

Catalyst Fund

The Barra Foundation

Instructions

There are some intractable problems and emerging opportunities that require a different approach, imagination and bold thinking. Barra is interested in these early-stage untested ideas – ones that could really change the game and make lasting change, especially in under-resourced communities.

Think of the Letter of Inquiry (LOI) as a pitch. This is your opportunity to tell us clearly and concisely about your approach, how your idea represents a break from existing practice, how it addresses and is informed by equity, and how it has the potential to influence how others do their work. If we think your idea has the potential for Catalyst Fund support, we will contact you to learn more.

Please refer to the Catalyst Fund [Guidelines](#) and FAQs to learn more about our criteria for reviewing LOIs.

Required Information

Year organization was founded*

Please list the year your organization was founded.

Character Limit: 4

Fiscal Sponsor

If you have a fiscal sponsor, please name your fiscal sponsor and provide the year for your organization, not the fiscal sponsor.

Character Limit: 25

Organizational Background*

Provide a brief statement of your organization's purpose or mission and your target population.

Character Limit: 1000

Organization's Annual Budget*

Enter the total amount of your organization's current annual operating budget. If you have a fiscal sponsor, provide your organization's budget, not the fiscal sponsor's budget.

Character Limit: 20

Project Name**Character Limit: 100***Amount Requested****Character Limit: 20***Grant Duration***

Tell us how many months of funding you are requesting.

*Character Limit: 250***County or Counties Served by Project***

Select all of the counties that will be served by the proposed project.

Choices

Bucks
Chester
Delaware
Montgomery
Philadelphia
Other

Area(s) of Interest*

Please choose your primary interest area from the pull down menu. If your idea relates to additional interest areas, please check the applicable boxes below.

Choices

Arts & Culture
Education
Health
Human Services

Choices

Arts & Culture
Education
Health
Human Services
n/a

Tell Us About Your Idea

When submitting an LOI, keep in mind that at this stage, we are just trying to determine if your proposed idea meets the [Catalyst Fund's criteria](#). Tell us about your idea by filling out the form below or attaching a brief video that directly answers the questions contained in the LOI.

Video Submissions

If you would like to submit a video describing your idea, please provide a URL link to your video in the field below. The video must directly answer the LOI questions:

1. Identify the problem or opportunity you seek to address.
2. Describe your proposed project.
3. Tell us how your project is a break from past practice.
4. Why is now the right time to do this?
5. How will you define success for this work?

Please do not submit videos longer than 10 minutes. Unfortunately, we cannot accept video files directly due to file size limitations. **Please also be sure to submit a budget using the [provided template](#).**

Character Limit: 2000

Respond to the Following Questions

Question 1. Identify the problem or opportunity you seek to address.*

Tell us about the problem or opportunity you seek to address. Please be as specific as possible when describing the problem or opportunity.

Character Limit: 2000

Question 2. Describe your proposed project.*

Tell us about the project and how it will address the problem or opportunity you described in Question 1 in a novel way. How will your project result in broad, equitable and transformative change?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 3: Tell us how your project is a break from past practice.*

Have you identified anyone either in the region or elsewhere doing the same or similar work? If so, tell us who and describe how your approach is different from and better than existing approaches.

Character Limit: 2000

Question 4: Why is now the right time to do this?*

Explain why now and why yours is the right organization to undertake this work. For example, is there new research, technology, leadership or a partnership opportunity that makes this a good time to pursue this idea? Are there particular gaps in what is currently being done in this area?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 5: How will you define success for this work?*

If your project succeeds, what change will have taken place and what will you have learned? How might this learning inspire change or influence practice beyond your organization?

Character Limit: 2000

Budget*

The project budget should provide a good sense of how much is needed for the proposed work and sources of funding beyond what you are requesting from The Barra Foundation. The project budget does not need to be final for the LOI. We understand that budgets evolve as projects take shape. Your budget should be structured in a way that would allow you to effectively carry out the proposed idea.

