The Innovation Fund
Fall 2020 Application Questions

Open Call

Thank you for your interest in The Innovation Fund!

This document is a guide and intended to assist you in preparing your application in advance. **This is not the site to complete and submit the application.** Please be advised that some questions may be slightly modified in the actual application.

To complete the application, please visit The Innovation Fund application portal to register. The application cycle will open on September 22, 2020, and close October 14, 2020, at 11:59 PM PT. If you have any questions about the application, please contact innovationfund@theworkerslab.com.

Tips & Recommendations

- Look over and prepare the necessary information before beginning the application. If your project is fiscally sponsored, please note that additional information about your Fiscal Sponsor will be requested.
- The application should take between **4-5 hours to complete**, depending on your level of preparedness.
- **When inputting your application into our application portal, save your application** after you complete each section.

Contact Information

NOTE: *Please share the information for the person completing this application in the* **applicant** *fields. If that person is different from the primary financial decision-maker of the organization or project, please provide the information for that person in the* **primary contact** *fields.*

Season: IF 2020

The Innovation Fund Applicant Cycle: Fall 2020

1. Innovation/Project Name (10 words max)

2. Applicant: First Name

3. Applicant: Last Name

4. Applicant: Role/Title

5. Applicant: Email Address

6. Applicant: Phone Number

7. Are you the primary contact? [Y/N]

8. Primary Contact: First Name

9. Primary Contact: Last Name

10. Primary Contact: Role/Title

11. Primary Contact: Email Address

12. Primary Contact: Phone Number

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General Information

13. Applicant Type
    a. Independent Organization
    b. Fiscally Sponsored Project
        i. Additional Questions for Fiscally Sponsored Projects: Please see the end of this document, under the "**Fiscal Sponsor Information**" section.

*On behalf of your **organization/fiscal sponsor**, please answer the following questions:*

14. Name of organization/fiscal sponsor
    [Hint: Please enter your organization's/fiscal sponsor's legal name]

15. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor Country

16. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor Address

17. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor City

18. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor State

19. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor Postal/ZIP Code
    [Hint: If not applicable write N/A)]

20. Organization/Fiscal Sponsor Type
    a. Non-profit
        i. Project Non-profit
            1. Community-Based Organization
            2. Philanthropy
            3. Social Enterprise
            4. Educational Institution
            5. Research or Think Tank
            6. Worker Center

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       7. Membership or Affiliate Organization
       8. Leadership Development Organization
       9. Innovation Lab
       10. Non-profit Other (Please specify)

   b. For-Profit
     i. Project For-Profit
       1. Social Enterprise
       2. Private Company
       3. Bank or Financial Institution
       4. Co-working Space/Social Club
       5. Media
       6. For-Profit Other (Please specify)

   c. Government
   d. Cooperative
   e. Labor Union
   f. Other (Please specify)

21. Please indicate the size of your organization (for independent organizations) or your fiscal sponsor's organization (for fiscally sponsored projects).
   a. 1 - 4 people
   b. 5 - 9 people
   c. 10 - 19 people
   d. 20 - 49 people
   e. 50 - 99 people
   f. 100 - 249 people
   g. 250 - 449 people
   h. 500 - 999 people
   i. 1,000+ people
     i. Please choose all staff types within the organization/fiscal sponsor:
       1. Full-time Employees
       2. Part-time Employees
       3. Independent Contractors
       4. Volunteers
         a. Total # of Full-time Employees (optional)

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      b.   Total # of Part-time Employees (optional)

      c.   Total # of Independent Contractors (optional)

      d.   Total # of Volunteers (optional)

22. What is the primary strategy employed by your organization/fiscal sponsor?
    a. Job Placement
    b. Job Training & Skills Development
    c. Legal Protections
    d. Narrative Change
    e. Policy Advocacy
    f. Research, Tool or Framework Development
    g. Technology Product Development
    h. Worker Education
    i. Worker Organizing, Advocacy or Activism
    j. Worker Ownership, Cooperative
    k. Other (Please specify)

