

# Global Call for Ideas

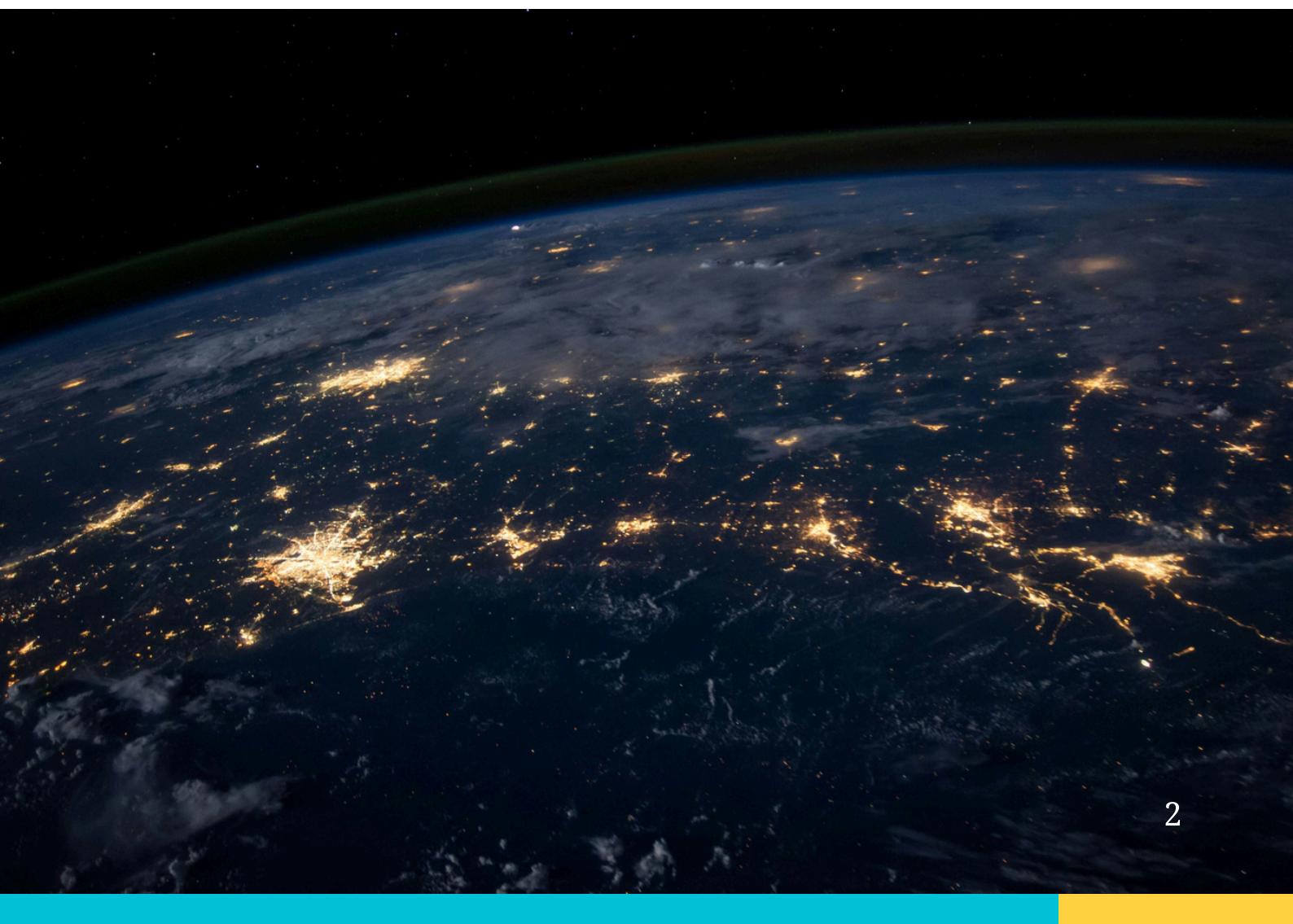
*with the potential to change the world...*

