

## Catalyst Network Support Pilot: Selection Guide for Organizations

### Purpose of the Pilot

The Catalyst Network Support Pilot tests a model where trusted backbone organizations serve as connectors and co-designers for supporting community organizations. It focuses on local capacity needs, readiness, and sustainable resources for lasting impact.

### What we want to learn

This pilot explores local organizations' TA needs and contributes to learning about what "readiness" means for effective support. By working with network partners, we aim to identify key elements that enable organizations to thrive and build long-term capacity.

### Readiness and criteria to apply

To participate in the pilot, backbone organizations demonstrated readiness and alignment with the following criteria:

- **Leadership capacity**  
Commitment from an executive-level leader to oversee the work and ensure alignment with organizational priorities.
- **Prioritization of capacity building**  
Demonstrated focus on addressing community impact needs through capacity building.
- **Commitment to engagement**  
Agreement to contribute to collaborative learning efforts.
- **Wallet contribution**  
Willingness to co-fund capacity-building efforts through budget allocation or other funding arrangements.
- **Mission alignment**  
Alignment with the pilot's goal of building capacity to drive community-level outcomes such as economic mobility and educational success.

### Expectations for Network Partners

To participate in the pilot, organizations will need to meet the following expectations:

1. **Participate in Catalyst's capacity advising & scoping process**  
Engage in Catalyst's advising process to identify organizational needs so that leaders can access expert guidance and hands-on support.



2. **Attend monthly learning calls with Catalyst**  
Participate in regular learning sessions to share insights and ensure alignment with the Catalyst team.
3. **Be ready and committed to addressing organizational needs through TA support**  
Executive-level leadership must demonstrate capacity and commitment to engage in at least one TA project during the course of the pilot.

## How to participate

To get started, follow these steps:

1. **Review the selection criteria**
  - The selection process will assess the alignment of your organization's needs and capacity with the TA pilot.
2. **Submit your application**
  - Complete the application to express your interest in participating, ensuring that your organization meets the outlined criteria.
3. **Receive confirmation**
  - After UP finalizes its selection of partner sites, Catalyst will notify selected organizations.

## Key dates to remember

- Application period: February 13-28, 2025
- Selection announcements: March 17, 2025
- Pilot kickoff: March 25, 2025 at 2pm
- Monthly learning calls: Ongoing, through project's completion (~10 hrs/month)

## Contact information

If you have any questions or need assistance with the application process, please reach out to Emily Calderon Galdeano, Interim CEO at [emily@uppartnership.org](mailto:emily@uppartnership.org). For general questions or to learn about Catalyst's technical assistance advising and network, reach out to [partnerships@catalyst-ed.org](mailto:partnerships@catalyst-ed.org).



## Scoring Rubric

Criteria	High (3 pts)	Moderate (2 pts)	Low (1 pt)
<b>Readiness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulates capacity growth area(s) &amp; implications of need</li> <li>Organization leadership plans to participate in program and/or is clearly supportive of participation</li> <li>Participating staff is in the right position to lead change in the capacity area (i.e., Development Director for fundraising capacity building)</li> <li>Clear understanding of how change will be enacted and who will participate in change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat able to articulate capacity growth area(s) &amp; implications of need</li> <li>Organization leadership somewhat supportive of participation but not specific or elaborate fully how</li> <li>Participating staff is in the right position to lead change in the capacity area (i.e., Development Director for fundraising capacity building)</li> <li>Moderate understanding of how change will be enacted and who will participate in change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weak articulation of capacity growth area(s) &amp; implications of need</li> <li>Not clear if organization leadership is supportive of this effort</li> <li>Participating staff is not the appropriate person to lead the effort</li> <li>Minimal or no understanding of how change will be enacted and who will participate in change</li> </ul>

<b>Willingness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly states an organization-level commitment to engage fully in process</li> <li>Clear, specific steps for high-level execution plan</li> <li>Clear understanding of how to sustain changes necessary to address capacity area</li> <li>History of capacity building or seeking capacity building support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Somewhat states an organization-level commitment to engage fully in process</li> <li>Identifies steps for high-level execution plan but not clear or specific</li> <li>Moderate understanding of how to sustain changes necessary to address capacity area</li> <li>No history of capacity building or seeking capacity building support but demonstrates interest in this opportunity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal or no organization-level commitment to engage fully in process</li> <li>Does not identify steps for high-level execution plan</li> <li>Minimal or no understanding of how to sustain changes necessary to address capacity area</li> <li>No history of capacity building or seeking capacity building</li> </ul>
<b>Ability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear ability to commit required time</li> <li>Org clearly has appropriate number and expertise of staff for effort</li> <li>Zero to minimal challenges named and no know conflicts stated or known by UP selection team; or challenges named but plan to avoid them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some ability to commit required time</li> <li>Org generally has appropriate number and expertise of staff for effort</li> <li>Some challenges named and no know conflicts stated or known by UP selection team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited staff capacity based on UP understanding of org and application response</li> <li>Obvious challenges; question not answered sufficiently</li> </ul>

