



## LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION CATALYST FUND

### Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

March 15, 2021

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

The purpose of the Catalyst Fund is to accelerate the pace and practice of collaborative landscape conservation across the United States. The Fund makes strategic investments in strengthening the collaborative capacity and process of place-based, community-grounded Landscape Conservation Partnerships—building in landscapes across the country the enduring collaborative infrastructure and social capital that is necessary to achieve bigger and better conservation over the long term. More background on the Catalyst Fund purpose can be found in the appendix of the [Applicant Guidance Document](#).

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

The Fund welcomes proposals from across the United States. Landscape Conservation Partnerships that cross the U.S. border into Canada or Mexico are eligible to apply as well.

#### **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 are also eligible to apply under IRS Code, Section 7871, or directly as Tribal Nations. The American West is defined to include the following states: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, California, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska.

#### **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 may be a formal fiscal sponsor or a core partner organization within the Partnership.

#### **What do you mean by “Partnership”?**

The Catalyst Fund focuses its investments on Landscape Conservation Partnerships. “Partnership” is used not to indicate a focus on a fixed type of inter-organizational structure but rather as an umbrella term to represent a variety of differing structures and degrees of formality for individuals and entities coming together in collaboration. We

consider requests from partnerships, collaboratives, coalitions, networks, working groups, etc. The commonality here is that these are groups of partners coming together in ways that transcend individual organizations' efforts and are working collaboratively toward a shared, long-term conservation vision for a landscape. In other words, this is more than an organization "partnering" with others to achieve its own work.

**I understand that the Fund focuses on Partnerships that bring partners together in collaboration; how do you define a partner?**

Partners within a Partnership are understood to be those individuals and organizations that are engaged in and committed to the shared conservation vision and collaborative work therein. Each Partnership itself should define who its partners are, and the Catalyst Fund does not offer a formal criterion (for instance, an organization or individual does not necessarily have to be providing match support nor have a specific workplan task in this proposal to be called a partner). Partnerships may have a mix of differing partners too, with a core groups of partners and an expanded list of more peripherally involved organizations. Please note that we are looking for Partnerships sufficiently robust in partner numbers that a broad range of stakeholders and perspectives are engaged. While it is impossible to identify a concrete partner threshold (some landscapes have a high density of potential partners to work with whereas other landscapes may face a paucity of organizations/community groups such that four or five partners would represent a significant number), Partnerships consisting of only a few organizations or individuals will generally not be competitive in the Catalyst Fund.

**Is my initiative well-aligned with the characteristics of Landscape Conservation Partnerships outlined in the RFP?**

The Catalyst Fund RFP seeks Landscape Conservation Partnerships that reflect the following characteristics: place-based; focused on a shared, long-term conservation purpose; collaboratively governed; community-grounded and 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 align with these characteristics. A more detailed exploration of the Partnership characteristics is available in the [Applicant Guidance Document](#).

**Can you explain what you consider a "landscape" to be?**

We consider a landscape to be an interconnected geographic area that exceeds jurisdictional boundaries yet functions as and is perceived as a single unit because of ecological, geographical, cultural, and/or other societal reasons. There is no fixed parameters on size here, or how "large" a landscape is. Rather, there is generally a sweet spot: a landscape should be sufficiently large in scale to span parcel and political boundaries; encompass a diversity of landowner types, conservation issues, jurisdictions, and stakeholder interests; and allow for conservation impact at ecological scale—but specific and contained enough that a community-grounded approach is feasible and people can work in ways that build enduring social capital

within the geography. Further, landscapes can be in urban, suburban, rural, working, or wild in context—or any combination thereof. We should also note that landscapes do not have to be discrete; we see many examples of “nested” landscapes, where a smaller landscape can be identified as a unit within a much larger landscape.

### **How much funding may I request?**

Applicants may request a one- or two-year grant of \$10,000 to \$25,000 in total. Approximately \$335,000 in funding is available in 2021 for grantmaking, with 13-16 grant awards anticipated.

### **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 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?**

A funding match of at least 1:1 is required. ***This match requirement is waived for Indigenous-led Partnership applicants.***

In-kind support can contribute to this match requirement, but at least 50% of the minimum requirement must be direct support. Previously expended funds cannot be used as direct match. Direct match can be pending at time of application, but grant award will be dependent on securing appropriate match.