**Application Period: November 24, 2025 - February 13, 2026**



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## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

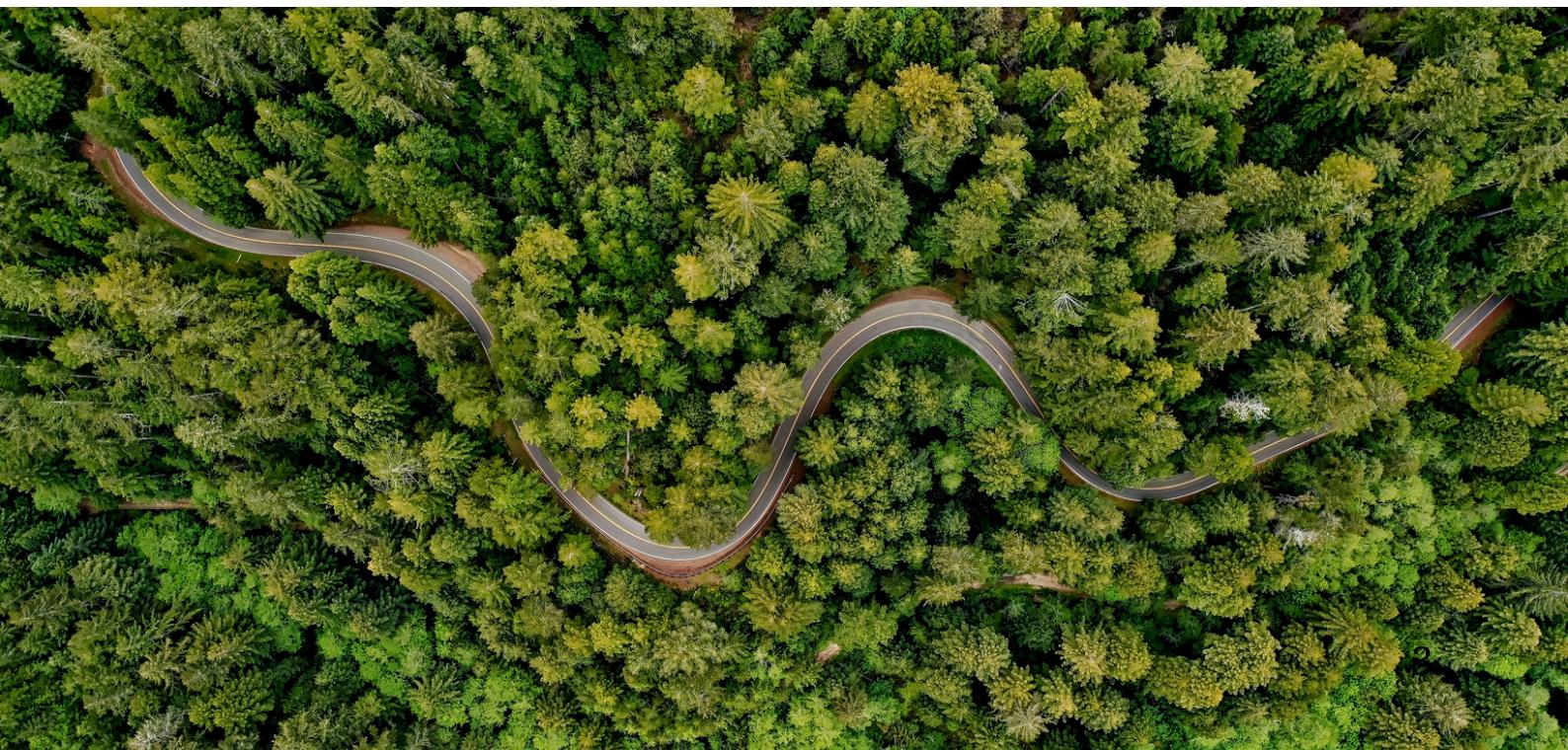
Templeton World Charity Foundation (TWCF) is committed to promoting scientific and religious exploration that inspires new perspectives on life's deepest questions. We are pleased to announce that we are currently looking for new ideas to catalyze discovery and accelerate progress in the spiritual search for meaning, purpose, and truth.

