

CATA LYST™ 2026

ctia wireless foundation™



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Funding **Wireless Innovation**
to Enhance American Communities



Apply for **Funding**

CTIA Wireless Foundation is seeking **ambitious early-stage social entrepreneurs** who have developed mobile-first solutions to enhance our lives and address challenges in American communities.

Wireless networks are a platform for innovation, supporting emerging technologies that are transforming our society. Mobile-first solutions powered by 5G and leading edge wireless offer a significant opportunity to make meaningful advances and tap into a **powerful infrastructure for social good**.

With over **\$1 million awarded** in unrestricted grants and nearly **30 million** lives impacted, Catalyst Winners are innovative social entrepreneurs creating lasting impact fueled by wireless.

Up to six applicants will receive **unrestricted grant support**, with a first-place award of \$100,000, as well as non-financial benefits.



PRIZES

1st Place **\$100,000**

2nd Place **\$50,000**

3rd Place **\$25,000**

Top three winners receive a professionally produced
2-minute video profiling your wireless solution.

3 Honorable Mentions will receive \$10,000 each.



What else do Catalyst Awardees Receive?

TOP THREE WINNERS:

- Media training from an industry expert.
- Speaking opportunities to share your wireless solution with wireless industry leaders, elected officials, policymakers and more.



WINNERS AND HONORABLE MENTIONS:

- [Organizational vignette](#) posted on CTIA Wireless Foundation's website.
- Features in CTIA Member communications, including newsletters and social media channels, as well as through CTIA Wireless Foundation channels.
- Financial support to participate in Catalyst in-person events.
- Chance to grow your community through our network of [Catalyst Alumni](#) and wireless industry leaders.

CTIA Wireless Foundation requires that Catalyst Winners and Honorable Mentions attend in-person events, and that Catalyst Winners participate in video production and submit brief interim and final grant reports.



“ If you’re a social entrepreneur with a big vision and a commitment to creating positive change through wireless technology, Catalyst is the program for you. It’s more than just funding—it’s a community that challenges you to grow, inspires you to dream bigger, and equips you with the tools to make a lasting impact.”

– Roy Scott, Catalyst 2024 Winner



Who Should **Apply** to Catalyst?

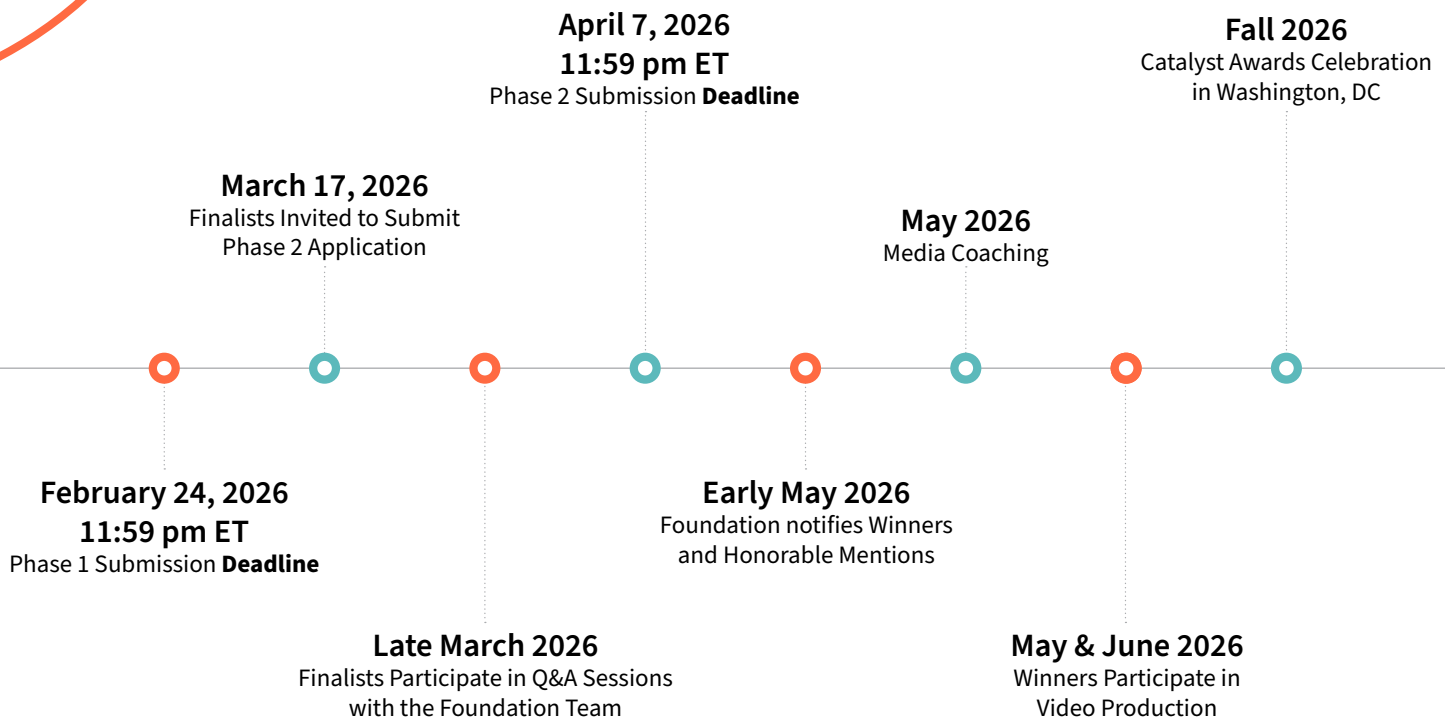
- Social entrepreneurs using wireless technology to solve a pressing issue in American communities. The applicant’s solution must be mobile-first.
- Social enterprises in early-stage development; solution is beyond ideation stage and has a proof of concept.
- Founders who have personal experience with the issue their mobile-first solution addresses.
- Innovators who are addressing some of our country’s challenges that often impact marginalized populations the most.
- Entities, both for-profit and nonprofit, that have the potential and infrastructure in place to make a real impact.
- Applicants who have experience working through business incubators, accelerators, or mentorship programs.
- We encourage applications from people of color, women, and/or veterans.

