

Outcomes Accelerator: Cohort 4 Forests and Nature Call for Proposals

Submission Deadlines

Applicants may submit EOIs via the [online portal](#) starting **September 17, 2025.**

EOI submissions for Outcomes Accelerator support are due by **October 31, 2025.**

Introduction

The Outcomes Accelerator is a catalytic platform to accelerate more effective testing, scaling and mainstreaming of outcomes-based financing (OBF) approaches into the delivery of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) impact. The Outcomes Accelerator works with stakeholders across the outcomes-based financing ecosystem – including governments, development agencies, investors, services providers, intermediaries, and knowledge partners – to address the key barriers facing the market and unlock funding for high-quality outcomes-based financing projects.

The Outcomes Accelerator offers flexible funding, targeted expertise, and networking to support OBF initiatives with testing, launching, and scaling.

The founding members of the Accelerator are SECO, FCDO, and the UBS Optimus Foundation, who have engaged Levoca LLC to perform the day-to-day Secretariat activities of the Outcomes Accelerator. Further details on the role of the Secretariat can be found in the Application Guidance section below.

See information on the winners of the first three Cohorts of the Outcomes Accelerator [here](#).

Scope and Priorities for the Fourth Call for Proposals

Forests underpin global climate stability, food and economic security, and biodiversity preservation. Achieving global sustainability goals—including the Paris Agreement’s 1.5-degree target, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, and the SDGs—requires urgent action to halt deforestation, restore degraded landscapes, and transition to sustainable land use practices. Forests provide invaluable yet often underappreciated social, environmental, and economic benefits.

There is growing evidence that OBF can align incentives, unlock private capital, and drive more effective forest protection and restoration. By tying funding to verified results, OBF can improve accountability, reward long-term stewardship, and support innovation across actors. This approach holds particular promise for the forest sector, where traditional funding has struggled to keep pace

with the scale and complexity of the challenge—and where coordinated, performance-based solutions are urgently needed.

The Outcomes Accelerator seeks proposals for innovative OBF projects to incentivize forest protection and restoration, sustainable land use, biodiversity conservation, and other nature-positive investments. We particularly encourage proposals addressing tropical forest biomes in priority geographies, notably the Amazon Basin, Congo Basin, Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea, while also welcoming high-impact projects from other critical forest ecosystems, including dry forests, savannahs and mangroves linked to tropical forests.

Project Types and Thematic Areas

The Outcomes Accelerator welcomes innovative proposals that apply OBF to achieve clear and measurable conservation, social, and economic outcomes.

The most successful proposals will articulate actionable OBF strategies through innovative financing mechanisms to:

- Overcome barriers to forest-friendly and nature positive investment
- Crowd-in public and/ or private capital
- Demonstrate replicability across jurisdictions and biomes
- Provide a pathway to diversify revenue streams *beyond conventional carbon crediting*; and
- Integrate cost effective and robust measurement, reporting, and verification (MRV).

Proposals may explore (but are not limited to) interventions within the following thematic areas:

Table 1: Thematic Scope of Fourth Call for Proposals

Category	Description
Forest Conservation and Restoration	Initiatives that leverage OBF to restore degraded forests, prevent deforestation, enhance ecological connectivity and improve forest resilience, wildfire management and protection, and create value from forest regrowth and restoration. We also encourage the submission of initiatives related to jurisdictional carbon credits, carbon projects (both reforestation and REDD+) that include additional outcomes related to biodiversity and social benefits for local communities, and projects that integrate REDD+ with sustainable commodity production.
Sustainable Land Use, Regenerative Agriculture and Agroforestry	Projects that use OBF mechanisms to incentivize sustainable and regenerative agricultural, agroforestry, or integrated land-use practices, that improve ecological health, connectivity, and economic sustainability and incorporate forest protection and restoration into viable sustainable production models.
Sustainable Supply Chains	Innovative OBF-enabled solutions ensuring deforestation-free supply chains, traceability, and measurable reductions in environmental impacts.
Nature Positive Recreation and Tourism	Projects using OBF to incentivize responsible eco-tourism enterprises or models for the development and management of outdoor recreation infrastructure linked to conservation-based KPIs.

Biodiversity Conservation	Approaches employing biodiversity-linked OBF instruments, that support habitat restoration and protection, species protection, and ecological corridor initiatives that deliver measurable improvements in ecosystem health and biodiversity gain.
Coastal Forest Ecosystems and Forest-Water Nexus	OBF-funded interventions in coastal forest ecosystems (e.g., mangroves) within tropical biomes or integrated forest-watershed management that deliver clear, measurable outcomes related to carbon sequestration, water security, and resilience.

Note: Projects exclusively reliant on carbon credits as their primary outcome payment mechanism must demonstrate clear additionality beyond traditional carbon finance.

Proposals will not be considered if they:

- Lack a clear outcomes-based financing component.
- Fail to enhance forest ecosystems or sustainable land use.
- Cannot clearly demonstrate a pathway to financial sustainability.
- Do not demonstrate their ability to comply with local and international regulations, including environmental, social, governance (ESG) standards and indigenous rights.