As part of TWCF's strategic planning process, we are seeking to engage the global community in a search for the best ideas wherever they may be found. This is not a traditional request for project proposals. Rather, we seek submissions of emerging topics that will form the basis of new funding priorities. This opportunity is expected to result in programmatic priorities funded in the range of USD 5-20 million, over a 5-7 year period.

### Key dates

- **Call for Ideas Opens - 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025**
- **Informational Webinar - 4<sup>th</sup> December 2025**
- **Call for Ideas Closes - 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

[Submit your idea here.](#)



## WHAT ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

We are looking for ideas to form the basis of future funding priorities aligned with [the foundation's purpose](#). Ideas should be bold and innovative, with the potential to deepen or expand our understanding of ultimate reality and what it means to be human. We seek ideas for rigorous research programs that can impact how we each see the world and our place within it. Recognizing that these discoveries may come from diverse sources we seek ideas that might illuminate and point to discoveries in three of our core areas of interest:

- (i) the fundamental processes, structures and constituents of the natural world
- (ii) what it is to be human, as well as the various ways human beings can progress spiritually through their understanding and pursuit of virtues such as love, creativity, gratitude, forgiveness, spirituality, connection, and other positive concepts.
- (iii) the nature of transcendent divinity and human responses to it.

Central to TWCF's mission is our commitment to meaning, purpose, and truth as realities that can be known and pursued. TWCF can fund curiosity-driven research on big questions that expand the horizons of humanity's perspectives, without necessarily expecting definitive answers. We welcome bold ideas that have potential to generate new insights, even if those ideas may be seen as too risky or contrarian by other funders.

As well as discovery focussed research, we are also open to ideas for more applied programs in specific topics (see Core Funding Areas) that will lead to long-term future benefits for humanity.

Our [current priorities](#) and [funded projects](#) exemplify, but do not limit, the range and types of topics that we are interested in. A full description of the scope of our work can also be found in the descriptions of our [core funding areas](#) (see Appendix).

We invite ideas from a wide range of disciplines, spanning the natural and social sciences, as well as humanities like philosophy and theology. Interdisciplinary ideas that integrate insights from different perspectives through open-minded inquiry are strongly encouraged.

## WHY SUBMIT AN IDEA?

This is a unique opportunity to shape TWCF's future grantmaking priorities. We want to hear from researchers and scholars with creative ideas that can push the boundaries of what we can know and understand, ideas that will advance long-term human progress. As we set out on a new strategic direction, we want to hear from a diverse group of thinkers. We have limited capacity to regularly run open calls, so we encourage you to seize this opportunity to put yourself and your ideas forward.

## HOW WILL IT WORK?

Ideas will be analyzed for fit with TWCF's mandate in the first instance and then considered for development as a priority funding area for TWCF. If your idea is taken forward for development, either alone or as a group of related ideas, you will be invited to advise the foundation in its strategic development process in 2026. We cannot guarantee funding of any specific ideas at this stage.



## REQUIREMENTS

All of TWCF's strategic priorities are designed to advance the foundation's mandate. Within each strategic priority, individual projects must also align with one of our [core funding areas](#). The largest focus of our grantmaking is on '[Big Questions in Science & Religion](#)' outlined above, with over two thirds of our resources directed to this funding area.

We also fund research and education programs in several specific areas chosen by our founder: genetics, [character virtue development](#), [genius](#), [individual freedoms & free markets](#) and [voluntary family planning](#). Ideas related to one of these areas are also welcome.

