CATALYST AWARDS APPLICATION PACK

Committing to impact together
About Catalyst

We award £100,000 annually, supporting Fellows to test needed social change innovations and scale the social impact of their projects.

The Catalyst Awards programme is the RSA’s grant-making offer to Fellows. Each year we fund initiatives from our global Fellowship community, investing in grassroots social innovation that contribute to the RSA’s efforts to resolve the challenges of our times.

We offer two types of Catalyst Awards: £2,000 Seed Awards and £10,000 Scaling Awards.

To be eligible, you must be an RSA Fellow. Find out more about RSA Fellowship.

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SEED AWARDS (£2,000)

Seed Awards are grants for: Early-stage projects in need of a financial boost, to help them test the real-world potential and feasibility of a new innovation.

Seed Awards can be paid to: Individual Fellows or a fundable organisation (see p.6).

Seed Awards Example: Eco Medics was founded to tackle sustainability within the healthcare industry. By engaging, educating and inspiring healthcare professionals, Eco Medics is building a network of individuals who can implement tried-and-tested projects in their local departments, which will in turn drive institutional changes that place the health of our planet alongside the health of its patients.

SCALING AWARDS (£10,000)

Scaling Awards are grants for: Growing projects that have already made a proven difference, to help them scale. By scale we mean, reaching new beneficiaries, deepening impact with existing beneficiaries, or exploring ways of becoming more financially sustainable.

Scaling Awards can only be paid to: A fundable organisation aligned with the RSA’s charitable objectives (see p.6).

Scaling Awards Example: Omnifolio uses in-depth profiling and job-matching to help people change careers more easily, vital given the occupational displacement being caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. They are currently scaling usage to gather enough data to validate their psychometrics, algorithms and jobs library as well as develop and support a community of practice.
RSA funding priorities

We welcome all applications aligned with the RSA’s charitable aims, which we explore through our focus areas:

- **Future of Work**
- **Regenerative Futures**
- **Learning**

We prioritise these applications because we have found that we are best placed to support and collaborate with projects that are aligned with our focus. We also believe we can make the most impact by strategically investing in the areas where the RSA has laid strong foundations.

We do not aim to be prescriptive about how a project addresses an RSA focus area, but strong applications will clearly address the area vision and approach, as set out in the following pages.

As part of the application form, you will need to select the focus area you are applying under.

Our ambitions

**Our vision**

A world where everyone is able to participate in creating a better future

**Our purpose**

Uniting people and ideas to resolve the challenges of our time

**We are**

A global community of proactive problem solvers
Future of Work focus area

Does your project contribute to ensuring good work for everyone in an age of technological change and rising economic insecurity?

By good work we mean work that allows an individual’s wellbeing to flourish, enables growth in their capabilities, affirms their sense of identity, allows them the freedom to live a larger life outside of work; and can still deliver the material security that allows them to participate equally in society.

Many people already enjoy good work – but many do not. If your project tackles barriers which get in the way of marginalised groups or communities accessing good work, or navigating the challenges and opportunities of automation and AI, you’re likely aligned with our Future of Work focus area.

Your project might relate to giving workers a stronger voice in their workplace or empowering workers around the data collected about them. Equally, we are interested in projects that try to build a more resilient safety net for workers and improve their skills or learning opportunities. We are also particularly interested in projects that seek to make sure marginalised groups have power and agency in the workplace in the first place.

However, if your project relates to the Future of Work in a different way, we are still excited to hear about your ideas. Read our page, ‘Future of Work’ for more information about the RSA’s work in this area.

Regenerative Futures focus area

Does your project contribute to creating a future that enables people and the environment to thrive together?

If your project affirms social and environmental outcomes as interconnected and part of a whole, and sees place, identity, democratic participation, and multiple perspectives as essential to success, you’re likely aligned with our Regenerative Futures focus area.

Your project might relate to climate change, circular and sustainable economies, restoring or revitalising communities and places. If your project relates to Regenerative Futures in a different way, we are still excited to hear about your ideas.

Read our page, ‘Regenerative Futures’ for more information about the RSA’s work in this area.
Learning focus area

Does your project contribute to a learning system – in schools, communities, workplaces and beyond – that supports individuals and communities to flourish? Does it take a wide and generous view of success and achievement, and consider a diverse range of routes for contributing to society?

Your project can work with learners of any age, both in and outside of formal education, but it will focus on the broader purpose of education as developing individuals’ capability and agency, as well as strengthening communities. This broader purpose will mean that you will need to bring together a range of stakeholders from across the system to help change it for the better.

