



## 2025 Kirby Impact Prize Application Questions

*We look for enterprises pursuing strategic pathways to impact at scale, who are close to the challenges at hand, who center the voice and experience of the populations they serve, who have demonstrated traction, and who embody courageous and collaborative leadership.*

### Application Questions included in Phase 1

**open for response for ALL ELIGIBLE enterprises on the Kirby Prize application platform\***  
**October 24 – December 4, 2024**

**Includes Eligibility Questions, Enterprise Demographic Questions, and an Enterprise Overview Deck.**

*We use a tiered application process, and will select a subset of applicants from Phase 1 to continue to Phase 2, from Phase 2 to the finalist round, and ultimately one prize winner.*

\*Link to the application platform will be available on our website ([bit.ly/kirbyimpactprize](https://bit.ly/kirbyimpactprize)) starting Oct 24.

### Eligibility Questions

1. Are you an impact-driven enterprise?
2. If you are an international organization, do you have an established presence in the U.S., whereby you are a United States Taxpayer and hold a federal taxpayer identification number? (*This could include an organization recognized as an organization exempt from federal income tax under IRC section 501(c)3 status, a U.S.-based fiscal sponsorship agreement, or other. Note that this eligibility criterion is because of tax implications for the award.*)
3. Does the enterprise have an anti-discrimination or inclusivity policy that prohibits discrimination based on marginalized identities?
4. Does the enterprise have a minimum operating budget of at least \$250,000 (USD (United States Dollars))?
5. If selected, do you agree to:
  - a. Not redistribute Prize funds to other organizations or individuals.
  - b. Participate in the F. M. Kirby Impact Prize program evaluation.
  - c. Allow CASE and Fuqua School of Business to use the enterprise's name, logo, and story in media and marketing efforts.

### Enterprise Overview Deck, covering the key elements below

*Note: You will be asked to upload an enterprise overview slide deck, ideally leveraging content that you have already created, **ensuring that content in the deck addresses the key elements listed below**. The intent of this request is for us to get to know the fundamentals about your impact enterprise and the solution you are working to scale.*

*If you prefer to provide written answers to the questions below, in lieu of a slide deck, you may do so using a template we will provide.*

1. **Brief SUMMARY OF YOUR ENTERPRISE.** *Tell us briefly who your organization is and what you do – some call this your "elevator pitch" or the quick overview of your organization, what you do, and the value you provide.*
2. **Description of the PROBLEM you are working to address.** *What is the problem you are addressing and why has it continued to be a problem? What are the key root causes of this problem?*
3. **Description of your SOLUTION and how it is OPERATIONALIZED.** *(often several slides).*
  - a. *What is your desired change, and what are the key activities your organization undertakes to lead to that change? How does your solution improve upon existing efforts to achieve that desired change?*
  - b. *How is your solution operationalized, including how your product/services flow, how your funding flows (including payers, funders, etc.), and how you engage with key partners in your implementation?*
4. **Summary of the EVIDENCE that shows your solution is working.** *What evidence do you have that shows your solution is effective (i.e., is having a meaningful impact), is demanded and valued by your target audience, and can be successfully implemented as intended? Response can include relevant quantitative and qualitative data; response should also include evidence backing key assumptions in the model.*
5. **Your top 3 impact-related KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs) and the RESULTS for each for the past three years,** which will help us understand your traction to date and the impact metrics most meaningful for your work. *Ideally this list will include at least one KPI related to outcomes experienced by the target audience (relative to those that only capture inputs/activities). For each, clearly list the indicator and results for each of the past three years (labeled with the year), e.g., Low-income women placed in jobs: 300 (2021); 350 (2022); 400 (2023).*
6. **Description of your SCALING PLAN.** *A strong answer will describe the strategies you plan to employ to achieve impact at scale, reasoning for pursuing those strategies, and a few key milestones associated with the plan.*

### **Enterprise Demographic Questions**

*On the application platform, you will also be asked to answer the following short demographic questions.*

1. Enterprise Name
2. Primary Contact for Prize communications
3. Email address for primary contact
4. Role of primary contact in enterprise
5. Name(s) (co) Founder/CEO
6. Overall staff size (FTE (Full Time Equivalent))
7. Location of enterprise headquarters
8. What geographic region(s) are you serving?
9. What specific country or countries is your solution currently in operation?
10. If you are operating in the United States, please list the states in which you currently operate.
11. What is the current scale of your operation? [Global, National, Regional, Local]
12. What is your annual operating budget for the most recent fiscal year? *[Note that applicants must have a minimum budget of USD\$250,000. The strongest applications historically have an annual operating budget between \$1-5 million USD.]* [range]
13. How many years has the enterprise been in operation? *[Note that applicants are required to have*

*strong evidence of impact over at least 3 years; most successful enterprises have been in operation for at least five years.]*

14. If applicable, list any major awards or fellowships you have received, and note the year in which awarded.
15. What is your organizational structure? [Nonprofit, For Profit, Hybrid]
16. What is the primary impact area in which your organization works? [Choose from list]

