



U.S. Small Business
Administration

2023 Growth Accelerator Fund Competition

Pre-application Webinar

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AmericasSeedFund.us/accelerators
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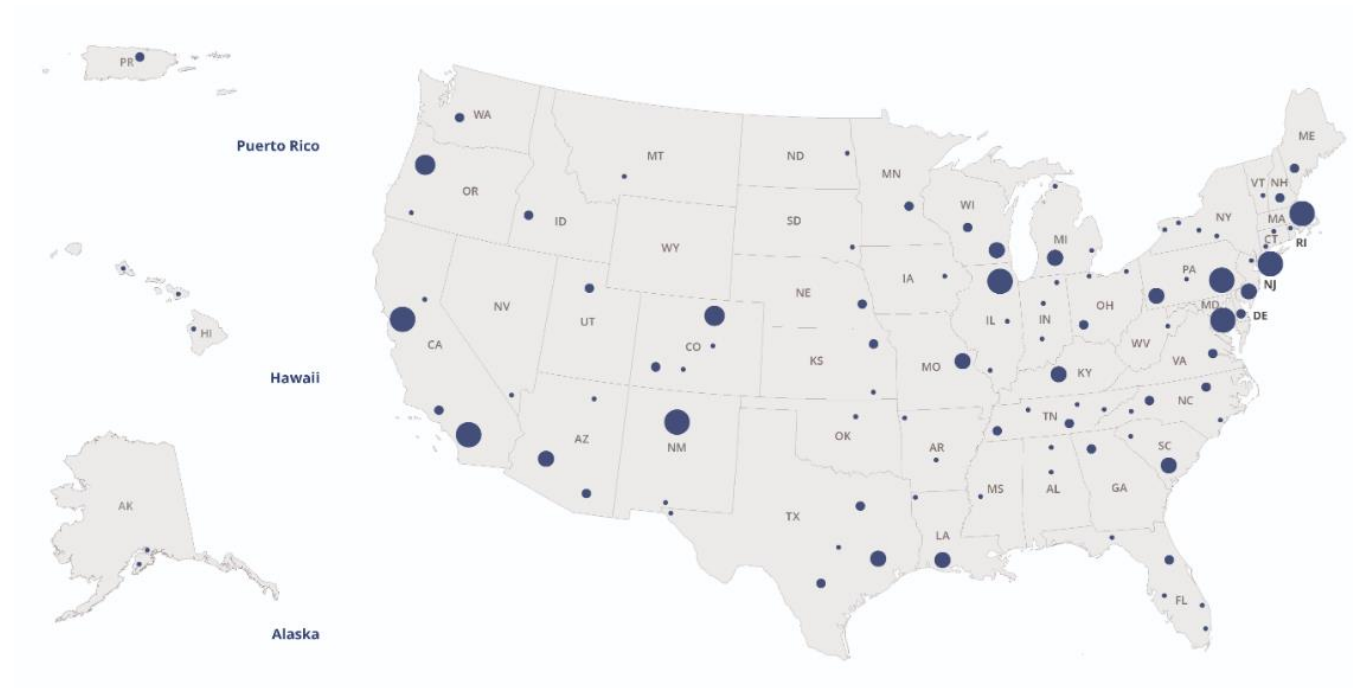
Mission

Building an inclusive public-private support ecosystem for all innovators.

Foster and facilitate a thriving national ecosystem that advances equitable investment in innovative high growth small businesses.

The SBA Growth Accelerator Fund Competition

SBA launched the Growth Accelerator Fund Competition (GAFC) in 2014 to stimulate innovation and entrepreneurship across the country.



Total GAFC prize awards since 2014	387
Total GAFC prize funds since 2014	\$19,350,000
Number of competitions 2014-2021	6
Number of states/territories represented	52
Number of unique winners	284

Program Purpose



Speed the launch, growth and scale of STEM/R&D-focused small businesses through impactful and inclusive approaches.



Nurture a national equitable entrepreneurship ecosystem – new collaborations and support for entrepreneur support organizations to enhance small business success.

Agenda

- Overview of the Prize Competition
- Eligibility
- Prize Selection
- Submission Slide Decks
- Q&A

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Competition Goals

- **Increase the pipeline and success** of STEM/R&D-focused entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- Increase the success of STEM/R&D-focused entrepreneurs in **accessing capital and resources** to advance their businesses.
- Incentivize innovation ecosystem stakeholders to provide **equitable access** to resources for underserved communities and industries.
- **Catalyze partnerships and relationships** between stakeholder groups to strengthen the national innovation ecosystem.
- **Connect both new and established participants** in the national innovation ecosystem.

