



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 projects.

The Catalyst Awards programme is the RSA's grantmaking offer to Fellows. Each year we fund initiatives from our global Fellowship community, investing in our potential to drive measurable social impact in resolving the challenges of our times.

We offer two levels 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**.



SEED GRANTS (£2,000)

Seed Awards are grants for: Early-stage projects in need of a financial boost, to help them develop into sustainable projects with the potential to deliver measurable social impact.

Seed Awards are intended to offer: The opportunity to test an idea, with a view to evaluating their project and actively collecting evidence of proof of concept. By proof of concept, we mean that there is documented evidence that the potential project, product or service can have a positive social impact.

Seed grants can be paid to: Individual Fellows or a fundable organisation.

SCALING GRANTS (£10,000)

Scaling Awards are grants for: Established projects that have clearly demonstrated their proof of concept to help them scale and grow.

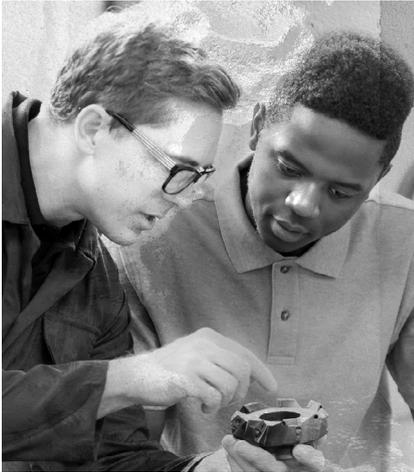
Scaling Awards are intended to offer: A financial boost to help projects become sustainable and/or replicable in order to increase their positive social impact, with strong plans in place to measure and evaluate impact.

Applicants should demonstrate a clear strategy for growth, including a clearly identified market, reasons why this audience will use and benefit from the project, service or product, and a clear understanding of the activities required to bring the project to its next stage.

Scaling Awards can only be paid to: A fundable organisation aligned with the RSA's charitable objectives.

RSA Funding Priorities

We welcome all applications aligned with the RSA's charitable aims, explored through our Impact Programmes (**Future of Work, Regenerative Futures, A Learning Society**) and **projects**. Please see the following pages for more information on our Impact Programmes.



We will prioritise applications;

- broadly aligned with our Impact Programmes and projects, and
- where RSA support is integral to the aim of the project.

By RSA support, we mean our people (Fellows and staff), networks, social media and communication platforms, our research and more.

We prioritise these projects because we believe that through aligned collaboration we will best achieve our ambitions of wider systems change. Strong applications will demonstrate the contribution their projects will make towards the broader visions of the relevant RSA projects or programmes.

If your project doesn't directly align with our current Impact Programmes or projects, please don't be deterred from applying at the **Seed Award** level. We are always looking for strong, timely applications tackling a broad range of current challenges.

£100,000

Awarded annually

£2,000

Each Seed Award

£10,000

Each Scaling Award

Future of Work programme

Does your project contribute to ensuring good work for everyone, especially in an age of technological change?



By **good work** we mean work that allows an individual's **wellbeing** to flourish, enables **growth** in their capabilities, **nurtures** their sense of identity, grants them the **freedom** to live a larger life; and delivers 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 in accessing good work, or navigates the challenges and opportunities of automation and AI, you're likely aligned with our **Future of Work programme**.

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 learning opportunities. If your project relates to the **Future of Work** in a different way, we are excited to hear about your ideas.

See our report '**A blueprint for good work**' for more information about the RSA's work in this area.

Regenerative Futures programme

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 programme**.