*On behalf of the **organization/project team** working on the specific innovation(s) relevant to this application, please answer the following questions:*

23. Does your organization/project have any web or social media presence?
    a. Yes
    b. No

24. Organization/Project digital media channels and assets
    [Hint: Please select all that apply]
    a. Website: Website URL
    b. Twitter: Website URL
    c. Instagram: Website URL
    d. LinkedIn: Website URL
    e. Facebook: Website URL

25. Organization/Project Logo: File upload
    a. Please upload a high-resolution logo for your organization and/or project.

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[Hint: Max File Size is 5MB Min. 300 dpi or 1024 x 768 pixels]

26. Organization/Project Mission (150 words)

27. What percentage of your organization/project's staff identify as Black, Indigenous, or as people of color?
    a. None
    b. 1 - 24%
    c. 25 - 49%
    d. 50 - 74%
    e. 75 - 99%
    f. 100%

28. What percentage of your organization/project's staff identify as Black women, Indigenous women, or as women of color?
    a. None
    b. 1 - 24%
    c. 25 - 49%
    d. 50 - 74%
    e. 75 - 99%
    f. 100%

29. What percentage of your organization/project's staff identify as women?
    a. None
    b. 1 - 24%
    c. 25 - 49%
    d. 50 - 74%
    e. 75 - 99%
    f. 100%

30. How did you hear about the Fall 2020 cycle of The Innovation Fund?

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Ecosystem Information

Leadership & Geographic Focus

31. Have you previously applied for The Innovation Fund with The Workers Lab?
    a. Yes
        i. Please indicate any cycles in which you've previously applied. (check all that apply)
        [Hint: This question is for data collection purposes only. There are no restrictions around the number of times you can apply, and previous applications will not be evaluated in this cycle.]
            1. 2017 or prior
            2. 2018
            3. 2019
            4. 2020 Spring
            5. 2020 Summer
    b. No

32. Does the project lead identify as Black, Indigenous, or a person of color?
    [Hint: Please answer this question for the person designated as the project lead. We understand that the project leader, the applicant (you), and the organization leader are sometimes the same person or different people. Here we are asking about the project's leader.]
    a. Yes
        i. How does the project lead identify racially/how are they racialized?
        [Select all that apply]
            1. Native American, American Indian, or Alaska Native
            2. African American or Black
            3. Asian
            4. Hispanic or Latino/a
            5. Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
            6. Middle Eastern or Arabic
            7. Prefer not to answer

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8. Other (Please specify)
   b. No

33. Please select the project lead's preferred gender category:
    [Hint: Please answer this question for the person designated as the project lead. We understand that the project leader, the applicant (you), and the organization leader are sometimes the same person or different people. Here we are asking about the project's leader.]
    a. Female
    b. Male
    c. Transgender
    d. Non-binary
    e. Prefer not to answer
    f. Other (Please specify)

34. Please specify any other identity or community intersections that you feel are relevant (e.g. LGBTQ+, differently-abled, etc):
    [Optional: Please answer this question for the person designated as the project lead. We understand that the project leader, the applicant (you), and the organization leader are sometimes the same person or different people. While we are primarily asking about the project's leader, if relevant, here you can also expand on co-leaders, or the leadership as it pertains to a joint project.]

35. Does the project lead consider themselves an entrepreneur? (60 words)
    a. Yes
        i. In no more than a few sentences, please explain why?
    b. No
        i. In no more than a few sentences, please explain why?

36. Which country is your program team based in?
    [Please refrain from selecting options where you might conduct activities on an intermittent or limited basis. Remember, this is about the project you are submitting this application for, not all the work in your organization's portfolio.]