Prize Structure and Timeline

Stage One Submissions Due
February 10

Stage One Catalyze
\$50,000

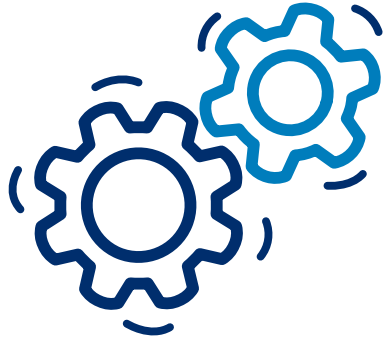
- Ecosystem Partner focused on a Theme (Catalyst) submits plans for:
 - Ecosystem building
 - Growth Accelerator Partnership vision

Stage Two Submissions Due
Early July

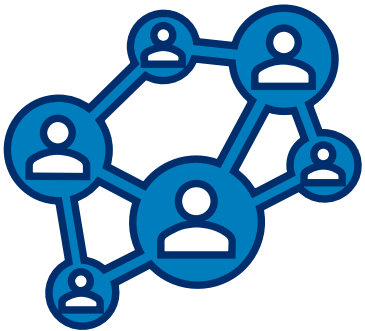
Stage Two Accelerate
\$50,000 - \$150,000

- Growth Accelerator Partnership submits shared vision and plan for providing accelerator program support to entrepreneurs

Stage One: Catalyze



- \$50,000 cash prizes
- Awarded to organizations (Catalysts) to catalyze relationships between aligned stakeholders (Ecosystem Partners) that lead to the development of Growth Accelerator Partnerships
- Catalysts work collaboratively with Ecosystem Partners to bring additional resources, deepen network connections, and develop strategies that amplify the impact and success of the Growth Accelerator Partnership and the STEM/R&D-focused entrepreneurs and small businesses it serves.
- **SBA encourages creative models for ecosystem building. SBA welcomes Stage One submissions from a broad range of organizations with a collaborative vision to nurture a national ecosystem for equitable access to entrepreneurship.**
- **Use of Stage One Prize Funds**
 - SBA expects Catalyst winners to use Stage One funds for ecosystem building activities, including but not limited to:
 - Recruitment of new, community-connected Ecosystem Partners
 - Co-design with Ecosystem Partners
 - Establishment of novel partnerships
 - Strengthening existing alliances among stakeholders (including public, private, non-profit, and academic partners)
 - Developing resources to support Growth Accelerator Partnership impact during Stage Two
 - Creating a new ecosystem-focused accelerator model
 - *The award funding from SBA is to be used to fund the operating budget for Catalysts and cannot be used for direct investing in small businesses or startups. Funding may be reserved for proposed Growth Accelerator Partnership activities at Stage Two.*



Theme Areas

Addressing national and societal challenges

- **Underserved Communities**, including but not limited to:
 - Underserved Geography (e.g. rural, specific region)
 - Specific Historically Underserved Community (e.g. community based on gender, race, individuals with disabilities, sexual orientation, veteran status)
- **National Security and Global Competitiveness**, including but not limited to:
 - National Security and Defense
 - International Trade
 - Public Health
 - Other critical and emerging technologies
- **Domestic Manufacturing and Production** , including but not limited to:
 - AgTech, Food Security, and Nutrition
 - Supply Chain Resiliency
 - Critical and Resilient Infrastructure
- **Climate and Renewable Energy**, including but not limited to:
 - Climate and Environment
 - Energy and Sustainability
- Other (specified by Contestant)

Model of Operation Elements

- Model of operations **must include most, if not all**, of the following elements across organizations in the Growth Accelerator Partnership:
 - **Training & mentorship** for STEM/R&D startups
 - **Introductions** to customers, suppliers, advisors, & other key players
 - Opportunities to pitch ideas & startups to investors and/or other **capital formation** avenues to startups, such as commercialization assistance
 - Regular **networking** opportunities to startups
 - **Selective process** to choose participating startups
 - Programs focused on building a strong startup community

Competition Guidelines

This webinar is not intended to cover all details pertaining to the competition guidelines.

You are responsible for reviewing the full and complete competition guidelines at: AmericasSeedFund.us/accelerators.

