



The Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions: Catalyst Program

Goal: The Nicholas Institute's mission is to help decision makers create timely, effective, and economically practical solutions to the world's critical environmental challenges. The Nicholas Institute engages local, state, and federal governments, international agencies, NGOs, companies, and communities through convening, providing legal, economic, and policy analysis, and supporting the process of taking policy concepts and turning them into practice. The vision for the Catalyst Program is to build on this mission by increasing engagement with Duke University faculty to incubate and advance new partnerships, enhance policy-relevant knowledge, and create innovative policy solutions based on new creative synergies. The program will invest in policy-relevant proposals that catalyze Nicholas Institute and faculty collaborations in new or emergent areas of shared interest. The program's intent is to create collaborations that will continue past the grant and become central components of the Institute's work in the years ahead. Examples of funded catalyst programs can be found on our [website](#).

Eligible Participants: Each proposal must be co-chaired by at least one person from the Nicholas Institute's senior staff (see attached list) and a Duke faculty member from any discipline. Priority will be given to proposals submitted by faculty representing schools that have had limited participation in the program in past grant cycles.

Funding and Project Types: Awards will be given out for use during the 2021 fiscal year, which runs from July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, in two categories:

- 1/ Pre-catalyst planning grants of up to \$5,000. These proposals should be used to investigate the possibility of a collaboration that could result in a catalyst proposal in the next fiscal year.
- 2/ Catalyst grants of up to \$25,000. Award funding can be used for applied research, workshops, course development, and events, including the cost of food, meeting venues, travel, external speakers, and post-doctoral and research assistant support. Note: On the basis of project performance and interest, these projects may be considered for renewal for additional funding in FY22.

Project Requirements: Projects must connect Nicholas Institute senior staff with Duke faculty, building on the core competencies of the co-chairs, and develop new or emergent ideas related to environmental policy challenges at the federal, state, and local level. Projects can be new initiatives or expansions of existing partnerships. They can include broad, multi-part projects, of which this funding is a piece, as well as smaller, intensive scoping or pilot projects. Additional considerations for project eligibility include (1) the project's alignment with the Nicholas Institute's mission, (2) the project team's ability to leverage additional resources and secure future funding (with a particular interest in aligning with funding priorities of the Together Duke strategic plan), and (3) potential for long-term impact.

Review and Selection: Proposals are due no later than **5 p.m., March 30, 2020 (deadline extended; originally March 16)**. Proposals will be reviewed by the Nicholas Institute Strategic Advisory Committee and final award decisions will be made no later than **May 4, 2020**.



Catalyst Program Proposal Template

Instructions: By **5 p.m., March 30, 2020**, an electronic PDF of your proposal should be submitted to colette.watt@duke.edu.

Please limit your proposal to four pages inclusive of the following information:

- I. Project Title and One-Sentence Summary
- II. Project Co-Chairs and Senior Personnel
- III. Proposed Budget: Provide an overall budget for your project, including a description of requested support and its anticipated uses. Identify other sources of funding, including funding already obtained or requested. List any funding opportunities that you intend to pursue.
- IV. Proposal Narrative (**maximum 2 pages**): Provide an overview of your project that articulates (1) the question or problem that the project proposes to explore; (2) the project goals; (3) proposed activities or work plan, including timeframes; and (4) anticipated outcome or impact.
- V. Evaluation Plan: Describe the metrics that will be used to effectively demonstrate and quantify the project's outcomes or impact. If the proposal requests a continuation from a prior grant, please also provide an evaluation of how the prior year's grant met its proposed metrics.
- VI. Sustainability Plan: If you can anticipate how this project will continue after the Catalyst Program support concludes, provide a future funding plan.
- VII. Engagement Plan: If you anticipate your project will include public outreach or engagement with decision makers, describe the relevant plans and timelines.

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