Your project might make use of innovative means to build new communities of learning in a place. It might address inequalities in existing institutions, for example, focussing on individuals or communities who are underserved or excluded. Or it might attempt to widen the curricula available to learners.

Read our page, ‘Cities of Learning’ for more information about the RSA’s work on lifelong learning, and see the RSA’s work on school exclusions and social action in primary schools.
Am I eligible?

As a registered charity in the UK, the RSA can only fund projects for exclusively charitable purposes as defined by the UK Charity Commission.

To satisfy this, your project must:

• Benefit the public in general, or a sufficient section of the public - what is a ‘sufficient section of the public’ varies from purpose to purpose;

• Not give rise to more than incidental personal benefit (to an individual or organisation) - personal benefit is ‘incidental’ where (having regard both to its nature and to its amount) it is a necessary result or by-product of carrying out the purpose.

For more information on what is considered charitable, please see the UK Charity Commission’s pages on charitable purpose and public benefit.

Please note, we do not fund applications for one-off events or applications for supporting ongoing business costs.

We accept applications from Fellows globally. Depending on the award type, applications can be made on their own behalf as an individual, or on behalf of a fundable organisation.

SEED AWARDS

• Can be paid to individual Fellows who will carry out the work themselves and be directly accountable to the RSA for the work undertaken.

• Can be paid to fundable organisations.

SCALING AWARDS

• Cannot be paid to individual Fellows.

• Must be paid directly to a fundable organisation.
Am I eligible? continued

Is my organisation fundable?

NON-PROFITS AND CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS
Generally always fundable. when listed on the applicable national register and with an aligned non-profit governance structure akin to the charity structure within the UK. Please include your organisation’s registration details (e.g. charity registration number) for the relevant national register.

COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY (‘CIC’)
Generally always fundable. Please include your organisation’s registration details (e.g. company registration number) for the relevant national register, and include a brief paragraph outlining its governance arrangements. We may request a copy of the organisation’s constitution.

COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE (‘CLG’)
Sometimes fundable, when there is a lock-in clause requiring that profits go to a charitable cause and that assets cannot be divested, except those that have been included in the articles of incorporation. Please include your organisation’s registration information (e.g. company registration number) for the relevant national register, and include a brief paragraph outlining its governance arrangements. We may request a copy of the organisation’s constitution.

COMPANY LIMITED BY SHARES (‘CLS’)
Almost never fundable, unless a registered social enterprise. Please contact the Catalyst team in advance to check your organisation’s eligibility and include a copy of the organisation’s constitution and a brief paragraph outlining its governance arrangements.

ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
Fundability confirmed on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Catalyst team in advance to check your organisation’s eligibility and include a copy of the organisation’s constitution and a brief paragraph outlining its governance arrangements.

Examples of alternative governance structures include industrial and provident community benefit societies, and industrial and provident cooperative societies.
What do we fund?

Applications for both Seed and Scaling Awards should provide a clearly allocated and clearly justified budget. This should be a detailed budget breakdown, itemising all costs. Please note we fund projects, not core costs.

**Clearly allocated**

The budget should total either £2,000 or £10,000, and include:

- **Income**. Please detail any income from other funders if applicable, including a description of what they are funding.

- **Expenditure**. Please include a line for each cost and label it clearly, providing a calculation if necessary (e.g. day rates or monthly costs). It can be helpful to break spending down by type, for example, into staff costs, activity costs (e.g. publishing/printing, room hire) and operational costs (e.g. software subscriptions, evaluation).

We understand that plans change. If you need to change how you spend your budget by more than £250 during your project, you must speak to the Catalyst team.

**Clearly justified**

The costs in the budget should clearly relate to the project activities described in the application.

There is a field in the application for entering additional detail that demonstrates costs are fair and accurate (e.g. local day rates, quotes from contractors, etc). You may submit additional attachments by email if needed.

If any of the following expenses are included, please take extra care to justify them as integral to the project rather than as ongoing business costs:

- **Travel**.
- **Website development**.
- **Equipment**.
- **Films or books**. These should have a public reach beyond the duration of a grant; there should be a life to the project beyond the production of the film or book.
- **Salaries**. We fund projects rather than core costs, meaning that applications with over 50% of the grant budget dedicated to salaries are rarely successful.
- **Marketing campaigns and associated printing costs**. Applications with over 50% of the grant budget dedicated to marketing are rarely successful.
How we assess applications

Our priorities when assessing applications are **Impact**, **Alignment** and **Suitability**. For each criteria, we have a number of sub-criteria that are scored on a scale of 1-3 based on the responses in the application form. A score of ‘1’ means that the criteria is not met, and a ‘3’ means that a criterion is strongly met.