Wireless networks — and the innovations enabled by wireless connectivity — create significant opportunities to make meaningful advances and solve pressing issues.

Who is **Eligible** to Apply to Catalyst?

- Applicants must be registered and operate in the United States and/or the United States Territories.
- Applicants must assume one of the following legal statuses:
 - Nonprofit organization;
 - For-profit organization with a demonstrated commitment to social good; or,
 - B-Corporation.
- Applicants must complete and submit the application form by the submission deadlines. The Foundation will not consider late or incomplete submissions.
- Applicants cannot be past or current CTIA members at any point in the application and awards process.
- Applicants cannot be past Catalyst Winners. Past Catalyst Honorable Mention recipients may apply.
- Individuals are not eligible to apply.

Catalyst **2026 Timeline**





What Does the **Submissions Process** Look Like?

DEADLINE

All interested organizations that meet the Catalyst eligibility requirements must complete the Phase 1 application via the [Catalyst Portal](#) no later than

Tuesday, February 24, 2026 at 11:59pm ET.

The Phase 1 application will include:

- A succinct description of the solution and how wireless technology is advancing it.
- The founder's story/the inspiration for creating the solution.
- Populations and geographic locations the organization serves.
- A profile of the organization's leadership, participation in any accelerator programs and any honors the organization has received.

CTIA Wireless Foundation will invite selected applicants, the Finalists, to proceed to Phase 2 by Tuesday, March 17, 2026.

The Phase 2 application will include:

- The organization's strategic goals and vision.
- Current and potential impact of the solution.
- A detailed description of populations served and issues the organization is addressing for them.
- The innovative nature and distinct value of the solution as compared to other solutions available.
- The effect a Catalyst award will have on the organization.
- Top-level financial information.

Finalists will participate in a question-and-answer session with the Foundation Team in late March. This virtual meeting is an opportunity for the Foundation to learn more about your work and for you to ask questions.

All Finalists who submit a complete Phase 2 application by the deadline will receive a minimum of a \$10K unrestricted grant from the Foundation.

Phase 2 applications must be submitted via the [Catalyst Portal](#) no later than

Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 11:59pm ET.



Interested in **Learning More?**

WEBINAR

For those interested in learning more about Catalyst, there will be two 45-minute webinars to provide an overview of Catalyst and to answer applicant questions on the following dates and times:

Tuesday, January 27 from 12:00PM - 12:45PM ET

Thursday, February 12 from 3:00PM - 3:45PM ET

ONLINE RESOURCES

- Visit our [website](#) for more information on Catalyst and our [FAQs](#).
- Meet the [Catalyst Alumni](#) and view their video vignettes.
- Learn about the [impact of Catalyst](#).
- Stay up to date by following the Foundation on [LinkedIn](#).





Legal Disclaimer

The Wireless Foundation D/B/A CTIA Wireless Foundation (“Foundation”) has the right to accept or reject any or all applications received as a result of this Call for Submissions. Foundation reserves the right to disqualify an application if it learns of circumstances that conflict, in fact, or in spirit, with Foundation’s goals or values. Foundation further reserves the right to award fewer grants if it determines, in its sole discretion, that an insufficient number of applications align with the overall purpose and goals of the Catalyst program. Foundation will not pay or reimburse any costs incurred by any individual and/or entity that participates in this Call for Submissions. Foundation does not endorse any Applicant (defined below) or application.

The entity submitting this application through its authorized representative (“Applicant”) grants Foundation, its affiliates, licensees, successors, and assigns (collectively, “Licensed Parties”) a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free, sublicensable right and license to publish, reproduce, distribute, copy, modify, print, display, transmit, create derivative works from and/or otherwise use its name, likeness, image, voice, and/or appearance (and those of its authorized representatives and agents) as such may be embodied in any pictures, photos, video recordings, audiotapes, and digital images (collectively, “Licensed Items”), whether created by Foundation, provided to Foundation by Applicant, or developed with grant funds. The foregoing license includes the right for Foundation to announce grant recipients by any means it deems necessary. Foundation will not disclose any of Applicant’s nonpublic confidential, financial, or organizational staffing information, but otherwise will not be required to treat any application as confidential.

Applicant warrants that it has all the requisite rights and permissions to grant Foundation rights in the Licensed Items and that the Licensed Items are not copyright protected or otherwise subject to third party proprietary rights. Applicant agrees that Foundation may use the Licensed Items for any non-commercial purpose consistent with the Catalyst program. Such uses include social media posts, videos, press releases, interviews, illustrations, bulletins, exhibitions, publications, and all other uses in any medium now known or later developed. Applicant acknowledges that no individual or entity will receive any compensation for Foundation’s use of the Licensed Items, and Applicant hereby releases the Licensed Parties from all claims, losses or liabilities which arise out of or are connected with the use of the Licensed Items. Applicant will indemnify, defend, and hold the Licensed Parties harmless from any and all loss, liability cost and expense arising from its application or Foundation’s use of the Licensed Items. Successful Applicants will be required to execute Foundation’s grant recipient agreement, setting forth additional terms and conditions, prior to receiving any grant funds.

By submitting this Call for Submissions, Applicant agrees to be bound by all the terms contained in this Legal Disclaimer and affirms that it is at least 18 years of age.

This Legal Disclaimer will be governed by the laws of the District of Columbia.



www.wirelessfoundation.org/catalyst