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

The Catalyst Fund focuses on collaborative capacity and processes that strengthen a Partnership’s ability to achieve its long-term conservation goals. As such, funding may be used for staff or contract support for Partnership coordination roles and/or costs associated with other collaborative process activities such as convening meetings (space, lodging, travel), web and print communications, stakeholder outreach activities, and strategic planning and conservation prioritization. Funding cannot be used for direct conservation project implementation such as acquisition of land or conservation easements, trail building, or land management activities; funding also cannot be used for academic research or writing; capital campaigns or capital improvements; office equipment; or political lobbying.

### **How does the application process work?**

New in 2021, the Catalyst Fund is switching to a single-stage application process, with a single proposal required. (In years past, an in-depth pre-proposal and a full proposal were required.) Applicants will submit proposals through an [online application portal](#). Applicants who have difficulty navigating the online portal should contact the [Catalyst Fund Manager](#). If preferred,

---

## **The Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund**

For more information, contact Jonathan Peterson, Catalyst Fund Manager, at [jonathan@landscapeconservation.org](mailto:jonathan@landscapeconservation.org)



Network for Landscape  
CONSERVATION

Indigenous-led Partnerships can complete a [Word form](#) proposal and submit it 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 proposal form.

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

Catalyst Fund proposals are due on Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> by 9pm ET. Grant awards will be finalized in July 2021.

**What are the proposal evaluation criteria?**

The Evaluation Criteria are set out in Sections IV [Catalyst Fund 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 proposal 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 proposal review process is completed, at which point all applicants will receive email notification of their status (in July 2021).

**Who manages the Fund?**

The Catalyst Fund is a program of the Network for Landscape Conservation. The Network is legally a fiscally sponsored project of the Center for 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 program committee composed of collaborative landscape conservation practitioners from across the country and representing multiple sectors and perspectives has been assembled to evaluate all proposals and make grant award recommendations.

**What does the Peer Learning component of the Catalyst Fund look like?**

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 identify a leadership representation (e.g. Partnership coordinator or steering committee member) to participate in a Peer Learning cohort. Over two years, the cohort will convene monthly via virtual means for learning, exchange, inspiration, and growth. Conditions permitting, the cohort will also convene annually in person (travel funding will be provided by the Network). 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.

---

**The Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund**

For more information, contact Jonathan Peterson, Catalyst Fund Manager, at [jonathan@landscapeconservation.org](mailto:jonathan@landscapeconservation.org)



Network for Landscape  
CONSERVATION

**If awarded, what is the disbursement schedule for grants? Are grant funds provided up front or as a reimbursement?**

For one-year grants, 100% of the funding will be provided upon signing of the grant agreement. For two-year grants, the typical disbursement schedule is 50% of the grant award upon signing of the grant agreement, with the remaining 50% of the grant award disbursed at the start of the second year (upon submission of an interim report). However, the main focus is on working with grantees to put them in position to be successful, and we are open to having discussions about alternative disbursement schedules if a grant is awarded.

**We applied unsuccessfully last year; should we reapply this year and can we resubmit the same proposal again?**

In short, yes, applicants should consider reapplying again if they remain a strong fit with the parameters of the Fund. We encourage such applicants to carefully review the [RFP](#), as this has been updated from last year. The [Applicant Guidance Document](#) remains a resource for helping applicants determine if they are an appropriate fit for the Fund and how to present a compelling and competitive request. With this 2021 funding round, we are shifting to a simplified proposal narrative (and no longer requiring an in-depth pre-proposal and second final proposal). Applicants are welcome to submit a request for the same need/purpose as last year (assuming that need/purpose remains), and should feel free to repurpose portions of their past proposals as helpful in answering the updated proposal narrative questions.

**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 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](#) carefully, and to review the [Applicant Guidance Document](#). Additionally, two webinars have been scheduled to provide an opportunity for interested applicants to have questions answered; these are scheduled for [Monday, March 22](#) at 2pm ET and [Tuesday, March 30](#) at 2 pm ET. Recordings of these webinars will be added to the [Catalyst Fund page](#) 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.

---

**The Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund**

For more information, contact Jonathan Peterson, Catalyst Fund Manager, at [jonathan@landscapeconservation.org](mailto:jonathan@landscapeconservation.org)



Network for Landscape  
CONSERVATION

### **What is the Network for Landscape Conservation?**

Founded in 2011, the [Network for Landscape Conservation](#) (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 200 organizational partners and nearly 5,000 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](#) 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](#).

---

#### **The Landscape Conservation Catalyst Fund**

*For more information, contact Jonathan Peterson, Catalyst Fund Manager, at [jonathan@landscapeconservation.org](mailto:jonathan@landscapeconservation.org)*



Network for Landscape  
**CONSERVATION**