

Dear RRRISE Collaborative,

Starting October 1, 2024, [Redwood Region RISE](#) will exit its Planning Phase and begin work to implement the strategies detailed in the Regional Roadmap due on September 30th. This also means several funding opportunities will emerge over the next few months for projects aligned with our region's vision and California Jobs First<sup>1</sup> priorities.

### **Here's what you need to know about upcoming funding opportunities:**

**Catalyst Pre-Development Funds:** Redwood Region RISE will be allocating \$9 million dollars in Pre-Development Funds to projects which advance our regional strategies and vision.

Pre-Development funds are for projects that demonstrate strong alignment with our values and strategies, are in the [exploratory or last-mile phase](#) of readiness, and have regional impact.

- The convening team will release a Request for Proposals (RFP) by mid-October. The RFP will be announced through our mailer and on our website. This formal application will ask more detailed questions pertaining to project feasibility than previously submitted through our Project Inventory (your "letter of intent").
- For those who cataloged their projects in our RISE project inventory, the application will provide space to make any updates to their existing entry, but applicants will not be obligated to re-enter responses.
- The application period will be open for one month.
- Project Development Technical Assistance is available to early stage projects with a strong equity focus (or those looking to strengthen this aspect of their initiative) through September 27th. TA is provided by Bischoff Consulting, [more info here](#). TA can assist project initiators move early-stage proposals through the project development process, center values in your project design, and

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<sup>1</sup>Through California Jobs First, Redwood Region RISE aims to:

1. Create thriving-wage opportunities for workers in our Region ("quality jobs")
2. Pursue sustainable economic growth (diversifying local and regional economies)
3. Advance California's goals for a climate-forward future (carbon-neutrality and beyond)
4. Creating inclusive Tables that empower communities that don't always participate in or benefit from economic development planning processes.

better connect with resources available within and outside of the Redwood Region RISE Collaborative.

How will projects be evaluated and funds granted?

- The Collaborative is working to finalize the [draft Catalyst Funding Scoring Criteria Guidelines](#) (scoring rubric) and the application and evaluation process. We strongly encourage you to review these criteria carefully.
- A team of project scorers will be recruited from Collaborative members across the region (not restricted to voting members) to score each project proposal. These project scorers will be trained, with each project scored by (at least) three different reviewers.
- A slate of the 20 highest scoring project proposals will be sent to the Voting Members for consideration. Five to ten projects will be awarded, totaling \$9 million in pre-development funds.

Even if you decide not to apply for Catalyst Funds or you do apply and don't receive an award, projects in our inventory will help inform the work of Sector Investment Coordinators for the next two years. They will be working to grow the economy and share information about sources of funding beyond California Jobs First.

**Implementation Funding:** The California Jobs First Multi Agency Team (the body that oversees all California Jobs First grant program activity) will release three rounds of competitive grants (fiscal year 24/25, 25/26, and 26/27) to fund projects. These funds are available to shovel ready projects. Project Initiators submit their applications directly to the State who will score and make the awards, however, each project submission needs to be endorsed by the RRRISE Collaborative.

- At the time of writing, the State has formally approved \$50 million for this fiscal year (24/25) in Implementation funds. Future rounds (fiscal year 25/26 and 26/27) are expected to be the same amount.
- To the best of our knowledge, applications will be received on a rolling basis. The date of the first evaluation period is currently unknown.
- The State has shared their [proposed project criteria](#), and will evaluate project submissions and award the funds.
- The RRRISE convening team will notify our Collaborative as we receive more information from the State about Implementation funds.

## California Jobs First Funds, Application, and Granting Process for RRRISE Members

- Implementation funds can be used for:
  - Innovation Ecosystem – Projects address gaps in an industry.
  - Entrepreneurship and Access to Capital – Projects support firms and entrepreneurs with tools to expand.
  - Infrastructure and Community Facility Development – Projects support targeted value chain investment.
  - Social Infrastructure – Projects remove barriers for communities to access opportunities.
  - Workforce Development – Projects support workforce training and/or supportive services.

### **Tribal Investment Initiative Funding:**

The California Jobs First Tribal Investment Initiative provides up to \$15 million<sup>2</sup> to California Native American Tribes<sup>3</sup> to support building equitable and sustainable Tribal economies across California and fostering long-term economic resilience while transitioning to a carbon-neutral economy. A draft Solicitation for Proposals was released for public comment in late August, and the Multi Agency Team is incorporating public comments and feedback. We are waiting for the final version and funding timeline to be finalized.

- Tribes, Tribal-serving organizations, and consortia of Tribes will apply directly to the State for these funds.
- The funds can be used for projects in the following three categories: 1) Planning Projects, 2) Pre-Development Projects, 3) Implementation Projects. Projects can address:
  - Innovation Ecosystem – Projects address gaps in an industry.
  - Entrepreneurship and Access to Capital – Projects support firms and entrepreneurs with tools to expand.
  - Infrastructure and Community Facility Development – Projects support targeted value chain investment.
  - Social Infrastructure – Projects remove barriers for communities to access opportunities.

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<sup>2</sup> [Link to Tribal Investment Initiative–Draft SFP](#)

<sup>3</sup> The Tribal Investment Initiative defines “Tribes” as a Tribe that has traditional territory in California and is on the contact list that is maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC). Tribal/Native-led organizations are also eligible to receive funding.



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- Workforce Development – Projects support workforce training and/or supportive services.

More information about these categories can be found on pp 9-10 of the SFP.

- Technical assistance with the application is available from RRRISE.