Instructions for Submitting a Public Library Theme PROPOSAL to the Lyrasis 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 investigate and potentially address as new programs, services or solutions for members. The instructions and template for Ideas are available on the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund website at Lyrasis.org/catalyst-fund.

An organization may be the lead applicant and submit no more than ONE proposal and ONE idea to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund in a single year. In 2025, we are continuing to reach out to 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 the 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 available to meet with applicants after **February 20, 2025**.

Step 2: Review the criteria for Proposals

Public Library Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- What is the potential or ongoing impact for the proposal to serve the public library community?
  - Is it a common and/or shared issue for members of the Lyrasis public library community?
  - Is this a model other public libraries could follow?
  - Is the proposal of interest to others outside of your organization?
- Does this proposal provide a solution to a well-defined problem or opportunity?
- Does the proposal advance an important objective of the public library community?
- Is the plan of work appropriate to the proposal's goal(s), and the budget reasonable and justified?

All applications will be evaluated on the strength of the need/case statements and how well results can be adapted and used in initiatives serving 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 receive no special consideration and 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 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. Applicants are encouraged to speak with staff prior to submission. Contact catalystfund@lyrasis.org to schedule an appointment.

Lyrasis Catalyst Fund staff will also review draft applications up to February 20. 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.

Step 3: Prepare and Submit your Proposal

To submit a 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 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 Catalyst Fund website at 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.

Applicant Organization: Name of organization submitting Proposal	**Amount**: *Total $ requested, which should match the total at the end of the budget table.*

Proposal Title: 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.

Project Goal: Provide a brief statement of the goal or purpose of your Proposal, maximum 500 characters with spaces.

Note: If your Proposal is selected by reviewers to advance to the final stage for selection by the Leaders Circle, this Statement of Purpose is often used as an abstract on the ballot, so **a powerful and engaging statement is an important piece of the application.** Note also that this should be the same text used on the online submission form.

Project Description:
1. Describe the problem, need, issue or challenge that your project will address.
2. What is the potential or ongoing impact for the proposal to serve the public library community?
   - Is it a common and/or shared issue for members of the Lyrasis public library community?
   - Is this a model other public libraries could follow?
   - Is the proposal of interest to others outside of your organization?
3. Describe your project plan, including your objectives, activities, outputs, timeframe, resource requirements, and, if relevant, partners or collaborators.
   Note: Projects should start no earlier than July 1, 2025, and be completed within 12 months.
4. Provide names and titles for the principal investigator(s) and other key participants in the project.

Budget: 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 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. ([See FAQ.](#))***
- 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
Consultant	*10 days at $1,000/day*	*$10,000*
Consultant Travel	*Chicago to/from Denver for 3 days at $400 airfare, $450 total hotel, and $150 per diem*	*$1,300*
Total Budget		*$11,300*

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])

   - ***Note:*** *Only Lyrasis members may apply to the Lyrasis Catalyst Fund. However, in 2025, we continue to expand our applicant pool to reach additional library institutions beyond current members to include more public libraries. If you are a partner of The Palace Project, BiblioBoard or the Indie Author Project, regardless of membership,* you are *eligible to apply but will need to meet with Lyrasis Catalyst Fund staff before submitting your application.* Reach out to Catalystfund@lyrasis.org to schedule your meeting.

   - *If you are unsure of your organization's status, contact Member Support at 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 reviewers and Lyrasis members who may vote to fund the project. **Remember to 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 at the end of the grant period when work is complete, openly accessible under a Creative Commons attribution license, for sharing with the community on the Lyrasis Institutional Repository.
   - 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.
   - Lyrasis will provide a one-year membership to any non-member grant recipient as part of any grant award.

8. Upload your 2-page PDF Proposal Narrative (section A above) in the designated box.
   - Save your document as a PDF prior to the 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 your 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 Catalyst Fund submission period, Proposals will be sent to multiple reviewers for evaluation according to the criteria listed above. Evaluations will be completed between April and May. 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.