

Instructions for Submitting an IDEA to the Catalyst Fund

Applications due by: February 26, 2025

Step 1: Confirm that you want to submit an Idea, not a Proposal.

Through an **Idea** submission, you are recommending an issue, program, service, need or solution that Lyrasis could design, investigate, test or address within the library, archives, museum and/or complementary research fields. If selected, Ideas will be included in Lyrasis' Research, Discovery & Impact agenda for exploration, planning, program design and piloting. Your organization will not be obligated to participate in the resulting program, service or solution.

*If you are requesting funds to pilot the project at your own institution, you should instead submit a **Proposal**.* With Proposals, funds will be awarded to the applicant. If the Proposal is selected, your organization will be responsible for conducting the project. The application instructions for Proposals are available at the [Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website](#).

A Lyrasis member organization may serve as the lead applicant and submit no more than ONE Idea and ONE Proposal to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund each year. In 2025, we are continuing to expand our applicant pool to reach additional library institutions, including public libraries. If you are a partner of The Palace Project, BiblioBoard or the Indie Author Project, you are eligible to apply but will be required to meet with Lyrasis Catalyst Fund staff prior to submitting your application. Reach out to catalystfund@lyrasis.org to schedule your meeting.

The staff will do their best to accommodate all potential applicants. However, based on demand, the staff may not be able to meet with applicants after **February 20, 2025**.

Step 2: Review the criteria and terms for Ideas

Ideas will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- What is the potential for the Idea to serve the broader Lyrasis community?
 - Is it a common and/or shared issue for members of the Lyrasis community?
 - Is the Idea of interest to others outside of your organization?
 - Could a sustainable solution or business model evolve to support the Idea long-term?
- Does this Idea identify a well-defined problem or opportunity for Lyrasis and its members?

- Does the Idea innovatively advance an important objective of the library, archives, museum and/or complementary research communities?

Please note that the Lyrasis Senior Grants Administrator and Grants Specialist are available to meet with organizations to review concepts and grant narratives and provide feedback on your application prior to submission. Applicants are encouraged to speak with staff prior to submission. Contact catalystfund@lyrasis.org to schedule an appointment.

Lyrasis staff will review draft applications up to two weeks before the application deadline. Drafts should be sent as MS Word documents to catalystfund@lyrasis.org. Drafts are not required but are highly encouraged. Comments provided will be suggestions only and do not imply any specific outcome from the review and selection process.

The staff will continue to work with institutions and provide feedback on drafts up to one week in advance of the grant deadline but may not be able to provide a written review.

Step 3: Prepare and Submit your Idea

To submit an Idea to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund,

- A. Prepare a brief narrative description, in its final form as a PDF, following the outline described below. A MS Word template is available at the [Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website](#).
- B. Complete the online submission form and upload your Idea PDF at <https://my.lyrasis.org/s/catalyst-fund-idea>. Members will need to log in to their My Lyrasis account. Non-members can create an account if they don't have one. Once inside My Lyrasis, links to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund applications can be found in the lower left navigation.

It is best to gather and prepare the information in advance of filling out the online submission form, as you cannot save the submission form mid-process and return to it at a future time.

A. The Idea Narrative Template

Follow the template described in the table below to tell us about your Idea. The template is also offered for optional download in MS Word format through the [Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website](#).

Please follow these general guidelines in creating your description.

- Font must be 10 point or larger.
- Margins must be 0.5 inches or larger.
- The final product must be converted to a PDF for submission.

- The Idea PDF cannot exceed two pages. Any description longer than two pages will be rejected.

Within the description, address the following topics, as relevant, in the order presented.

