Clearer Thinking Regrants for Unjournal

If you have an idea or project that you think could have a big positive impact on the future of the world, we'd love for you to apply to the Clearer Thinking Regrants program!

You can apply as an individual, on behalf of a team, on behalf of a not-for-profit organization, or on behalf of a for-profit startup. In order for us to consider regranting funding to you, the only absolute requirements are that your project ***has to***...

- Be an altruistic effort aiming to substantially improve the future of the world, and
- Be unlikely to have a frisk of substantially harming the world.

We are ***unlikely*** to fund your project if...

- It is designed to be local or small in scope, or
- There is not a sufficiently plausible mechanism by which your project might one day greatly benefit the future of humanity.

The minimum grant size we will regrant to any projects selected is $10,000, and the maximum possible award we could conceivably regrant to any project is $500,000.

This first round of the application process is designed to take just 20 minutes to complete and is intended to be done in a single sitting.

Please complete this application by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on July 22nd, 2022. If your project is selected during this first round of the process, there will be two (and in some cases three) further rounds of evaluation that will be more time-intensive. Note: if your project is a startup or for-profit company, any funding given will be as an investment on the same terms as other investors rather than a grant.

You can learn more about ClearerThinking.org here. This grant program is made possible by the FTX Future Fund's regranting program.

In this application, you'll be asked to:

Specify which of a list of cause areas your project is most relevant to

> **Improving sense-making** (e.g., prediction markets, combating misinformation, synthesizing information, etc.)

Complete the following sentences - **keeping each response to 1 sentence** whenever possible, and not exceeding 3 sentences for any question (except for the one about the mechanism of impact, which can be up to 5 sentences):

A brief name you can use to refer to my project is...

The Unjournal

The activities that my project involves are...

Organizing and funding credible, quantitative, public, journal-independent evaluation of research in a range of formats, focusing on work that is highly relevant to global priorities (initially in economics, social science, and impact evaluation).

- The group or population that will benefit from this project is...

Humans and animals now and in the future. Unjournal aims to make research more efficient, more impactful, better communicated, and more collaborative (e.g., sharing data and tools). Aligned researchers and policymakers will 'benefit' by being able and incentivized to do their work better, leading to global public benefits.

- This project is important because I believe it will lead to...

... better and more impactful research. We will make it easier for global-priorities-relevant researchers to get feedback and credible ratings on their work. We hope to transform academia: P*ublic evaluation and improvement* of hosted work should replace "dance your way through the journal game to try to 'win' as many publications as possible".

- The mechanism by which I expect my project will achieve these positive outcomes is as follows:

1. Assemble a team of interested and qualified academics and practitioners to agree on a reasonable going-forward set of rules, processes, tasks, and a platform. [Mainly done]
2. Pilot: Identify/solicit most relevant and valuable work that seems to have been under-evaluated or under-promoted, identify 'evaluators' and pay them to write, publish evaluations and quantitative ratings (somewhat benchmarked against traditional publication tiers/outcomes/metrics). [In process]
3. Publicize and promote these projects (papers) and evaluations, award prizes for the best work, host a presentation seminar, and convince academics and institutions to 'submit work to Unjournal first/in addition', while getting further feedback on how to adjust our processes.
4. Build the credibility and prestige of Unjournal by tracking the impact and 'publication success' of the highest-rated Unjournal projects, getting more buy-in and participation from academic leaders, policymakers, and grantmakers... leading Unjournal (and related evaluation systems) to ultimately replace traditional journals.
5. More efficient and better research and evaluation processes (transparency, less publication-gaming, emphasizing global impact, etc.) leads to positive scientific advancement, better policy making, and better philanthropy, reducing existential risk, and improving human and animal welfare.

- (OPTIONAL) In the future, I expect the most important indicators to see if my project is succeeding will be...

Achieving the concrete milestones laid out HERE, including:

- The number of papers/projects we evaluate, the relevance of this work to global priorities, and the quality/informativeness/usefulness of the evaluations,
- whether high-quality impactful researchers submit work to the Unjournal,

- whether institutions (universities, policymakers, grantmakers) place value on our ratings (references and citations, mentions in tenure cases and grants), and
- whether the EA community (e.g., on the EA Forum, in Open Philanthropy reports) engages with these evaluations and finds them useful.