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37. Which region is your project team based in?
[Please refrain from selecting options where you might conduct activities on an intermittent or limited basis. Remember, this is about the project you are submitting this application for, not all the work in your organization's portfolio.]
   a. International
   b. Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.
   c. Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.
   d. Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.
   e. West: Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.
   f. Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.
   g. U.S. Territories: Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Minor Outlying Islands.

38. Which state is your project team based in?
[Please refrain from selecting options where you might conduct activities on an intermittent or limited basis. Remember, this is about the project you are submitting this application for, not all the work in your organization's portfolio.]

39. Do you have any intentions to engage workers in geographies **other than** where your team is based?
[We will presume you will engage workers in the location where the team is based. If you plan to target and engage workers elsewhere for this project within the next 12 months, please indicate those locations. Here, we are simply looking to understand the geographic reach of your project within the grant year.]
   a. Yes
      i. International
      ii. Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont.

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    iii.   Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia.

    iv.   Southwest: Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.

    v.   West: Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

    vi.   Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin.

    vii.   U.S. Territories: Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Minor Outlying Islands.

    b. No

    c. Not sure yet

40. Does your work explicitly focus on or impact workers in California's Central Valley or Inland Empire?
    a. Yes
    b. No

Innovation Context & Approach

41. In one sentence, please describe your innovative idea that can help workers come back stronger. (30 words max)
[Hint: You will have the opportunity to expound more later in the application. As we often review hundreds of applications, it is helpful to have a one-sentence summary of the project readily available.]

42. There are several definitions out there about what a "quality job" entails. Which component of a "quality job" does your project address? (Select all that apply)
    a. Wages
    b. Benefits
    c. Scheduling
    d. Career Paths
    e. Worker Voice
    f. Other (Please specify)

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43. What is the primary strategy employed by your innovation/project? (Select one)
    a. Job Placement
    b. Job Training & Skills Development
    c. Legal Protections
    d. Narrative Change
    e. Policy Advocacy
    f. Research, Tool or Framework Development
    g. Technology Product Development
    h. Worker Education
    i. Worker Organizing, Advocacy or Activism
    j. Worker Ownership, Cooperative
    k. Other (Please specify)

44. What industry is your innovation intended to disrupt?
    [Hint: Select all that apply]
    a. Agriculture, Forestry, Farming & Fishing
    b. Arts
    c. Childcare
    d. Construction
    e. Educational Services
    f. Finance
    g. Food service
    h. Healthcare
    i. Homecare
    j. Hospitality & Accommodation
    k. Information
    l. Insurance
    m. Leisure & Entertainment
    n. Manufacturing
    o. Mining
    p. Professional and business services
    q. Public Administration
    r. Real Estate

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      s.   Recreational
      t.   Rental & Leasing
      u.   Retail/Wholesale
      v.   Social Assistance
      w.   Technology
      x.   Transportation, Logistics & Warehousing
      y.   Utilities
      z.   Other Sector/Industry (Please specify)

45. Please select the statement that best describes your project's outcomes as related to individual and/or collective worker power. (please select one)
      a.   My project focuses mostly on ensuring workers have their basic needs met and have stability and agency on a more individual basis.
      b.   My project focuses mostly on organizing and aggregating workers' voices/actions so they can have more agency as a group/class/sector of workers.
      c.   My project focuses on both of the above equally.
      d.   My project focuses on neither.
            i.   Please elaborate.

46. What stage of development is your project in?
[Help: Please select one]
[Hint: You will have the opportunity to share more about the specifics of where your project is later in the application process. Please select the option that best suits your project's development.]
      a.   Idea - you've identified a critical problem facing workers and now you're researching whether solutions exist
      b.   Solution - you've begun honing in on the potential solution you want to develop (program, service, product, strategy, etc.) and are scoping a prototype
      c.   Pre-Pilot - you've designed a prototype and are seeking partners and seed funding for a future pilot
      d.   Pilot - you're pilot-ready or have already begun experimenting with a set of workers and are collating proof points that validate the project's impact

e. Implementation - you've seen initial evidence of success and are ready to expand to a larger group of workers beyond the pilot; the model is undergoing improvements based on learnings from the pilot phase
f. Scale - you're confident in the model and ready to apply in a new context to reach more or different workers (broader geography, more workers, cross-sector, new partners, replicate the model, or translate into policy applications)

47. At The Workers Lab, we seek out innovations that can increase power for workers. We recognize that power is multi-dimensional and that for workers to be drivers of social, economic, and political change, they need to have power and agency; not just at work, but also in their personal lives, in communities, and society more broadly. Many projects we've invested in focus on one of these, while others focus on multiple.

