

# After-Action Review: Redwood Region RISE Catalyst Pre-development Funds Request for Proposal (RFP)

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### What is an After-Action Review (AAR)?

An After-Action Review is a structured process that enables organizations to reflect on a completed project or activity, identify lessons learned, and utilize that information to enhance future projects and activities. Many organizations have found this process to be a valuable tool for continuous improvement and adaptation.

### Why is it being done?

Redwood Region RISE's Voting Member Block requested an After-Action Review of the Catalyst Pre-development Funds RFP.

### How will the After-Action Review be done?

- **Step One** - Information will be gathered through surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews. We will also review the RFP, related documents, and the grant proposals. *Timeline: June and July 2025*
- **Step Two** - We will review the collected information and create an initial list of lessons learned from the Catalyst RFP application process. Then, we will explore how these lessons can be applied to other Collaborative activities, including future funding opportunities. *Timeline: August 2025*
- **Step Three** - We will share the preliminary findings and recommendations from Step Two with the Leadership Team and Voting Member Block, gather their feedback, and support them in finalizing a list of policy and process recommendations. *Timeline: September 2025*

To help facilitate the After-Action Review, we have brought in Toni Symonds with Policy Works California, a justice-focused consultancy. She is familiar with the California Jobs First Initiative and Redwood Region RISE, but did not directly participate in the outreach, scoring, or evaluation of Catalyst proposals.

### **What aspects of the Catalyst Pre-development Funds RFP can we explore in an After-Action Review?**

One of the primary objectives of the After-Action Review is to identify what went well and understand the reasons behind that success, as well as to recognize what did not go as planned and explore the potential reasons for those issues. We can use this collective learning to reinforce successful practices and make targeted changes to our processes in areas that require improvement. Key questions we will explore include:

- What were our goals in deploying the Catalyst Pre-Development Fund money?
- What actually happened?
- If so, why was there a difference?
- What have we learned?
- How can we use these learnings moving forward?

### **Will I have an opportunity to share my opinions?**

Yes. The After-Action Review survey will be posted on the Redwood Region RISE [website](#) and shared through our RRRISE Newsletter in the week following our June 27, 2025, Quarterly Collaborative Meeting. We are accepting survey responses until July 30, 2025.

### **Will the outcomes be shared?**

Yes. A slide presentation of the findings and recommendations will be posted on the Redwood Region RISE [website](#).

## **More Q & A Related to After Action Reviews**

### **How is an After-Action Review different from a performance evaluation?**

After-Action Reviews are not intended to measure performance against benchmarks or key performance indicators. They are intended to be a constructive, collective learning opportunity, where the relevant interest holders involved in the activity find common ground on how to improve and use this information in their next activity and/or similar activity.

### **What are the key characteristics of an After-Action Review?<sup>1</sup>**

1. After-Action Reviews are designed to contribute to a culture of continuous collective and institutional learning, focusing on the gathering of lessons learned, gaps, and best practices.
2. After-Action Reviews are relatively quick to conduct and are generally undertaken shortly after the action or event being evaluated.
3. After-Action Reviews rely on open, honest, and equal interaction between participants, as well as the collective sharing of experiences and perceptions regarding the action or event being reviewed.
4. After-Action Reviews comprise a basic, consistent analytical structure that applies four main research questions to examine what should have happened during the management of an event or activity, what actually happened, what went well and what did not, and why. This analysis also identifies areas for improvement and suggests ways to enhance them.

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<sup>1</sup> "The Global Practice of After Action Review: A Systematic Review of Literature," World Health Organization, 2019.