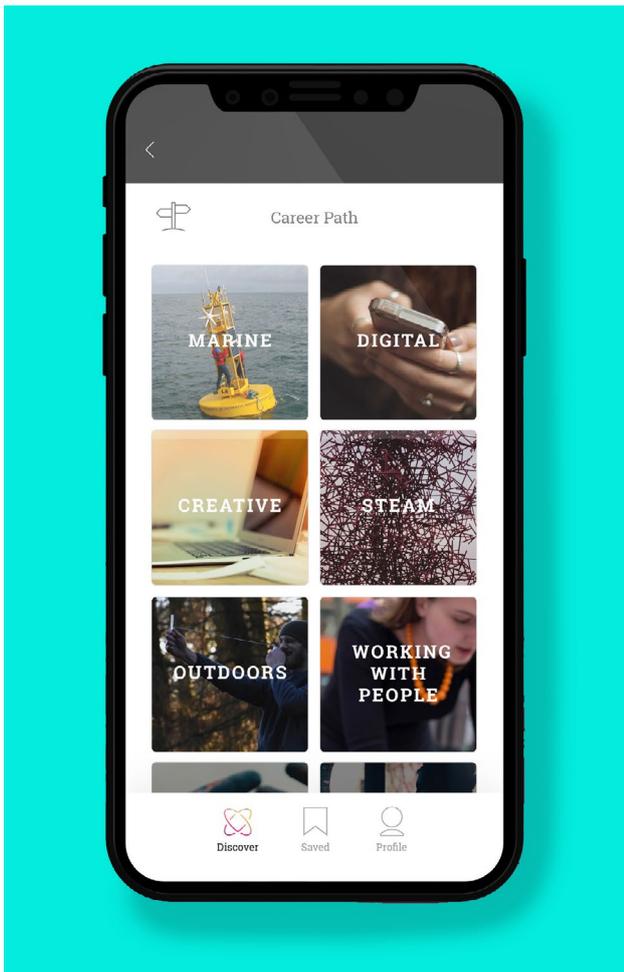
Your project might relate to climate change, circular and sustainable economies, restoring or revitalising communities and places. If your project relates to Regenerative Futures in a different way, we are excited to hear about your ideas.

Read our page, '**Regenerative Futures**' for more information about the RSA's work in this area.



Learning Society programme

Does your project help to enable and recognise learning outside of traditional structures? Does your project work with learners of any age who have not thrived in formal education? Do you have a project that ties learning to the needs of the place you live?



Projects that align with the **Learning Society programme** will likely have a place-based focus and be learner-centred. Your project might use innovative means to build ecosystems or communities of learning. There could be a strong digital element to the work, but it is not a platform or online-only solution.

Part of our aim is to build communities of practice and innovation capabilities within the lifelong learning sector, so we particularly appreciate projects with openness, transparency and collaboration baked into their approaches.



Eligibility

WHAT KINDS OF PROJECTS CAN CATALYST FUND?

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, projects 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 - 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**.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

We accept applications from Fellows globally, who may make an application on their own behalf as an individual or on behalf of a fundable organisation (please see the following page).

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;
- or fundable organisations.

Scaling Awards:

- Cannot be paid to individual Fellows.
- Must be paid directly to the Fellow's organisation delivering the project, which must be structured as one of our fundable organisations.

What organisations can receive funding?

Please check that your organisation is eligible and include the requested details in your application.

NON-PROFITS AND CHARITABLE ORGANISATIONS

Generally always eligible, 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 eligible. 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 eligible, 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 eligible, 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

Eligibility 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 project costs can be covered?

Applications for both **Seed** and **Scaling Awards** should provide a clearly allocated and justified budget breakdown for the specific costs the Catalyst funding will be applied to. Budget can be used towards covering project monitoring and evaluation costs.

CLEARLY ALLOCATED

The budget should total either £2,000 or £10,000.

Each line item should include the amount of funding allocated to it (e.g. 'Printing studio time, eco-friendly paper and inks for zines - £500').

Bear in mind that if you need to change how you allocate the funding from your initial application by £250 or more, this must be discussed with the Catalyst Fund Programme Manager in advance.

CLEARLY JUSTIFIED

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

Explain why these specific costs are integral to the project's success and impact (also see '**What project costs can be covered?**')

Include relevant detail that demonstrates costs are fair and accurate (e.g. local day rates, quotes from contractors, etc). You may submit additional attachments if needed.

If any of the following expenses are included, please take extra care to justify them as integral to the success of the project:

- 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 - 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.

