

2020 Catalyst Fund

Application Guidelines

The Catalyst Fund, developed and managed in partnership with the Aspen Institute, recognizes ventures at **critical junctures** in their development. These ventures have **high potential** to deepen or widen their impact, have **significant early momentum**, and have **critical need**.

To qualify for the [Catalyst Fund](#), you must be a Fellow of the Aspen Global Leadership Network, with a venture or Action Pledge two years active that is poised to continue for the foreseeable future. Submissions must be descended from what was designated your leadership venture as a Fellow, or from an "Action Pledge". If you are unsure whether your venture fits the criteria for the Catalyst Fund, please consult our cheat sheet on the next page.

1. Narrative Statement

A. Problem & Approach —300 words maximum

- What need or problem does your venture seek to address? What community or systems does this apply to?
- What is your venture's mission and why did it begin?
- What distinguishes your approach from others?

B. Impact—250 words maximum

- Describe the impact of your venture on individuals and/or the community, including any key early metrics you track. How do you know the venture is embraced by those it serves?
- How are you poised to grow or deepen your impact, and how will you know when you are successful?

C. Critical Juncture—200 words maximum

We want to understand the narrative and trajectory of your venture's journey, and what critical juncture your venture is at now and looking to the future.

- What milestones have you achieved in the last year, and what milestones do you anticipate in the next year?
- Critical need is a key criterion for the Catalyst Fund—how would funding and/or recognition make a difference for your venture at this specific stage in its development?
- How is the venture funded now, and how do you envision it will be sustained? What is your vision for the future?

2. Success to Significance—150 words maximum

The Catalyst Fund, like the McNulty Prize, celebrates the boldness and impact of AGLN Fellows using their expertise and platforms to address the world's toughest challenges.

- What is your title and role in the venture's achievements? How are you uniquely positioned to address this issue?
- In what way is the venture an outcome of your fellowship experience?

3. [OPTIONAL] Additional Materials

A. [Optional] Supporting Documents

You are invited but not required to share existing materials that demonstrate your record of success.

Please upload as a single .doc or .pdf file, that is up to around 5 pages letter-sized (8.5 x 11 inches).

- Financial statements, annual reports or other reports to supporters or investors
- Press coverage and other recognition, photos or pamphlets
- Existing letters or testimonials in support of your venture
- Your CV

B. [Optional] A Short Video – If you have one, please share an existing video that shows and tells about your venture. YouTube or Vimeo links accepted.



Should I apply to the Catalyst Fund or the McNulty Prize?

We know that no two ventures are alike; however, we do recognize certain patterns among candidates with successful applications. Below is our “cheat sheet” to help you decide whether the Catalyst Fund or the McNulty Prize is more appropriate for your venture at this stage. **These are not requirements, nor hard and fast rules, but rather typical scenarios that we see to help you determine the best fit.**

ALL APPLICANTS		
Leadership	Courageous, adaptive, entrepreneurial spirit, leads with values, integrity and a culture of learning.	
Fellowship	Robust and active engagement with the AGLN	
CATALYST FUND APPLICANTS		
Financial Need	Has critical need	Financial need is not a criterion for the Prize
Organizational Stage	Beyond piloting, and focused on implementing, refining, strengthening the model, and building traction from the community being served. <i>On average, has been in operation for 2-4 years.</i>	Honed an effective model for change. May be focused on institutionalizing, scaling, and exploring systems change. <i>On average, has been in operation for 4 or more years.</i>

IMPACT

Growth, Reach & Depth	Anticipating key growth milestones. Expanding or deepening the model to address unmet needs. <i>On average, may reach one or two markets.</i>	Proven ability to replicate or significantly deepen existing impact. <i>On average, may reach multiple markets.</i>
Outcomes & Measurement	Early evidence of impact is sensed , exhibited, and captured. <i>In general, can articulate what is being delivered, and the initial impact on individuals.</i>	Delivers consistent results with regular evaluation. <i>In general, can share evidence and measured results of how lives or communities are changed.</i>

CREATIVITY

Approach	Tested programs and strategies using an entrepreneurial approach. <i>In general, noted among peers as 'one to watch'.</i>	Well-designed and implemented programs using an entrepreneurial and distinct approach , withstanding strains of growth or replication. <i>In general, model is trusted by and influencing others in its sector.</i>
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SUSTAINABILITY

Financial Health and Planning	Developed vision and timeline for sustainability and early strategies to expand funding sources. <i>In general, relies on grants and seed/angel funding.</i>	Achieved general financial health, with more mature model and diversity of funding sources. <i>In general, mixes grants with other sources like earned revenue or public-private partnerships.</i>
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