<p>Applicant Organization: This is the name of organization submitting the Idea.</p>
<p>Idea Title: Provide a brief, relevant title for your Idea, maximum 150 characters with spaces. Note: this should be the same title used on the online submission form.</p>
<p>Idea Statement of Purpose: Provide a brief statement of the purpose of your Idea, maximum 400 characters with spaces.</p> <p>Note: If your Idea is selected by reviewers to advance to the final stage for selection by the Lyrasis Leadership Team, this Statement of Purpose is often used as an abstract to be shared in advance of discussions held by the Team, so a powerful statement is an important piece of the application.</p> <p>Note also, this should be the same text used on the online submission form.</p>
<p>Idea Description: Describe your Idea for Lyrasis. What problem, need, issue or challenge for members (libraries, archives, museums and/or complementary research communities) will it address?</p> <p>You may also want to consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the potential for the idea to serve the broad Lyrasis community?<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Is it a common and/or shared issue for members of the Lyrasis community?◦ Is the idea of interest to others outside of your organization?◦ Could a sustainable solution or business model evolve to support the idea long-term?• Does this idea identify a well-defined problem or present a well-defined opportunity for Lyrasis and its members?• Does the idea innovatively advance an important objective of the library, archives, museum and/or the complementary research communities? <p>If relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include references to any studies or reports that can further explain the issue, models from other fields, or existing work in related areas.• List other organizations that you would recommend as potential partners in researching and/or implementing the Idea.

B. The Online Submission Form

Provide the following information in the spaces provided on the online submission form at <https://my.lyrasis.org/s/catalyst-fund-idea>.

1. Name of applicant organization
 - *This should match the name at the top of the Idea Narrative described in section A. The online form allows 100 characters including spaces.*

2. Is your organization a member of Lyrasis? Are you a partner of The Palace Project, BiblioBoard or the Indie Author Project? (If yes, have you scheduled your meeting with Lyrasis Catalyst Fund staff, yet? [Y/N])
 - *Any Lyrasis member can apply.*
 - *In 2025, we continue our project to expand our applicant pool to reach additional library institutions, including public libraries. If you are a partner of The Palace Project, BiblioBoard or the Indie Author Project, you will be asked to meet with the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team to discuss your Idea before applying.*
 - *Already a [Lyrasis member](#)? No additional criteria. Lyrasis members are highly encouraged to meet with the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team but are not required to do so.*
 - *If you are not a Lyrasis member, but are a partner of The Palace Project, Biblioboard or the Indie Author Project, you are invited to apply with only one requirement: that you meet with the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team at Lyrasis to discuss your Idea before applying. The meeting will be online for approximately 30-45 minutes. This meeting will help to strengthen your application. The Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team will review, discuss and help refine your concept before you submit your application. They will also introduce you to Lyrasis, its vision, benefits and commitment to the library, archives and museum community.*
 - *If you are unsure of your organization's status, contact Member Support at membersupport@lyrasis.org.*

3. Contact Information: First and Last Names, Telephone number, Email address
 - *This is the person to whom future communications regarding the Idea will be sent. Only one contact can be listed on the online form, although others may be described in the narrative.*

4. Title for the Idea
 - *This should match the title provided in the Idea Narrative described in section A. The online form allows 150 characters including spaces.*

5. Briefly state the purpose of the Idea.
 - *This statement should match the brief statement of purpose provided at the top of the Idea Narrative described in section A. The online form allows 400 characters including spaces.*

- *Note that this statement will serve as a brief introduction to your Idea for Lyrasis Leadership Team review. **Make it interesting!***
8. Upload your PDF Idea Narrative (section A above) in the designated box.
 - *Save your document as a PDF prior to upload. Only PDFs will be accepted.*
 - *Idea descriptions longer than 2 pages will not be accepted.*
 9. Select the Submit button at the bottom of the online form.

Step 4: After Submission

You will receive a confirmation email from Lyrasis after submitting an Idea. The email will contain the information submitted, including an attachment with your PDF narrative.

Following close of the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund submission period on February 26, 2025, Ideas will be sent to multiple reviewers for evaluation according to the criteria listed above. Feedback from reviewers will be forwarded to the Lyrasis Leadership team to decide which should be included in the Research, Discovery & Impact agenda. Applicants will be notified of decisions and pending plans by Lyrasis in June or July.

If you have questions as you prepare your Idea or while it is under review, please contact us at catalystfund@lyrasis.org.