I am (or my team and I are) especially well-suited to implement this project because…

Our team, including our Founding committee, has a strong background in academia and academic research, global priorities/EA, open science/open access publishing, meta-science, and policy, spanning a range of fields (Economics, Psychology, Political Science, Biology) and professional involvement (academia, nonprofits/EA, open science organizations, policy institutions).

For example, I have 15+ years teaching and doing research in economics (including interdisciplinary work), I have worked at Rethink Priorities for over 1.5 years, and I am active on the EA Forum, involved in projects with 80k, GWWC, and QURI), and Open Science (BITSS catalyst, board of Scientific Data).

Another example: Daniel Lakens' is the top-cited (Google Scholar) author with `label:meta_science`; his work focuses on how to design and interpret studies, applied (meta)-statistics, and reward structures in science, and he co-founded Red Team Market.

If space permits…

Gavin Taylor is Board Member & Head of Grant Managment at the Institute for Globally Distributed Open Research and Education, and has worked for Rethink Priorities, Clare Conry-Murray is on the board of the Society for the Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS) and an Associate Editor at Collabra (open access journal), Daniel Lakens - an open science advocate, completing research with the Open Science Collaboration and the Peer Reviewers' Openness Initiative)

Some suggestions?: highly experienced and diverse background on the founding committee, for example psychology, economics etc in academia and in industry. All have a previous interest or experience in open science (shows passion in the project)

Criteria for final choices

1. 'Understand the project'; but also consider people willing to offer constructive criticism;
    a. Somewhat subjective, I am not going to offer a quiz
2. Credible that they can commit some time and energy to this (CV shows a record of following through, convincing application) … somewhat subjective
3. Key skills and knowledge … including: Communications and writing, operations and managing processes, broad knowledge of academic fields, knowledge/experience in research management and publication contexts, bibliometrics and incentive mechanisms, etc
4. Prominence in the profession and relevant fields (I will try to give fairly objective measures)
5. "Diversity": We need people representing the range of fields and professional backgrounds relevant to this project, including academic fields, open science, publishing/biblio/library/management, and EA. Other forms of diversity (gender, life-experience) may also be given some weight.
6. Avoid COI/insularity (try not to choose only people I have a close link to)

If this project gets funded but **doesn't** achieve its desired outcomes, the **most likely** reason would be…

Some combination of two mutually reinforcing things:

1. Authors and institutions 'refuse to engage' (authors don't want us to review their work, are hostile to our evaluations; perhaps because of strong risk-aversion and conformity pressures), and universities and policymakers ignore them
2. we have a hard time getting good reviewers, and the evaluations are non-informative, overly flattering, or show lack of expertise or a lack of effort.

If I suddenly had an extra $10,000 for my project (e.g., if I was awarded it from this application I'm completing now), I (or we) would be most likely to spend it on...

- Increasing the payments to reviewers from $250 to say, $400 (as people have commented that the fee is a bit on the low side),
- Hire a few people/pay for the time of editors/paper managers,
- Increase the 'best paper prizes' a bit,

Copied from unsuccessful FTX Future Fund Application (we could use this list to answer this question? The answer could be chosen from the options below eg, could choose number 1 or combine numbers 3 and 4?):

1. 4 additional hours per week of my (David) time over a period of 7 months (on top of ACX/LTFF funding).
    - Cost: $9,361 paid to my employer Rethink Priorities to administer this (this includes pay, benefits, payroll tax, etc)
2. For 6 additional months, (after the 12 months mentioned above), six hours per week of my time (this period is not covered by ACX/LTFF)
    - Cost: $12,035
3. Travel, conference fees, accommodation to attend two in-person academic or open-science conferences or workshops over this period to promote the Unjournal, gain feedback, and seek new research leads and collaborators
    - Cost: $2500
4. Administrative support from RP for my work on this project, 22% of the grant (RP ops will be giving real, substantial administrative support on the Unjournal project)
    - Cost: $7863

This project is a...

- multi-person project that is not a charity or company

So far, this project...

- has already received or spent some funds, but the total amount received or spent is less than $50,000 (USD)

By submitting this form, you are agreeing to have your responses read by our application review team.