) and Section VI (Application Requirements) of the [Program Description and RFP](#) carefully for further detail. [Indigenous Community RFP](#) applicants should carefully review RFP section III. Funds may not be used for: academic research or writing, capital campaigns, capital improvements, office equipment, acquisition of land or conservation easements, or political lobbying.

How does the application process work?

The Catalyst Fund has a two-tiered application process: (1) an open call for pre-proposals, and (2) invited full proposals from a select number of pre-proposal applicants. Applicants will submit pre-proposals and full proposals through an online application portal, which is linked to the [NLC Catalyst Fund webpage](#). Applicants responding to the general RFP or the Indigenous Community RFP will enter through the same online application portal, before then selecting the appropriate application process to proceed with submitting their pre-proposals. Applicants who have difficulty navigating the online portal may contact the [Catalyst Fund Manager](#).

When are the proposals due and when will I hear back?

The timeline for the 2019 grant cycle is as follows:

Catalyst Fund RFP released	March 15
Catalyst Fund Webinars	March 22 and March 28 at 2 pm Eastern time
Pre-Proposal deadline	April 26
Invitations to submit full proposals	June 3
Full proposal deadline	July 1
Announcement of Grants	August 15

What are the proposal evaluation criteria?

The Fund Priorities and Evaluation Criteria are set out in Sections IV and V of the [Catalyst Fund Program Description and RFP](#), and in Sections III and IV of the [Indigenous Community RFP](#).

How can I check on the status of my application?

All submissions to the Catalyst Fund will receive emailed acknowledgement. If you submit a pre-proposal form but do not receive email notification confirming receipt, please contact the [Catalyst Fund Manager](#) to confirm successful submission. You can access your applicant profile on our online grant portal at any time to review the history and status of your submissions. However please note that status updates will not be posted until the entire pre-proposal review process is completed, at which point all applicants will receive emailed notification of their

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status (on June 3). Applicants invited to submit full proposals will then receive access to the full proposal application process on the grant portal.

Who manages the Fund?

The Catalyst Fund is an initiative of the Network for Landscape Conservation. NLC is governed by a 34-person Coordinating Committee that is comprised of conservation leaders from the nonprofit, private, public, academic, tribal, and philanthropic sectors across North America who are responsible for the strategic direction of the Network and its programs. NLC is legally a fiscally sponsored project of the Center of Large Landscape Conservation (CLLC), which administers the Fund and makes final decisions on Catalyst Fund disbursements. As such, grant agreements will be executed between grantees and CLLC.

Who evaluates the grant proposals?

A grant review committee composed of collaborative landscape conservation experts from across the country and representing multiple sectors and perspectives has been assembled to evaluate all proposals and make grant award recommendations.

What additional support and peer exchange is available to grantees?

The field of collaborative landscape conservation is growing rapidly, and the people involved have much to learn from each other. Grantees should expect to join bi-monthly 60-minute calls or webinars with other grantees and to attend an annual in-person convening for peer exchange, training opportunities, and mutual inspiration (travel funding will be provided). NLC staff and leadership will also be available as helpful for problem-solving, providing background resources, and/or connecting grantees (as mentors or mentees) to other practitioners wrestling with similar issues.

What are the reporting requirements for grantees?

Grantees will be asked to provide a short, mid-grant written report as well as a final written report. Grantees will document how the Catalyst Fund grant was spent and to evaluate its impact. Additionally, grantees will be asked to track progress for five years after the grant period by filling out a short annual survey for NLC.

What is the source of funding for the Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund?

Funding for the Catalyst Fund has been made available through the generous support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation.

How do I find out more or talk to someone about the Fund?

We encourage you to read the [Catalyst Fund Program Description and RFP](#) carefully, and to read the [Indigenous Community RFP](#) carefully if you are an Indigenous-led partnership. We encourage you to attend the webinar on either March 22 or March 28. All Catalyst Fund documents can be found on our website: <http://landscapeconservation.org/catalyst-fund/>. In

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addition, NLC Director [Emily Bateson](#) and NLC Catalyst Fund Manager [Jonathan Peterson](#) will be available for questions by email *after* your careful review of the RFPs. Please indicate “Catalyst Fund RFP Question” in the subject line of your email.

What is the Network for Landscape Conservation?

Founded in 2011, the [Network for Landscape Conservation](#) (NLC or Network) connects people to ideas and innovations—and to each other—in order to build a community of practice for the rapidly growing field of landscape conservation. NLC works with partners across sectors, cultures, and geographies to develop effective tools and strategies and to advance best practices and policies to help people safeguard the landscapes that enable people and all of nature to thrive. Our broad-based network today includes more than 150 organizational partners and 2,500 practitioners, fulfilling a unique purpose as an umbrella network and hub of activity to advance the practice of collaborative, place-based conservation at the necessary landscape scale. NLC is governed by a 34-person [Coordinating Committee](#) that is comprised of leaders from the nonprofit, private, public, academic, tribal, and philanthropic sectors across North America. The Network for Landscape Conservation is a fiscally sponsored project of the [Center for Large Landscape Conservation](#).

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