The highest scoring applications are those that demonstrate all three criteria strongly.

The detailed criteria are as follows:

**Impact**

- The project clearly outlines the issue it addresses and who it would benefit.
- There are clear outcomes defined for assessing the project’s impact.
- The project team have the capability and capacity to deliver the intended impact.

*Note:* we consider partnerships as part of this criterion.

**Alignment**

- The project contributes to the RSA’s focus areas.
- Catalyst grant funding will make a clear difference to the project.
- It is clear why the RSA is well-suited to fund and support this particular project.

**Suitability**

- The expenditure provided is clear, fair and justified.

*Seed Awards:* There is a clear plan to test the feasibility of a new innovation.

*Scaling Awards:* There is clear evidence of an existing impact and how it would be scaled.
How we assess applications continued

We review all eligible applications against our standard application criteria, which help us find suitable, aligned, and impactful projects. Applications are reviewed by both a shortlisting panel and a decisions panel.

**STEP 1**

Our **Catalyst team** reviews the applications to make sure they are all eligible under our guidelines.

**STEP 2**

A shortlisting panel made up of RSA staff reviews applications and marks them against the criteria. The shortlisting panel discusses all applications and makes initial recommendations.

**STEP 3**

The decision panel reviews the recommendations, deliberates, and agrees final Award decisions. The decision panel is made up of a mix of individuals from the RSA Community, including Fellowship Councillors, Fellows, RSA staff and participants in other RSA Programmes.

Feedback on our processes

The Catalyst programme is overseen and run by the fund programme manager working with service administrators and other colleagues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open</th>
<th>Always transparent and honest, we welcome new thinking and different perspectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>We are confident that together, we can resolve the challenges of our time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneering</td>
<td>We champion curiosity, creativity and courage to inspire better ways of thinking and doing</td>
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<td>Rigorous</td>
<td>Rooted in evidence-led thinking, we act with integrity and purpose</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabling</td>
<td>Through generosity and collaboration, we help others succeed</td>
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We are committed to continuous improvement and value any feedback that might help us improve our processes. We also collect feedback from applications and our grantees to this end, a practice that we are continuously developing.

We aim to conduct ourselves and the programme by the RSA’s values. If you would like to highlight a good experience, report a problem, or make a complaint about the Catalyst process, we encourage you to contact the **Catalyst team** directly.

If you remain dissatisfied, there is also an **RSA complaints procedure** that can be found here.
How to apply

1 Confirm your Fellowship number and email address

To apply, you’ll need your Fellowship number and the email address we currently hold for you so that we can link your Catalyst application to your account.

Confirm both of these under the ‘My Account’ section of MyRSA. You can also call us on +44 (0)20 7451 6895 or email catalyst@rsa.org.uk.

2 Use the ‘practice’ forms to draft your applications

Practice forms for both Seed and Scaling Awards can be found on the Catalyst webpage. Once complete, responses can be copied directly into the application portal. Please note that most fields have a clearly marked character limit (which includes spaces). A character limit is provided on the practice application form as well as on the portal.

3 Complete and submit your application through the Catalyst portal

A link to the Catalyst application portal can be found on our Catalyst webpage during application rounds. If you have recently submitted a Catalyst grant application, you can log in using your existing details.

If this is the first time you are submitting a Catalyst application, choose the ‘Sign Up’ option and create new credentials so that you can access the application portal.

4 As a reminder,

Please check the following before submitting:

• If you are applying on behalf of an organisation, please ensure it is fundable.
• That you have provided a clear and detailed budget (this is the most common reason we disqualify projects).
• You are certain your project addresses an RSA focus area.
• You are certain your project fits the description of a Seed or Scaling Award.
• Your project has clear public benefit.
Timeline - March 2022 to June 2022

11th March
Catalyst Awards applications open

8th April
Catalyst Awards applications close at 23:59 GMT

April & May
Shortlisting and decision panels

June
Decisions are announced to applicants

In the event that we need to make any changes to the timeline for any reason, we will notify all applicants by email.
Contact the Catalyst team

You can reach the Catalyst team by email at catalyst@rsa.org.uk or by phone on +44 (0)20 7451 6895