Your budget should be broken down by line item and by year if multi-year funding is requested. If funds have been raised or requested from other sources, please provide this information. [Please use this budget template when submitting your budget.](#)

File Size Limit: 3 MB

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The Barra Foundation

There are some intractable problems and emerging opportunities that require a different approach, imagination and bold thinking. Barra is interested in these early-stage untested ideas – ones that could really change the game and make lasting change, especially in under-resourced communities.

Think of the Application as an opportunity to give us more detail about your project design and goals, how your idea represents a break from existing practice, what you hope to learn by undertaking this work, and how it has the potential to transform or create a ripple effect in the field or sector to achieve broader impact.

Project Name*

Name of Project

Character Limit: 100

Amount Requested*

Amount Requested

Character Limit: 20

Grant Duration*

Tell us how many months of funding you are requesting.

Character Limit: 10

Organization's Annual Budget*

Enter the total amount of your organization's current annual operating budget. If you have a fiscal sponsor, provide your organization's budget, not the fiscal sponsor's budget.

Character Limit: 20

Question 1: Project Design*

Please give us a detailed description of the project design. What is the experiment that you are testing? If the experiment works, what will happen?

Character Limit: 10000

Question 2: Goals*

What are the goals of your project that can be achieved during this grant period? Do you have aspirational goals that extend beyond this project?

Character Limit: 6000

Question 3: Novel*

Why do you think your approach is significantly different from existing or past solutions? Please be sure to provide the context for your project. Can you explain why existing approaches are not as effective as what you are proposing?

Character Limit: 3000

Question 4: Transformative*

What potential does your idea have to change a process, practice, system or model to achieve a broader impact? In what way might it influence the way those in your field or sector do their work?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 5 (optional)

If you propose bringing an idea to the region that is in place elsewhere, why do think this approach will work here and how would you need to adapt the idea to make it work?

Character Limit: 1500

Question 6: Learning*

What are you going to learn from this work? How will you measure or gather information about the process and outcomes of this work? Can you assess/evaluate the work on your own or do you need outside assistance?

Character Limit: 1000

Question 7: Dissemination*

How will you share your findings or lessons learned and who will you share them with in the Greater Philadelphia region and beyond?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 8: Risk*

All new, early-stage ideas involve potential risks. What risks do you envision in undertaking this work, and what are the idea's limitations? How do you plan to address and manage them?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 9: Leadership*

Tell us about the strengths you bring to this work. We want to understand your capacity to bring this idea to fruition and why yours is the right organization for this undertaking. This might include unique aspects of your organization; the qualifications of your staff, board and/or consultants; your partners generally or for this work specifically; your funders or other supporters; or your knowledge of the field.

Character Limit: 2000

Question 10: Milestones*

Please detail three or four key milestones that you will use to determine the incremental success of your project during the grant period.

Character Limit: 2000

Question 11: Durability*

Changing practice and getting new ideas to “stick” can be a challenge. Why do you think this project has the potential to “take root” and create durable change?

Character Limit: 2000

Question 12: Sustainability*

Financial

How do you plan to obtain financial support or achieve financial sustainability to keep your work going? Will the results and learning from this project enable you to attract different or new revenue streams? If so, what are they?

Non-Financial

In addition, what non-financial resources will you need to reach your goal (e.g., stakeholder participation, technical assistance, referrals to resources, etc.) and how will you obtain these resources?

Character Limit: 1000

Project Budget*

The project budget should provide a good sense of how much is needed for the proposed work and sources of funding beyond what you are requesting from The Barra Foundation. Your budget should be structured in a way that would allow you to effectively carry out the proposed idea.

Your budget should be broken down by line item and by year if multi-year funding is requested. If funds have been raised or requested from other sources, please provide this information. [Please use this budget template when submitting your budget](#). Note: We cap indirect costs at 10% of project-related salaries and benefits.

Character Limit: 1000 | File Size Limit: 5 MB

Timeline*

Provide the estimated start and end dates for your project.

Character Limit: 250

Other*

Please attach a list of the members of your Board of Directors.

If you plan to use consultants, tell us about the consultants you have considered and attach a scope of work from your preferred consultant.

Character Limit: 1000 | File Size Limit: 10 MB