    From the list below, please select what workers would have *more of* if your project is successful. (select all that apply)
    [Hint: Please refrain from selecting options where you might conduct activities on an intermittent or limited basis. Remember, this is about the project you are submitting this application for, not all the work in your organization's portfolio.]
    a. Safety and health at work - physical, environmental, or psychological harm, and threats are reduced
    b. Recourse at work - workers know their rights and are able to fully exercise and invoke them
    c. Security in life - workers have stability from a pay perspective and work-life perspective with their basic needs and ambitions being met now and in retirement
    d. Control of work - workers have the ability to influence decision-making around norms, policies, and organizational practices
    e. Mobility in work and life - workers have access to viable and accessible pathways for growth and advancement
    f. Participation in society - workers are activated to participate in free and fair democratic processes through work-related means or outside of work
    g. Other (Please specify)

48. Did this project start specifically as a response to COVID-19?

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a. Yes
b. No
    i. Does this project aim to address challenges that have emerged or have been exacerbated by COVID-19?
        1. Yes
        2. No

49. What measures have the industries you are disrupting taken in response to COVID-19 that directly impact the workers you are targeting? (Select all that apply)
    a. Adjusted Hours of Operation
    b. Bonuses or Other Financial Assistance
    c. Closed Operations
    d. Executive Salary Reductions
    e. Furloughs or Unpaid Leaves
    f. Hire More Workers
    g. Layoffs
    h. Pay Cuts and/or Reduced Hours
    i. Paid Time Off
    j. Staggered Work Schedules
    k. Virtual Conferencing and Meetings
    l. Work from Home Options
    m. Other (Please specify)

50. What support has the industries you are disrupting provided workers during the COVID-19 pandemic? (Select all that apply)
    a. Access to Community Services
    b. Back-Up Dependent Child Care
    c. Community Relief Fund
    d. Emergency Financial Assistance for Workers
    e. Job Board, Job Search, or Employment Assistance
    f. New Skills Development, Training, Education Assistance
    g. Technology Support
    h. Other (Please specify)

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51. Below is a list of potential areas of future exploration for The Workers Lab. If your project has an explicit focus on any of the following workers please select any that apply. We may follow up with you after the competition to learn more about your efforts. [Select all that apply]
    a. Rural communities
    b. People with disabilities
    c. Native American and/or Indigenous communities
    d. Senior citizens
    e. LGBTQ+ workers
    f. Refugees or Asylum seekers
    g. DACA recipients
    h. Youth/young people
    i. None of the above at this time

52. Feel free to elaborate on any worker, geography, or issue areas that we should be paying attention to, that is not included on the list above. (60 Words)

Project Information

53. Please confirm the name of your innovation/project: (10 words)

54. Please indicate the size of the project team
    a. 1 - 4 people
    b. 5 - 9 people
    c. 10 - 19 people
    d. 20 - 49 people
    e. 50 - 99 people
    f. 100 - 249 people
    g. 250 - 449 people
    h. 500 - 999 people
    i. 1,000+ people
    j. Other (Please specify)
    k. Same as the size of the organization

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       i.   Please choose all that apply:
1. Full-time Employees
2. Part-time Employees
3. Independent Contractors
4. Volunteers
5. Same as organization breakdown
   a. Total # of Full-time Employees (optional)
   b. Total # of Part-time Employees (optional)
   c. Total # of Independent Contractors (optional)
   d. Total # of Volunteers (optional)

55. **We would love to learn a little about you!** Please briefly share what resonates with you about this cycle's focus on workers coming back stronger. (100 words max)
[Hint: The Workers Lab's CEO shared why this topic is so personally important to him [here](#). Can you tell us your 'why' in a few sentences?]