Prizes

*At least **\$3,000,000** in cash prize awards*

Stage One

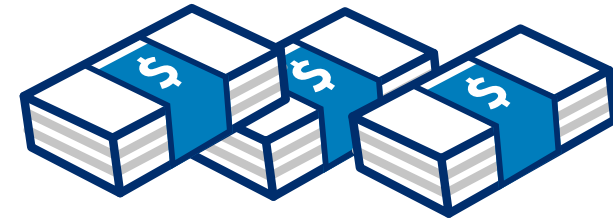
Catalyze



\$50,000

Stage Two

Accelerate



**\$50,000 -
\$150,000**

SBA expects to award up to \$1,000,000 in cash prizes for Stage One

Multiplier Bonus Prizes

The Growth Accelerator Fund Competition serves as a scalable and replicable framework for efficiently deploying resources to the entrepreneur support organizations that serve innovation-focused entrepreneurs and small businesses. At any time, SBA Federal partners, including other SBA Program Offices or other Federal agencies may leverage this framework by sponsoring one or more Multiplier Bonus Prizes.

Stage One Bonus Prize:

- A Federal agency partner may elect to provide a Bonus Prize to one or more Stage One contestants for focusing on a priority area of the agency partner's choice. Bonus Prize winners are awarded from the pool of Stage One contestants. Bonus Prize winners are considered Stage One and become eligible to participate in Stage Two

Stage Two Bonus Prize:

- A Federal agency partner may elect to provide a Bonus Prize to one or more Stage Two Growth Accelerator Partnerships for focusing on a priority area of the agency partner's choice. Bonus Prize winners are awarded from the pool of Stage Two contestants.

Multiplier Bonus Prizes may be added at any point.
Updates will be posted at www.AmericasSeedFund.us.

Important Dates

Stage One Catalyze

Submission Period: January 11 to **February 10, 2023**, 12:00 PM (noon) ET

Screening, Judging, and Vetting Period: February – April 2023

Stage One Winners Announced: April 2023

Stage Two Accelerate

Submission Period: June to July 2023

Screening, Judging, and Vetting Period: July – September 2023

Stage Two Winners Announced: September 2023

Who Can Compete?



Private entities (for- and non-profits) such as corporations or other organizations, that are incorporated or organized in and maintain a primary place of business in the U.S.

Non-Federal government entities, such as states, counties, tribes, and municipalities

Academic Institutions based in the U.S.

Individuals or teams that are U.S. citizens or permanent residents and at least 18 years old at the time of submission

Eligibility

General

1. citizens or permanent residents of the US who are at least eighteen (18) years of age at the time of their submission of an entry (or teams of such individuals);
2. private entities, such as corporations or other organizations, both for profit and nonprofit, that are incorporated or organized in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States, not owned or controlled by a foreign government or foreign government sponsored entity.
 - Individuals submitting on behalf of corporations, nonprofits, or other organizations or groups of individuals (such as an academic class or other team) must meet the eligibility requirements for individual Contestants.

Note: Non-federal government entities, such as states, counties, tribes, & municipalities can compete, as well as SBA Resource Partners (FAST, SBDCs, WBCs, etc.).

Eligibility

Not Eligible

- The following are NOT eligible:
 - SBA employees
 - SBA contractors
 - Federal entities
 - Federal employees acting within the scope of their employment
 - Individuals or organizations that are currently suspended or debarred by the federal government

Selection of Winners

- **Screening & Vetting**

- SBA will review submissions for completeness and Contestant eligibility
- SBA, at its sole discretion, may request clarifying/explanatory information
- Contestants selected for awards will be vetted by SBA for, among other things, conflicts of interest with the Agency

- **Winners Selection**

- SBA will choose winners whose submissions best satisfy the Competition criteria and present the greatest potential for success
- SBA may also take into account the geographic location and dispersal of Contestants, the extension of services to underserved populations, industry diversity, the risk posed by the Contestant's organization, and similar considerations when selecting winners
- No less than 50% of GAFC prizes will go to first-time winners & no less than 50% of GAFC prizes go to Contestants located in the 29 states/territories with the fewest # of SBIR/STTR Phase I awards (refer to prize competition rules)

Submission Package

Contestant Information: Submission Portal at AmericasSeedFund.us/accelerators

Submission Slide Deck: A **PDF** version of a slide deck (no more than **13 slides**) and must address all items, in the order listed. The deck will not be made public. A standard, 11-point minimum font size applies (tables, images, and illustrations may use a reduced font size not less than 8-point and may be landscape). No more than 10 MB.

