



**Instructions for Submitting a Traditional Innovation Theme  
PROPOSAL to the Catalyst Fund  
Applications Due by: February 26, 2025**

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

Through a **Proposal**, you are requesting funds to pilot a project directly. Funds will be awarded to your organization if the Proposal is selected. Your organization will be responsible for conducting the project.

If you are presenting a concept that you believe will benefit the field, but which you would like Lyrasis to research and develop, then submit an **Idea** to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund instead of a Proposal. Ideas are recommendations for Lyrasis staff to design, investigate and potentially address as new programs, services or solutions for members, and the field at large. The instructions and template for Ideas are available at the [Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website](#).

A Lyrasis member organization may be the lead applicant and submit no more than ONE Proposal and ONE Idea to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund each year.

**Step 2: Review the criteria for Traditional Innovation Theme Proposals**

Traditional Innovation Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Does this Proposal **innovatively test-and-try** a solution to a well-defined problem or explore the feasibility of a well-defined opportunity?
- Does the Proposal **advance an important objective** of the library, archives, museum and/or complementary research communities?
- What is the potential for the Proposal to **impact** and serve the broad Lyrasis community?
  - Is it a common and/or shared issue for members of the Lyrasis community?
  - Are the outputs scalable beyond a single institution?
  - Is the Proposal of interest to others outside of your organization?
- Is the plan of work appropriate to the project's goal, and is the budget reasonable and justified?

The Lyrasis Leaders Circle is interested in projects that cross organizational boundaries and engage diverse types of libraries, archives, museums and complementary research organizations in partnerships that expand the impact of innovative solutions to shared challenges. Collaboration is not a requirement but is encouraged in implementation and/or demonstrating the potential impact of your proposed project. In addition to

general applications, the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund will be accepting thematic applications specifically focused around Public Libraries.

If you wish to submit a Proposal to continue work on a project previously funded by the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund, you may apply. The application will be judged by the same criteria as others. The work on the previous Lyrasis Catalyst Fund project must be completed and the required final report submitted to Lyrasis prior to submission of a new application. In addition, the new Lyrasis Catalyst Fund submission must include a brief description of the earlier funded project's accomplishments as well as newly proposed activities.

**Please note that the Lyrasis Senior Grants Administrator and the Grants Specialist are available to meet with organizations to review concepts and narratives and provide feedback on your application prior to submission. Please contact [catalystfund@lyrasis.org](mailto:catalystfund@lyrasis.org) to schedule an appointment.**

### Step 3: Prepare and Submit your Proposal

To submit a Traditional Innovation Theme Proposal,

- A. Prepare a two-page narrative description as a PDF following the template described below. A template in MS Word format is available through the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website at <https://lyrasis.org/catalyst-fund/>.
- B. Complete the online submission form and upload your two-page Proposal PDF at <https://my.lyrasis.org/s/catalyst-fund-proposal>. 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 form mid-process and return to it at a future time.

#### **A. The Proposal Narrative**

Follow the template described in the table below to make your Proposal. The template is offered for optional download in MS Word format through the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website at <https://lyrasis.org/catalyst-fund/>.

Please follow these general guidelines in creating your narrative.

- 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 Proposal cannot exceed two pages. Proposals longer than two pages will be rejected.

- No appendices or attachments are allowed unless they fit within the two-page Proposal limit.

Within the Proposal, address topics in the order presented below.

<p><b>Applicant Organization:</b> <i>Name of organization submitting Proposal</i></p>	<p><b>Amount:</b> <i>Total \$ requested, which should match the total at the end of the budget table.</i></p>
<p><b>Proposal Title:</b> <i>Provide a brief, relevant title for your Proposal, maximum 150 characters with spaces. Note that this should be the same as used on the online submission form.</i></p>	
<p><b>Project Goal:</b> <i>Provide a brief statement of the goal or purpose of your Proposal, maximum 500 characters with spaces.</i></p> <p><b>Note:</b> <i>If your Proposal is selected by reviewers to advance to the final stage for selection by the general membership, this Statement of Purpose is often used as an abstract on the ballot, so <b>a powerful statement is an important piece of the application.</b></i></p> <p><i>Note also that this should be the same text used on the online submission form.</i></p>	
<p><b>Project Description:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the problem, need, issue or challenge that your project will address, why your project is innovative, and how it could help others or advance knowledge or practice for the field at large. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Emphasize the potential impact and how the project will benefit the Lyrasis community.</i></li> <li>• <i>Refer to related work, past or present, if relevant.</i></li> <li>• <i>If the Proposal continues work previously funded by the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund, describe how the previous project met its goals and how the new proposal builds upon earlier work.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Describe your project plan, including your objectives, activities, outputs, timeframe, resource requirements, and, if relevant, collaborators and sustainability plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Projects should start no earlier than July 1 and be completed within 12 months.</i></li> <li>• <i>Where appropriate, proposals should include a brief sustainability plan. If there are questions about how to address this, what should be considered, or whether this is relevant to your proposal, contact Lyrasis at <a href="mailto:catalystfund@lyrasis.org">catalystfund@lyrasis.org</a> for assistance.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Provide names and titles for the principal investigator(s) and other key participants in the project.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Budget:</b> <i>Complete rows in a table to list expense lines, describe the basis for budget figures and summarize line-item costs. The total of line items in the cost column</i></p>	