**In addition to the required alignment with our core funding areas, ideas with any of the following criteria are preferred:**

### Substantially positive in outlook

Research should seek to advance positive goals or character traits rather than have a negative or pessimistic focus.

### Contrarian

TWCF is mandated to support work that isn't already popular or routinely supported by "mainstream" funders.

### Innovative

Research based on novel hypotheses, methods, or some other breakthrough innovation that has the potential to create changes in thinking and behavior.

### Catalytic

Ideas that have the potential to generate wider interest and funding from others will be prioritised.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Can I submit more than one idea?*

- Yes. We just ask that each idea submission is substantially independent. If you have related ideas, consider indicating the different potential approaches in a single submission.

*Should ideas span different core funding areas or focus on one area?*

- Ideas only need to relate to a single core funding area. They may touch on multiple funding areas, but this will not necessarily confer any particular advantage during the selection process.

*What do you mean when you say that this is not a “traditional request for project proposals”?*

- Traditional Requests for Proposals typically require applicants to describe a specific, time-bound, and budget-bound project for which they would like to request funding. We are not looking for specific projects, but broader ideas for new priority areas and new portfolios of grants.

*Why should I share my idea(s) with you?*

- We understand that great ideas are valuable. We believe in partnering with others to advance our mission and to make progress towards our founder's vision through a number of program priorities. We want to learn from great minds who are attracted to the vision and mission of TWCF. If your idea is selected, you will be invited to partner with us in turning that idea into a compelling and impactful funding priority.

*Why do I need to list an institutional affiliation?*

- The Foundation does not make grants or donations to individuals; nor do we generally make grants to for-profit entities. This helps us evaluate how we might develop an idea should it be selected.

**For any questions, please contact us.**

Please feel free to send us an email at  
[ideas@templetonworldcharity.org](mailto:ideas@templetonworldcharity.org)



## APPENDIX 1:

# TEMPLETON WORLD CHARITY FOUNDATION CORE FUNDING AREAS

### 1 BIG QUESTIONS IN SCIENCE AND IN RELIGION

The Big Questions portfolio is the largest Core Funding Area, constituting more than two-thirds of TWCF's resources.

This area promotes the discovery of new information and research that adopts a humble approach to gaining knowledge and understanding of the universe and humanity's place within it, with the goal of beneficial progress in all areas of life and human endeavour. It emphasizes the importance of learning from different disciplines and perspectives through open-minded inquiry. By using the discipline and logic of the scientific method and other forms of cognitive inquiry, research should produce new, verifiable information whose conclusions can be brought to bear on and enhance humanistic and religious understandings of the fundamental nature of the world. More specifically, *scientia*—the Latin root of “science”—reflects Templeton’s interest in supporting discoveries using the full range of intellectual disciplines focused on progress and truth in three categories:

#### (i) The Nature of the Human Person and the Potentials for Personal and Societal Well-Being

This encompasses fundamental questions and discoveries concerning what it is to be human, as well as the various ways human beings can progress. It covers the study of human faculties and abilities, such as consciousness, intelligence, and free will. This category includes topics such as the nature and dimensions of human flourishing, the role of competition in well-being, the fostering of mental and spiritual frameworks, and the role of values in shaping worldviews. Also included are empirical projects that aim to elucidate the nature of concepts such as purpose, meaning, prayer, love, creativity, gratitude, forgiveness, spirituality, religion, curiosity, ethics and morality, generosity, future-mindedness, self-control, humility, joy, spiritual development, the natural history of religion, and wisdom. TWCF’s interest in quantitative research and the use of experimental paradigms to study these topics reflect the belief that scientific, verifiable knowledge can supplement ancient wisdom about these aspects of human life and experience.