One-slide Summary (public): A single presentation slide that summarizes information about your organization and the ecosystem you are working to build that may be used to attract new Ecosystem Partners. If selected, the one-slide summary will be made public.

Video Narrative: A video of not more than **ninety (90) seconds** that describes how the applicant is uniquely qualified to catalyze the entrepreneurship ecosystem around its selected theme. The video must be posted to a public site (such as YouTube or Vimeo) and be accessible to Competition judges. If selected, the video may be made public.

Submission Slide Deck

Stage One: Catalyze

Submission Slide Deck

Slide 1: Summary Information

- Name of Primary Contestant (entity)
- City and State/Territory
- Website of Contestant
- Contact Person (First & Last Names)
- Contact Email and Phone
- Other Key Team Members (Names)
- Theme Area
- Link to Video Narrative

Slide 2-3: Ecosystem Vision

- Your organization's mission
- Your vision of a thriving ecosystem in the selected Theme Area(s)
- Your organization's experience and activities in the selected Theme Area(s)
- How you will augment the ecosystem of support to enable new opportunities and address challenges in the selected Theme Area(s)

Submission Slide Deck cont'd

Slide 4-5: Broadening Participation in the Innovation Economy

- How your organization currently supports inclusive innovation, and how you will support and expand access to the innovation economy in your Theme Area(s) for entrepreneurs from underserved communities
- How your organization defines and measures success
- How you will use Stage One prize funds to encourage new entrants (including Ecosystem Partners with roots in underserved communities) to engage with the innovation ecosystem and participate in the Growth Accelerator Partnership

Slide 6-8: Overall Plan for the Award

- Your current plan for Stage One and how this plan will contribute to forging a successful Growth Accelerator Partnership for submission in Stage Two
- How you will deploy new and/or existing resources (including Stage One prize funds) to catalyze collaborative partnerships in innovation ecosystems
- Your value proposition to stakeholders (including Ecosystem Partners, entrepreneurs, etc.) as an ecosystem builder (e.g., resources, knowledge, expertise, and experiences)
- How you will build capacity and scale a network of resources to support and sustain a successful Growth Accelerator Partnership at Stage Two

Submission Slide Deck cont'd

Slide 9-10: Implementation and Learning Agenda

- What you will pilot in Stage One to catalyze new collaborations with Ecosystem Partners, and how that will assist in the development of a Stage Two Growth Accelerator Partnership
- What risk factors you anticipate, how you will mitigate/overcome these risks, and what success looks like at the end of Stage One
- What organizational and staff resources you will deploy to implement your Stage One plan

Slide 11-12: Ecosystem Building Partnerships

- Former, current, or future partnerships/working relationships with federal, state, regional, and/or local entities you would like to highlight
- Specific details on the effectiveness of past collaboration efforts
- How your organization will leverage other available resources to support a Growth Accelerator Partnership
- Your interest in and ability to support new Ecosystem Partners
- Characteristics, skills, or assets you value in potential Ecosystem Partners
- The role you envision for potential Ecosystem Partners to achieve the vision of a thriving ecosystem in the selected Theme Area(s)

Slide 13: Additional Information at Contestant's Discretion

- Contestant may use this slide to provide any additional information that would be useful for the submission.

One-Slide Summary (public)

Stage One: Catalyze

One-Slide Summary (will be made public if selected)

- Make your own public-facing, one-slide submission summary that can be used to explain to potential Ecosystem Partners who you are and your vision for a Growth Accelerator Partnership.
- There is no template, so feel free to present the information as you see fit. Please make any text readable in a standard printout and conference room projection.

Video Narrative (public)

Stage One: Catalyze

Video Narrative (will be made public if selected)

A video of not more than 90 seconds that can be used to explain to potential Growth Accelerator partners who you are and your ecosystem vision.

Describe:

- How your organization is uniquely qualified to catalyze an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem around your selected Theme and implement your proposed plan
- The value you bring to the ecosystem
- What you look for in Ecosystem Partners
- What you plan to do with Stage One prize funding that will lead to the Growth Accelerator Partnership proposal for Stage Two

The video serves as a first introduction of your organization and vision to reviewers and potential Ecosystem Partners.

Post your publicly accessible video online (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo).

Be creative and produce a video that conveys the required information in exciting and interesting ways but remember that time-consuming activities that only improve production values (i.e., technical elements such as décor, lighting, and cinematic techniques) are not necessary.