## **Application Questions included in Phase 2, by invitation only**

***open for written response, to those invited, on the Kirby Prize application platform***

***January 10 – 27, 2025***

***(These questions are subject to change)***

### **PROBLEM & SOLUTION**

1. **Describe how your solution works, including the business model.** (250 words max)  
*Please be as specific as possible so the review committee thoroughly understands the key parts of your solution and how they fit together. A strong answer will include clear descriptions of the services or products you provide, how they are implemented and by whom, how you reach and serve primary customers/beneficiaries, how any other payers are incorporated, and how funding flows through your model.*
2. **The problem(s) your solution is seeking to address have evolved and persisted over long periods of time. Describe how your solution uniquely addresses causes of the problem and how it addresses implementation challenges that have other solutions have faced.** (250 words max)  
*A strong answer will clearly tie the solution to the major factors underpinning the specific problem that the organization is working to solve; it will also describe how the solution addresses implementation challenges that have kept other solutions from being successful. For example, if a solution is working to improve yields for smallholder farmers, we would want to understand how the solution is addressing the key factors that have resulted in low yields (including, perhaps, factors related to climate resilience, seed varieties, cost of inputs, etc.). We would also want to understand how the solution is navigating implementation barriers that others have faced in working on this problem – such as reaching rural farmers, establishing trust, etc.*

### **SCALING PLAN**

3. **In Phase 1 we asked you to briefly describe your scaling plan. In Phase 2, provide additional detail and context about this plan, including:** (300 words max)
  - a. Your key scaling goals over the next 3-5 years
  - b. Key things you have tested and learned that give you confidence in this scaling plan (include specific examples)
  - c. Key scaling milestones you will track over the next 3-5 years that will help you know

- whether you are on the right course
- d. How the F.M. Kirby Impact Prize could contribute to your scaling journey
4. **Who are the key entities in your operating environment** (e.g., local/national government, other NGOs, advocacy groups, business community, providers of complementary services) **with whom you must work or coordinate with as you scale, and how do you engage with them currently? What are your plans to engage with them over the next 3-5 years?** (250 words max)
  5. **What are the biggest barriers or risks to achieving your scaling goals, and how will you address or account for the top risks?** (250 words max)
  6. **Describe the learning systems and/or processes you have in place to ensure continuous learning and improvement as you scale, including what these systems help you learn and how you act on that learning. Please also provide one example of how you have used data/information to make a course correction or change to your work.** (250 words max)

## TEAM & ACCOUNTABILITY

7. **Description of the ways in which the organization (including leadership, employees, decision-making structures) is PROXIMATE TO THE COMMUNITIES AND CHALLENGE** being addressed. Also describe how you continue to hold yourself **ACCOUNTABLE TO YOUR CLIENTS and/or beneficiaries.**
  - *By “proximate,” we follow the definition [outlined here](#): being a part of a group or being meaningfully guided by that group’s input, ideas, agendas, and assets.*
  - *A strong answer will describe how the organization’s leadership and decision-making power reflects shared experiences, identities, and/or geographic communities relevant to the organization’s work. Please also explain how, and how often, you solicit feedback from or center the voices of your clients and/or beneficiaries.*
8. **How are you thinking about the makeup of your team as you scale? Specifically, are there key skills/experience gaps you need to fill in order to be able to achieve your scaling plan, and what are your plans to fill those gaps?** (150 words max)

## FUNDING

9. **Please explain how you financed your work during the last fiscal year.** (250 words max)

*A strong answer will help us understand the sources of funding (e.g., using categories such as earned revenue from sales of a product or service; foundation grants; individual donations; government; corporate; investment capital like equity or loans, etc. You do NOT need to disclose names of specific funders) and the amounts or percentages in each of those categories. For example, an organization might report that they spent \$5M to run their programs this past fiscal year with 75% from individual donations, 15% from earned revenue (families paying fees), 10% from corporate sponsorship + any additional explanation required. Note: If you use amounts of funding, please convert the numbers to USD.*

**10. Given your proposed scaling strategy, explain how you anticipate your funding needs and/or mix changing over the next 3-5 years? (250 words max)**

*A strong answer would help us understand how you are thinking about funding your scaling strategy – both in terms of how much more money you will need and what sources you hope to get the funding from. Of course, we understand that financing plans are hard to predict but we want to get a feel for your expectations and approach. For example, an organization might talk about a scaling strategy that involves expanding to a new country and needing to have \$1M in additional funding to set up operations which they anticipate getting 50% from foundation grants and 50% from government contribution + and additional explanation required.*

**11. What have you tested and learned to give you confidence that the funding plan outlined in question 10 is feasible? (250 words max)**

*A strong answer will include evidence of willingness to pay by new or increased funding sources (e.g., we have tested selling our product in a pilot program and so have early indications that our customers are willing to pay \$X. Or, we have had meetings with government officials and signed an MOU acknowledging their intent to contribute funding to cover X% of our work).*

**Requests for Finalists, by invitation only**

*Interview and supplementary due diligence materials  
Taking place March 7-April 11, 2025*

**Participate in a 60-minute interview with the Selection Committee**

**Provide a limited number of supplementary due diligence materials**

*Likely to include recent balance sheet, cash flow statement, strategic plan, summary of impact assessments, and anti-discrimination policy/inclusivity policy.*