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### (ii) The Fundamental Structures, Constituents, and Laws of the Natural World

This covers highly original explorations of topics such as cosmology, time, quantum reality, emergence, complexity, the ontology of mathematics, extraterrestrial life, multiverses, dark energy and matter, life and biological evolution/genetics, new concepts of order and form in biology, causation, information and communication, and order and chaos. Programs on the nature of progress and discovery in these core areas are also eligible for funding. This list is illustrative rather than exhaustive. Some of the concepts listed in (1) above—mind, infinity, complexity, free will, and purpose—can also be considered under this heading. We may also support projects concerning the nature of science and scientific inquiry, as well as those that promise to shed light on the existence or operation of laws governing these objects of inquiry. Because the highest level of scientific research should reveal more about the nature of ultimate reality, proposals must articulate the project’s theological or philosophical impact.

### (iii) The Nature, Essence, and Purposes of Transcendent Divinity

This includes projects on the nature of God, creation, divine creativity and human participation in it, divine action, providence, the fine-tuning of the universe, the nature of divine goodness, and unlimited love. It also includes studies of human responses to the divine, such as the nature of religion, awe and wonder, the power of gratitude and future-mindedness, religious experience, and the efficacy and significance of prayer with a view that such discoveries would inform and enrich human conceptualisation of the nature of God or the divine. TWCF does not advocate any religious theme over any other.

## 2 APPLIED RESEARCH AND EDUCATION PROJECTS ON KEY TOPICS

Secondarily, TWCF dedicates approximately one quarter of its resources to applied research and education projects that have the potential to create long-term impact. TWCF does not pursue traditional humanitarian charity, but funds programs aimed at preventing the need for such traditional efforts in the future. Through these secondary funding areas we support vitally important but neglected opportunities for multiple, beneficial transforming impacts on humanity’s future. These projects focus on topics of special interest to our founder, namely:

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### (i) Genetics

Our founder, Sir John Templeton, believed that genetics research held great promise for advancing progress and benefiting humanity. Given the rapidly changing nature of genetic research, we do not offer an exhaustive list of topics.

Instead, our Foundation prioritizes funding for neglected areas with the potential for strategic breakthroughs at the intersection of genetics and our core goals, vision, and purposes. These include: genetics of character or cognitive traits, epigenetics and genetic inheritance, genetics of past human evolution or more applied avenues such as genetic innovations to advance human health, genetically modified organisms for enhanced food or energy production or environmental remediation.

### (ii) Character Virtue Development

Our founder saw character development as the means by which to deepen knowledge and understanding of the human person, and to become spiritually prosperous. Significantly, he wanted people to be transformed by what he perceived to be spiritual principles, and believed that the products of such spiritual prosperity would be personal, and relational, and lead to social, and economic prosperity. TWCF welcomes proposals on a wide range of learned and learnable attributes, virtues, skills, habits, or capabilities that enable individuals to lead better lives.

### (iii) Genius

TWCF supports work to identify and cultivate geniuses whose work can bring benefits to human civilization. In this context, geniuses are not simply those who are classified as such by psychometric tests. Rather, they are those who generate significant mathematical, scientific, technological, and spiritual discoveries and inventions that benefit humanity or have the potential to transform human civilization.

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### (iv) Individual Freedoms & Free Markets

Our Individual Freedom and Free Markets (IFFM) portfolio supports education, research, and efforts to promote individual freedom, free markets, competition, and entrepreneurship. Grounded in the ideas of classical liberal political economy, we support projects that focus on individuals and their place in a free society. TWCF strongly encourages proposals that explore how “free enterprise is a teacher of ethics”, highlighting Sir John’s vision of the role of other character virtues in reinforcing entrepreneurship and free markets.

### (v) Voluntary Family Planning

TWCF funds projects that empower women and families to control their lives and futures by giving them the power to choose the number of children they have. Proposals in this area may include facilitating access to tools and information concerning ways to control family size voluntarily or engage religious leaders in fostering education about voluntary family planning; however, ideas concerning ways to voluntarily increase family size may be considered as well.