Geography

Projects or services must be delivered in or be provided for the benefit of countries and territories eligible to receive official development assistance according to the [OECD-DAC List of ODA Recipients](#).

Priority will be given to tropical biomes in the Amazon Basin, Congo Basin, Indonesia, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea, though high-impact proposals from other critical forest ecosystems are welcome and eligible to apply, including dry forests, savannahs and mangroves linked to tropical forests.

Project Maturity

The Outcomes Accelerator seeks initiatives that can demonstrate existing market traction, such as engagement with key partners and availability of outcome funding. Competitive proposals will be able to provide evidence of support, commitment, and leadership from outcome funders and domestic government partners (e.g. letters of support, MOUs, official announcements, etc) and other key partners.

OBF Mechanisms and Strategies

The Outcomes Accelerator is instrument-agnostic as long as projects support the design, implementation or capacity building for an Outcomes-Based Finance approach. All projects should involve the participation of non-state actors. Private investment is not required but may be considered a bonus when it adds knowledge and rigor, and/or financial viability to the project.

Project should adhere to [OECD guidance](#) and definitions of outcomes-based finance. Instruments may include, but are not limited to, impact bonds, outcomes bonds, impact-linked loans and bonds, outcome funds, biodiversity units, nature credits and environmental market mechanisms, carbon-linked payments, innovative PES and compensation schemes, pull finance mechanisms, outcomes contracts, corporate insetting, among other tools, strategies, and approaches.

Who can participate?

The Outcomes Accelerator invites applications from individual organizations or consortia, including, but not limited to:

- **Outcome funding organizations** including multilateral and bilateral funding organizations, private philanthropy, corporates and partner governments.
- **Service delivery organizations**, including non-profit and for-profit organizations that implement outcomes-focused programs.
- **Market support providers** including deal developers, intermediaries, advisory firms, research organizations; and
- **Impact Investors** including funds, development finance institutions, foundations, institutional and other investors, or providers of risk or working capital.

Technical Criteria to Guide Expression of Interest (EOI) and Full Proposal Assessments

All proposals will be objectively assessed using the evaluation criteria in the table below to support decision making and shortlist the most promising applications and EOIs. The assessment scores for proposals will remain confidential within the Outcomes Accelerator. For transparency and learning purposes, applicants may ask for qualitative feedback on their proposals that are invited to submit full proposals. The Outcomes Accelerator’s Governing Committee will review shortlisted proposals and endorse final selections.

Table 2: Technical Assessment Criteria

Criteria	Description	Max Points (Total=100)
Potential for Impact and Accelerator Additivity	<p>Applicants must submit proposals aligned with the scope of the Fourth Call for Proposals to use outcomes-based financing (OBF) mechanisms to align incentives, unlock private capital, and drive more effective forest protection and restoration. See Table 1 above for more details on the scope of this CfP.</p> <p>Competitive proposals will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly articulate the development challenge(s) and any market failures to be addressed – including barriers to forest-friendly and nature positive investment. • Demonstrate why an OBF approach makes sense for the problem it seeks to solve, and how it will improve the 	35

	<p>effectiveness and/or efficiency in the delivery of forest-related outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the key pain points that are preventing the project from moving forward and how the Outcomes Accelerator will help address them. <p>The Outcomes Accelerator will also prioritize projects that will deliver tangible benefits for local and Indigenous communities, including initiatives that embed local knowledge and promote the participation of these communities.</p>	
Stakeholder Support and Likelihood to Launch	<p>Proposals must demonstrate their readiness to launch, backed by strong support from relevant stakeholders. For the fourth Cohort, the Outcomes Accelerator will prioritize projects that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate clear market traction and interest from potential partners Commitment and leadership from governments, investors, private funders or offtakers Present a credible, well-defined pathway to sustainable financing beyond donor support Engage and center local and Indigenous communities in design, implementation, and decision-making 	25
Capacity to Deliver and Staffing	<p>The Outcomes Accelerator will prioritize proposals with teams, organizations, and consortia that can demonstrate their capacity to deliver (e.g., strength and quality of partnerships, level of expertise, track record of delivery, evidence supporting interventions, etc.). Consortia partnerships and subcontractors should be well defined.</p>	20
Innovation, Demonstration Effect and Scalability	<p>The Outcomes Accelerator will prioritize proposals that are innovative, data-driven, and offer a potential pathway to scale and sustainable funding, including mobilization of partner government and/or private sector funding. Proposals should also explain how the program will be financially viable in the long term and demonstrate its ability to crowd in private finance for forest ecosystems. This can include outcomes-based projects that are looking to expand into a follow-on or scale up phase.</p>	20
	Total	100

In addition to the technical criteria, proposed budgets will be assessed separately at the Full Proposal stage with consideration for realism and price reasonableness. Indicative budget amounts for each product category are provided in the Application Guidance below.

All applications will be required to meet the due diligence and eligibility requirements of the UBS Optimus Foundation and the donors to the Outcomes Accelerator if selected.

What types of activities are eligible for Accelerator support?