should be entered in the “Total Budget Request” box at the top of the narrative template.

- **Lyrasis Catalyst Funds cannot be used for overhead or capital expenditures.**
  - *Travel is estimated at \$500/coach airfare, \$400 for two hotel nights, and \$300 for out-of-pocket expenses. You may apply unused Summit travel funds to other aspects of your project’s expenses. If you anticipate that travel would exceed the figure provided, you may increase this budget line if you explain the basis for the additional anticipated cost.*
  - *Other travel expenses should be based on your organization’s policies and anticipated costs for destination(s) and days of travel.*
- *Include in the template only expenses that will be part of the award, if successful. Do NOT include any cost share from your organization in the budget template. Matching funds or cost share is not required or expected. Sample budget provided below.*

Line	Basis	Cost
<i>Consultant</i>	<i>10 days at \$1,000/day</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>
<i>Consultant Travel</i>	<i>Chicago to/from Denver for 3 days at \$400 airfare, \$450 total for hotel, and \$150 per diem</i>	<i>\$1,300</i>
<i>Total Budget</i>		<i>\$11,300</i>

## B. The Online Submission Form

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

### 1. Name of applicant organization

- *This should match the name of the organization provided at the top of the Proposal 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. Already a [Lyrasis member](#)? No additional criteria. Lyrasis members are highly encouraged to meet with Catalyst Fund project managers but not required.*
- *In 2025, we are continuing to expand our applicant pool to reach additional library institutions, including public libraries. 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: you must meet with the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team at Lyrasis to discuss your proposal before applying. The meeting will be online for approximately 30-45 minutes. In this meeting, the*

*Lyrasis Catalyst Fund team will review, discuss and help refine and strengthen your concept before 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](mailto:membersupport@lyrasis.org).*

3. Contact or Project Director: First and Last Names, Telephone number, Email address

- *This is the person to whom communications regarding the Proposal will be sent. Only one project director can be listed on the online form, although co-directors may be listed in the narrative.*

4. Title for the Proposal

- *This should match the title provided at the top of the Proposal Narrative described above in section A. The online form allows 150 characters including spaces.*

5. Briefly state the goal or purpose of the project.

- *Note that **this statement will serve as an introduction to your Proposal for Leaders Circle review.** Make this interesting!*
- *This statement should match the goal statement provided at the top of the Proposal Narrative described in section A. The online form allows a maximum of 500 characters including spaces.*

6. Total amount requested

- *This amount should match the request provided at the top of the Proposal Narrative described in Section A. Use whole U.S. dollars.*

7. Agreement to terms of awards

If the project is selected for funding, the applicant organization agrees to:

- Provide a final written report, openly accessible under a Creative Commons attribution license, for sharing with the community on the Lyrasis website.
- Present results to Lyrasis members.
- Make available any software products created with Lyrasis Catalyst Funds on a royalty-free basis according to the terms of an open source license and in an open source repository (such as GitHub).
- Be financially responsible and use the funds specifically for the project as approved.
- Communicate and/or meet regularly with Lyrasis Catalyst Fund staff during the project period.

8. Upload your 2-page PDF Proposal Narrative (section A above) in the designated box.

- *Save your document as a PDF prior to upload. Only PDFs will be accepted.*

- *Proposals 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 a Proposal. The email will contain the information provided through the online submission form and include an attachment with your PDF narrative.

Following the close of the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund submission period, proposals will be sent to multiple reviewers for evaluation according to the criteria listed above. Evaluations will be completed in April. The Lyrasis membership will make final selections in May. Applicants will be notified of results by mid-June. Project start dates should be planned for July 1.

If you have questions as you prepare your Proposal or while it is under review, please contact us at [catalystfund@lyrasis.org](mailto:catalystfund@lyrasis.org).