Panels will be looking to ensure that they do not reflect ongoing business costs, which are generally not fundable, and clearly contribute to the project achieving sustainable social impact.

PAYMENTS

Please be aware payments are made differently for **Seed** and **Scaling Awards**:

Seed Awards are paid in a lump sum at the beginning of the project and should generally be spent within 12 months from the award date.

Scaling Awards are paid across 4 tranches and should generally be spent within 18 months from the award date. An initial payment of up to £2,500 is made upon accepting the Award, the remaining funding is paid across 3 payment tranches upon submission of evidence required to release the next payment. The payment schedule and evidence details are agreed between the grantee and Catalyst Fund Programme Manager upon the Award offer.

Criteria

At both the shortlisting and decisions panels, applications will be assessed against the following criteria:



Impact

Does the project outline the issue it addresses, and its potential for social impact?

Is there an appropriate plan for measuring and evaluating the project's impact?

Is there a viable plan for the idea or project to be sustained beyond the period of the grant?



Alignment

Will the project contribute towards the vision of current RSA projects or programmes?

Will Catalyst grant funding make a clear difference?
Is it clear why the RSA is well-suited to fund and support this particular project?

Does the project empower marginalised voices, take a regenerative approach, or demonstrate systems thinking?



Suitability

Is the project clearly not for profit or personal benefit?

Is the budget breakdown clear? Are the costs fair and justified?

Seed Awards: Is it clear what the applicant is seeking to trial or test?

Scaling Awards: Has the applicant provided 'proof of concept' - evidence that the potential product or service can be impactful, and given reason to believe this can be successfully scaled and sustained?

The Assessment Process

Your work will be evaluated against the **criteria** in a two-stage process consisting of a shortlisting panel and a decisions panel.

1

STEP 1

Firstly, a shortlisting panel reviews all applications and marks them against the criteria. The shortlisting panel discusses all applications and makes initial recommendations. The shortlisting panel is comprised of RSA staff.

2

STEP 2

The decision panel reviews the recommendations, deliberates and agrees final Award decisions. The decision panel is mainly comprised of Fellowship Councillors and Fellows and may include invited members of the RSA community to ensure a diversity of perspectives.

The Catalyst process is managed by the Catalyst Fund Programme Manager working with Service Administrators and other colleagues in the organisation. The Catalyst Fund Programme Manager facilitates both the shortlisting and decision panels.

Catalyst Process Feedback

We commit to continuous improvement and living the **RSA's values**.

Open	Always transparent and honest, we welcome new thinking and different perspectives	<p>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.</p> <p>You are also welcome to go through the RSA complaints procedure if you feel more comfortable.</p>
Optimistic	We are confident that together, we can resolve the challenges of our time	
Pioneering	We champion curiosity, creativity and courage to inspire better ways of thinking and doing	
Rigorous	Rooted in evidence-led thinking, we act with integrity and purpose	
Enabling	Through generosity and collaboration, we help others succeed	

How to apply



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.



Use the practice forms to draft your applications

The practice Seed and Scaling forms for your round are available to download on the [Catalyst Award webpage](#).

Please note that most fields have a clearly marked character limit, including spaces in the count. If your responses go over the character limit, the page will reload with a red error message under the relevant fields prompting you to reduce your input.

Some formatting elements (e.g. bullet point lists) may add invisible characters that increase your character count when copied over. To avoid frustration, we recommend drafting or checking your answers in a simple text editor to ensure your character count is accurate.



Complete and submit your application through the Catalyst portals

Go to the Catalyst application portal which appears on the main [Catalyst webpage](#) when rounds are open. If you have recently submitted a Catalyst grant application, you can log in using your 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.

Timeline - September 2021 to January 2022

27th

September

Catalyst Awards open to applications

25th

October

Catalyst Awards close to applications at 23:59pm BST

November & December

Shortlisting and decision panels

21st

January

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**](mailto:catalyst@rsa.org.uk)
or by phone on +44 (0)20 7451 6895