Outcomes Accelerator takes a portfolio approach, aiming to balance late-stage and early-stage concepts, a range of instrument types, and innovation level. The table below provides indicative guidance on potential uses for Pipeline Acceleration funding. It is intended for guidance only.

Table 3: Indicative Uses of Accelerator Funding

Product	Description	Indicative Amount
Scoping study	Country-focused, looks at one or more topics. This should be done in partnership with an interested outcome funder.	Up to \$60K -100 K
Early-Stage Design	High value opportunity requiring detailed design study	Up to \$300K
Late-Stage Design	Concept in late stage of design, requiring funding support to reach launch (e.g. finalization of key contracts, including outcomes contract)	Up to \$200K
Project Scale Up	Funding to support the design of a scale-up phase of an existing outcomes-based project. Can include design of outcomes fund.	Up to \$200K

Application Process

The application process is a two-step process: (1) Expression of Interest (EOI), and (2) Full Proposal for shortlisted applicants by invite only. The EOI will include an initial screening for eligibility, followed by general information about the organization(s), project details and concept, and general funding requirements.

Applications that are successful at the EOI stage will be invited to submit a full proposal, which will require greater detail about the project, including buy-in from relevant stakeholders, project risks, activities, staffing and a full budget breakdown.

Application Stages:



Anticipated Application Timeline

- **EOI Submission Window:** September 17 – Oct 31, 2025
- **Full Proposal Submission Window:** Mid-December 2025 – January 2026
- **Due Diligence and Contracting:** March – May 2026

Submission Deadlines

Applicants can create an account to submit EOIs on the [online portal](#) starting **September 17, 2025**

The EOI submission deadline for Outcomes Accelerator support is **October 31, 2025**.
 The Full Proposal submission deadline (invite only) is **January 23, 2026 (TBC)**.

All questions should be sent to OutcomesAccelerator@levoca.org.

Applicants with concerns on sharing highly sensitive information should reach out to the Outcomes Accelerator Secretariat to discuss possible non-disclosure arrangements or an option to redact highly sensitive information in their proposals with a short justification explaining why information was left out.

Assessment Process

All applications will be subject to a competitive assessment to ensure that selected projects into the Outcomes Accelerator contribute to the Accelerator's goals as well as demonstrate value for money, using the technical assessment criteria provided above to guide decision-making and review.

At EOI stage, projects will first be screened for their eligibility as pass/fail and then be assessed based on evaluation criteria as to whether they will be invited to submit a full proposal. Additional information and clarifications may be requested upon EOI review.

At the full proposal stage (invite only), projects will be assessed on a greater level of detail, including a project budget, staffing, and KPIs. The Outcome Accelerator can enter a dialogue with proponents on all aspects of the proposals, before submitting the recommendations for final approval. Applicants may be requested to present their proposal in-person or virtually to the Outcomes Accelerator members and/or independent experts in a pitch session before final decisions are made. Full proposal templates will be made available to short-listed applicants.

Applications will be selected based on a holistic view of the project proposal against defined criteria for each cohort and will be carefully selected to ensure a complementary portfolio balanced in theme, region and levels of novelty.

Decision-making

All proposals will be assessed competitively and transparently guided by the assessment criteria outlined above. The final selection of Outcomes Accelerator applications will be made by consensus by the member organizations of the Governing Committee of the Outcomes Accelerator, consisting of FCDO, SECO and the UBS Optimus Foundation. Proposals will be submitted to Levoca in its role as the Outcomes Accelerator Secretariat for eligibility screening, technical review, and processing, which will share documentation with the Governing Committee.

To support decision-making recommendations on grant approvals, the Governing Committee may invite external, independent, non-voting member(s) and other outcome funders on ad hoc or permanent basis to participate in the technical review process. Project proponents may be required to present their proposals virtually to a panel of Outcomes Accelerator donors, donor observers, and independent experts before final decisions are made.

Contracting (UBSOF)

Selected Applicants will receive Outcome Accelerator Funding once the proposal has received final approval and a legal written agreement to use Outcome Accelerator funding towards implementation of the project is signed by all parties (the Trustee– UBS Optimus Foundation and grantee).

Transparency and Disclosure

The Outcomes Accelerator is committed to transparency and sharing knowledge as a public good. All materials and studies supported with Outcomes Accelerator funding should be made public when possible, including, but not limited to, feasibility and design studies and outcomes contracts. Proposals may opt-in to be included in the Outcomes Accelerator Pipeline Database.

Conflicts of Interest

The Outcomes Accelerator will identify and take appropriate measures to avoid or resolve conflict of interest situations by the Secretariat, and any voting and non-voting members and observers of the Governing Committee of the Outcomes Accelerator.

Levoca, in its role as the Secretariat of the Outcomes Accelerator, will operate its advisory services and other business activities at arm's length from the Outcomes Accelerator and will not be able to apply for Outcomes Accelerator sub-grants or be hired by sub-grantees using Accelerator grant money.

Feedback

The Outcomes Accelerator is a laboratory for learning and innovation and will continually review and improve its operating processes as needed, including seeking feedback from the market.

Questions and Contact Information

For any questions or further information, please reach out to the Outcomes Accelerator team at OutcomesAccelerator@levoca.org.