

## [2022 Knowledge Challenge](#)

### Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation

*Unrestricted funding opportunity*

**Coordinator:** Tiffany Worboy, Director, Foundation Relations ([tworboy@emory.edu](mailto:tworboy@emory.edu))  
**Website:** [https://rfp.kauffman.org/prog/2022\\_knowledge\\_challenge/](https://rfp.kauffman.org/prog/2022_knowledge_challenge/)  
**Submission Limitations:** None  
**Foundation Deadline:** March 1, 2022 (no later than 12:59 AM EST)

*[Please contact your RAS unit \\*and\\* Tiffany Worboy to inform them of your intent to submit.](#)*

## OVERVIEW

The 2022 Knowledge Challenge RFP is intended to support activities that improve our understanding of entrepreneurship and generate practical, actionable, and rigorous evidence to inform decision making and change systems. **The Foundation's online application portal will open on January 18, 2022.**

Applicants will be asked to select a focus area. The two options are:

- **Systems and structures to support inclusive prosperity:** This area will explore the infrastructure needed to support entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs live within communities that are shaped by many interrelated systems and structures — communities where access to financial capital, health care, childcare, education, food, and transportation are often unequally distributed, and COVID-19 has fundamentally altered the business landscape. We need a more holistic understanding of how these structural conditions shape outcomes for entrepreneurs — particularly those whose race, gender, and geography have too often left them underserved by entrepreneurship and the economy more broadly — so that we can work towards greater inclusive prosperity. How can we ensure that the structures and systems in place create opportunity for individuals to start a business? What is needed to help entrepreneurs sustain their businesses, build capacity, and thrive? Systems and structures addressed in this focus area could address these questions. **We especially welcome submissions exploring wealth and income inequality, emerging trends in financing, and broader protections and social supports needed among entrepreneurs and aspiring entrepreneurs.**
- **Equitable opportunities and the future of work:** This area will explore how entrepreneurial activity might be structured as the economy emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic. How we work, what we do for work, and where we work are changing. Digital technologies, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, platforms, and algorithms are becoming increasingly ubiquitous, shaping the ways we work and live. What supports are needed to align entrepreneurial activity with the goal of inclusive prosperity? How might supports vary among differing forms of entrepreneurial activities such as self-employment, independent contracting, gig work, and employer firms? How do changes in work tasks and arrangements affect entrepreneurial activity? What new innovations are emerging, and what is yet to emerge? How can we ensure that these changes create more equitable outcomes, rather than supporting existing inequalities? How do we ensure that the future of entrepreneurship helps support and sustain individuals, families, and communities? **We welcome proposals that explore these issues with an eye towards the future and what may lie ahead for entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship.**

## BUDGET & AWARDS

Applicants may request funding **up to \$200,000 for projects led by a single PI** and **up to \$400,000 for projects led by a team** of collaborating PIs (interdisciplinary teams and research-practice collaborations) over 36 months. Applicants with smaller project budgets and scopes are also encouraged to apply.

Applicants should submit a project budget that aligns with the scope of the project, supports proposed activities, and clearly connects those activities with line-item requests.

## ELIGIBILITY

Proposals must come from faculty researchers at an institute of higher education **and/or** researchers who are part of a nonprofit organization. Applications are especially encouraged from teams of principal investigators (PIs) that represent two or more disciplines -- and teams that represent research-practice collaborations.

*We will not consider funding for:*

- Indirect/overhead expenses associated with the ongoing operations of the organization.
- Proposed project duration longer than 36 months.
- More than one application per primary investigator (only one proposal allowed).

## APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process will consist of two stages: (1) an initial application including an overview of your project, and (2) a full proposal.

### Stage 1 - Initial Application:

In addition to organization and primary contact info, basic budget numbers, and drop-down categorizations of the proposal, applicants will be expected to complete a series of questions that are specific to this request for proposals.

#### Components include:

- Proposal summary
- Staff capacity
- Project description
- Implementation plan
- Project personnel
- Financial feasibility of project/program

**\*\* Prospective applicants are encouraged to take advantage of the following opportunity for proposal support:**

#### Question Period:

- The Kauffman Foundation will accept questions related to this RFP and the application process from January 18 – February 8, 2022.
- Responses to common questions will be posted to the RFP FAQ once the question period closes.
- **Submit questions to:** [knowledgechallenge@kauffman.org](mailto:knowledgechallenge@kauffman.org).

### Stage 2 - Full Proposal:

If selected to advance to the second stage of the RFP process, applicants will receive user credentials to the Foundation's online grants management system, Fluxx.

## REVIEW PROCESS

All Stage1 submissions will be screened by Kauffman staff, and selected proposals will be sent to external reviewers. Those chosen as semi-finalists will be evaluated by a team of program officers and grants administration staff in a final decision meeting.

The review and approval process for this RFP will take approximately 5 months from the Stage 1 deadline date.