**LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION CATALYST FUND**

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**February 3, 2020**

**What is the purpose of the Catalyst Fund?**

The purpose of the Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund is to accelerate the pace of conservation at scale across the United States through targeted support of collaborative Landscape Conservation. The Catalyst Fund specifically supports key collaborative processes and activities to build critical capacity and forward conservation momentum in Landscape Conservation Partnerships. *See* Section I of the [Applicant Guidance Document](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_2020Guidance-Document_FINAL.docx) for more background on the Catalyst Fund purpose.

**What is the geographic emphasis of the Catalyst Fund?**

The Fund welcomes applications from across the 50 states of the U.S. 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?**

Applicants must be U.S. based non-profit organizations with approved IRS 501(c)(3) status.Indigenous-led Partnership applicants in the American West (defined to include the following states: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska) are also eligible to apply under IRS Code, Section 7871.

**What if my Landscape Conservation Partnership does not have IRS 501(c)(3) or 7871 status?**

A Landscape Conservation Partnership should apply directly if it has the appropriate IRS status. However, many Partnerships do not have formal 501(c)(3) or Section 7871 IRS status, and another organization may apply *on behalf of* a Partnership. In such cases, the applicant organization should be:

* The recognized lead convener of the Partnership;
* A recognized partner organization within the Partnership; or
* The fiscal sponsor organization of the Partnership.

**The RFP states that a portion of the Catalyst Fund is specifically reserved for Indigenous-led Partnerships; what does this mean?**

Partnerships that meet the “Indigenous-led and Primarily Serving Indigenous Communities” priority of the Fun are invited to apply through a reserved application for separate consideration, as a portion of the Fund is specifically reserved to support such Partnerships. *See* Section II of the [Applicant Guidance Document](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_2020Guidance-Document_FINAL.docx) for a summary of priorities and requirements of this portion of the Fund.

**Does my initiative meet the Landscape Conservation Partnership definition?**

The Catalyst Fund RFP defines Landscape Conservation Partnerships as: place-based; focused on a shared, long-term conservation vision; collaboratively governed; inclusive; and informed. 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. *See* Section 3B (“Am I an Appropriate Fit for the Catalyst Fund? The Landscape Conservation Partnership Definition”) of the [Applicant Guidance Document](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_2020Guidance-Document_FINAL.docx) for a detailed exploration of this definition, and what will and will not meet its standard.

**How much funding may I request?**

Applicants may request a one- or two-year grant of $10,000 to $25,000 in total. The Fund will provide approximately $335,000 in funding through competitive grants in 2020.

**Can I apply for multiple grants?**

A Landscape Conservation Partnership should only submit one proposal in any given Catalyst Fund funding round. An applicant that is a fiscal sponsor, convening organization, and/or partner in more than one Partnership may submit multiple proposals if each proposal is specifically for different Partnerships. Landscape Conservation Partnerships are eligible to apply each year to the Catalyst Fund, but no Partnership may receive more than $25,000 total during the first three years of this Program (the 2019 funding round through the 2021 funding round).

**Are matching funds required?**

Landscape Conservation Partnerships must demonstrate a funding match of at least 1:1. (*See* Indigenous-led Partnership exception, below.) In-kind support can contribute to this match requirement, but at least 50% of the minimum match requirement must be direct support.Previously expended funds cannot be used as direct match. If matching funds are pending at time of application, applicants should indicate a time frame and the sources from which they anticipate securing other funding. For two-year grants, disbursement of second-year funds will only be awarded if the first-year match has been fully secured.

***For the Indigenous-led Partnership portion of the Fund matching funds are not required***, but proposals will be viewed favorably if they demonstrate: 1) in-kind support from partners (time, meeting space, other); 2) additional direct funding from other sources; and/or 3) a strategy for leveraging a Catalyst Fund grant to attract new funding to the Partnership.

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

The Catalyst Fund invests in capacity building and the collaborative processes of Landscape Conservation Partnerships as a mechanism to build enduring Partnerships that accelerate conservation impact.Funds may be used for staff/contract support and/or direct project costs (e.g., convening [space, food, lodging, and travel]; web and print communications; outreach activities that educate and involve stakeholders; and costs involved in science-informed landscape conservation planning, mapping, and prioritization). 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-stage application process, with an open call for pre-proposals followed by invitation-only full proposals. Applicants will submit pre-proposals and full proposals through an [online application portal](https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=NLCgrants). Applicants that meet the priorities and requirements of the Indigenous-led Partnerships portion of the Fund are invited to apply through a reserved application process. All applicants should access the online application system and then select the appropriate process from the main dashboard. Applicants who have difficulty navigating the online portal should contact the Catalyst Fund Manager. If preferred, the Indigenous-led Partnership pre-proposal can be completed as a [Word form](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CatalystFund_IndigenousLed-Partnerships_PreProposal_2020word-form_FINAL.docx) and submitted via email to Jonathan Peterson.

**Do the character limits for application questions include spaces?**

Yes, spaces count against the character limits for the narrative questions in the pre-proposal form.

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

The timeline for the 2020 grant cycle is as follows:

Catalyst Fund RFP released Monday, February 3

Pre-Proposal deadline Friday, March 13

Invitations to submit full proposals Friday, May 1

Full proposal deadline Friday, May 29

Announcement of Grants On or before Tuesday, September 1

**What are the proposal evaluation criteria?**

The Evaluation Criteria are set out in Sections IV [Catalyst Fund RFP](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_RFP_2020_FINAL.docx).

**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, please contact the Catalyst Fund Manager to confirm successful submission. You can access your applicant profile on our online application portal at any time to review the history and status of your submissions. However note that status updates will not be posted until the entire pre-proposal review process is completed, at which point all applicants will receive email notification of their status (on May 1). Applicants invited to submit full proposals will then receive access to the full proposal application process on the online application portal.

**Who manages the Fund?**

The Catalyst Fund is a program of the Network for Landscape Conservation. The Network 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. The Network 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. Funded Partnerships will be invited to select one to two representatives to participate in a Peer Learning cohort that will last the length of the grant period. The program will consist of bi-monthly 60- to 90-minute calls or webinars as well as an annual in-person convening for peer exchange, training opportunities, and mutual inspiration (travel funding will be provided). Network staff and leadership will also be available to help with problem-solving, providing background resources, and/or connecting grantees 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, the Network will track progress of funded Partnerships for five years after the grant period through a short annual survey.

**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 RFP](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_RFP_2020_FINAL.docx) carefully, and to review the [Applicant Guidance Documen](http://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_2020Guidance-Document_FINAL.docx)t. Additionally, two webinars have been scheduled to provide an opportunity for interested applicants to have questions answered; these are scheduled for [Monday, February 10](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_0jh4Mj4SQD-NiTQHGuKOHw) at 2pm ET and [Wednesday, February 19](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-Z7K4MKoT6yrR4-bVr9f5w) at 2 pm ET. Recordings of these webinars will be added to the [Catalyst Fund page](http://landscapeconservation.org/catalyst-fund/) on the Network’s website upon completion. Finally, Catalyst Fund Manager Jonathan Peterson will be available for questions by email *after* your careful review of the RFP, the Applicant Guidance Document, and the webinars. 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](http://landscapeconservation.org/) (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. The Network 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. The Network is governed by a 34-person [Coordinating Committee](http://landscapeconservation.org/about/people/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](http://largelandscapes.org/).