56. Please **list the workers or workforce your creative idea is targeting.** (30 words max)
[Hint: e.g. gig/contingent, child care workers, justice-involved Latinx youth, food service workers, janitors, frontline retail workers, workers who lost their job due to the pandemic]

57. Please **describe the problem(s)** this project addresses and how it specifically affects workers of color (Black, Indigenous, or otherwise). (250 words max)
[Hint: Please note how these problems impact your target workforce's ability to come back stronger.]

58. Please **describe your creative idea**. Is it a program, service, tool, strategy, or something else? Help us understand how it works and how it can address the problems you identified in the previous question. (250 words max)
[Hint: As a note, this cycle's focus on workers coming back stronger is meant to surface creative ideas, rooted in community, and provide pathways to quality jobs. At this moment of many overlapping crises, we are looking for creative ideas that put workers on a new path.]

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59. Please **describe how you have engaged workers to date** in the development of this idea and what you have learned from that engagement. We firmly believe that engaging workers at various phases of an idea's development is paramount. If you have already engaged workers, please share how. If you have not, please share why that is so and any plans you have to engage them. (200 words)
[Hint: Please articulate or quantify data points and metrics for engagement where possible.]

60. Please share your vision for **'scale'** and what scaling this idea would look like after the 12 month grant year. (100 words)
[Hint: We'd like to learn from you. We know that scale is a buzz word to funders and means different things to different people. Is it something you've considered so far? Do you have a plan for it? Are you unsure what it means or whether it's possible for your idea? There is no wrong answer here and if you don't know or aren't sure yet, please just say so!]

61. How do you plan to **sustain and resource this work**? (100 words max)
[Hint: Please share any ideas or pathways for sourcing or generating revenue that you have in mind. Again, there is no wrong answer to this question.]

62. Please share no more than three **S.M.A.R.T. goals** for this project and the estimated timeline for achieving each over 12 months. (50 words max for each goal)
[Hint: To make sure your goals are clear and attainable, each one should be:
   a. *Specific (simple, sensible, significant);*
   b. *Measurable (meaningful, motivating);*
   c. *Achievable (agreed, attainable);*
   d. *Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based);*
   e. *Time-bound (time-based, time-limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).]*

63. What do you hope to **learn** from further developing and testing your idea in the coming year? Feel free to list any key learning questions you hope to answer. (200 words max)

64. What **skills and/or experience** do you and your team have to execute this project? (200 words max)

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65. If awarded a grant, what **kinds of expenses** would you anticipate these funds might cover? Feel free to list or describe these major costs. (100 words)

Fiscal Sponsor Information

NOTE: *Please only use this section if you are applying as a fiscally sponsored project.*

66. Has this project already secured a fiscal sponsor (as of 10/14/2020)?
    a. Yes
    b. In Process
    c. No

67. What kinds of resources is your fiscal sponsor dedicating to this project? (optional)
    a. Dedicated Staff
    b. Financial Resources
    c. Systems, Infrastructure, or Technical Support
    d. Leadership Support or Access to a Network
    e. Fiscal Sponsor Resources
    f. Other (Please specify)

68. Has your team worked with the above listed fiscal sponsor previous to this project?
    a. Yes
    b. No

69. How long has your team been operating under this fiscal sponsor?
    a. 0 - 6 months
    b. 6 - 12 months
    c. 1 - 2 years
    d. 2 or more years

70. If awarded a grant by The Workers Lab, does your team aspire to spin off into its own organization (independent of a fiscal sponsor)?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Unsure (Please explain)

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