

RFP Details and Instructions

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

How do I submit a proposal?

The application process begins with an Online Funding Inquiry (OFI) on the John Templeton Foundation's application portal. Please click [here](#) for the link to our online application portal. In the *Cycle & Area* section of the application, select the "Character Through Community" funding cycle.

What does the application process look like?

1. OFI Submission (March – June 2021): All OFIs must be submitted by June 11, 2021 for consideration.
2. Review (June – July 2021): All applications will be reviewed by internal JTF staff and some will also go to a panel of external reviewers. Applicants will receive notification on the status of their OFI by July 30, 2021.
3. Full Proposal Submission (August – October 2021): Applicants who receive an invitation to submit a Full Proposal should expect to submit their Full Proposal by October 15, 2021. Applicants will receive notification on the status of their Full Proposal by June 10, 2022.

What do I put in each of the online fields?

Please reference the "Online Funding Inquiry Instructions and Notes" document as you work on completing the Online Funding Inquiry. This document is found within your JTF online portal.

The online fields are so short! Can I include more information as an attachment or in an email?

Due to the number of expected applications, we encourage applicants to limit their entry to the OFI form. We have found that the space provided is sufficient for applicants to provide a succinct, but detailed, project description. In addition to the applicants' CVs or resumes, the online form includes space for one attachment. Please only include an attached document if it is absolutely necessary for understanding your proposed project. Please do not send additional project information via email.

Should my community of practice only include individuals from one organization, or can it include individuals from multiple organizations?

We encourage you to identify the community of practice team members that will help to accomplish your goals in a cost-effective manner. Community of practice members can come from the same organization or from multiple organizations.

I'm planning to apply with a collaborator(s) from another organization. Should we each submit an OFI?

No, you only need to submit a single OFI for the project. For the purposes of the OFI, we ask that a single person serves as the *Project Leader* and include their organization's details in the *Organization* section of the application.

ELIGIBILITY

Who is eligible to apply?

Anyone whose organization meets the criteria identified in the Character Through Community Request for Proposals is eligible.

Can non-U.S. organizations apply?

Yes.

What types of organizations are eligible to apply?

We welcome proposals from a wide range of organizations. We anticipate a significant majority of the awardees will have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status or an equivalent international nonprofit status.

PROPOSAL DETAILS

How much should I request?

When determining your request amount, we ask that you consider (a) the cost of your activities and (b) the scope of your impact. Your request amount should accurately reflect fair market-rate costs for your proposed activities. Oftentimes, applicants note that the number of activities is flexible, with more activities requiring more funds, and fewer activities requiring less funds. To determine the number and cost of your activities, please consider the overall scope of your impact. If you are seeking to create significant change at the national level or to conduct a rigorous evaluation of a high-profile organization, then a request amount over \$1 million USD may be required. If you are focused on impacting change at the local level, then a request amount closer to \$200,000 USD may be appropriate. There is no "right amount" to request, but our reviewers do consider the "return on investment" as a key decisioning criterion. *Generally, we do not plan to invite proposals that request funds less than \$50,000 USD or more than \$3 million USD.*

Can we submit an OFI for a project with a duration over 3 years?

JTF will provide funding for projects up to 36 months in duration for organizations with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. We can provide funding for projects up to 33 months in length for all other organizations.

When should proposed projects start?

All proposed projects should have an anticipated start date no earlier than July 1, 2022 and no later than December 1, 2023.

Do you provide overhead/indirect costs?

The Foundation allows for an overhead/indirect cost component within the budget, which is no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the direct costs. We welcome proposals that request a lower percentage. The overhead/indirect cost should be included in your *Total Request Amount*.

Do you support travel and lodging costs?

Travel and Lodging for the Personnel Employed by the Legal Organization can be completely underwritten by the Foundation for all project activities. However, the Foundation has much stricter limits for the travel and lodging costs associated with anyone who is not employed by the Legal Organization, such as a Project Co-Leader at another institution or a conference presenter from another institution. In general, JTF does not fund projects with budgets that exceed 10% travel and lodging costs for persons not employed by the Legal Organization. Please note that JTF will not pay for first class or business travel.

May our project team or organization submit more than one OFI?

Yes. A project team or organization can submit multiple OFIs. If the OFIs are on related projects or ideas, we encourage you to bundle them into a single initiative.

Should citations or references be included in our OFI?

The Foundation expects applicants to use their judgment in deciding how many citations are necessary to include as part of describing their project idea. While in-line citations for key references can be helpful, especially where the proposed project is building on or challenging a particular line of work, we do not expect a full reference list at the OFI stage.

Is feedback available for a declined OFI?

Regrettably, given the large number of OFI submissions, the Foundation is unable to provide each applicant with specific feedback.

What kinds of Outcomes and Outputs should we include on the application?

Outcomes and Outputs will vary based on the nature of the project activities. For instance, if the goal of the project is to launch a new character-focused curriculum, then outcomes should align with the goal of continued implementation of the newly launched character development curriculum. Outputs could include (but are not limited to) practice-based outputs like new curricula, trainings, meetings/conferences, and other resources.

For another example, if the focus of the project is to conduct an evaluation to further understand why a program works and who it impacts, then outcomes should identify how answering the research questions will impact our understanding and practice of character development. Outputs should include academic papers and conference presentations, as well as relevant practice-based outputs (updated educational material, curricula, etc.).

Do you have further advice for applicants?

Successful applications, especially those requesting more than \$250,000 USD, should identify a *specific opportunity or problem of practice* that references a specific method to strengthen character programming. We have found that proposed activities with a unified focus are more often successful than proposed activities that are diffuse and lack an overarching narrative.

REVIEW & SELECTION

What are the selection criteria?

External reviewers, as well as John Templeton Foundation's internal staff, will consider the following criteria when reviewing OFIs:

- *Alignment with RFP objectives.* Have you clearly stated how the proposed work aligns and furthers the objectives laid out in the RFP call?
- *Detailed project plan.* Have you provided a detailed project *plan*?
- *Highly qualified and well-positioned project team.* Does the project team have the necessary experience and connections? Are you organized as a community of practice? Does your community of practice represent a diversity of perspectives and experiences?
- *Anticipated impact.* If you are successful, what is the likely significance of the proposed project? How will the world change as a result of your success (i.e., as described in the outcomes)? Please clearly describe your anticipated outcomes and outputs.
- *Cost effectiveness.* Is the proposed work cost effective?

OTHER

Who should I contact if I have further questions about the application process?

For any additional questions, please contact: characterRFP@templeton.org

