

Third Way Moderate Power Venture Fund Request for Proposals

About Third Way

Third Way is a national think tank that champions modern center-left ideas.

Our work is grounded in the mainstream American values of opportunity, freedom, and security. But we identify as center-left, because we see that space in U.S. politics as offering the only real path for advancing these ideals in the century ahead.

Our agenda is ambitious, aspirational, and actionable. It is built on the bedrock belief that for political movements to succeed in our political system, they must relentlessly re-imagine their policies, strategies, and coalitions.

We are fighting for opportunity, so everyone has the chance to earn a good life; progress on social issues, so all have the freedom to live the lives they choose; and security, so we are protected from 21st century global threats.

Our competitive advantage lies in our high-impact advocacy campaigns that combine rigorous policy research with a unique and incisive understanding of the vast American middle—the people who ultimately decide majorities and provide mandates for change. We design our work to persuade elected officials, intellectuals, advocates, the media, and others with political influence.

The Moderate Power Venture Fund

The center-left ecosystem is far too small, and we must find political-minded entrepreneurs to launch and scale new projects to help us compete in the marketplace of political ideas. Through the Moderate Power Venture Fund, Third Way seeks to provide seed funding and support to scale innovative projects whose ideas align with our organizational mission of building center-left social capital and political power.

We seek proposals for original initiatives led by outstanding individuals or teams. We are interested in ambitious projects that aim to bolster one or more key elements of a moderate power infrastructure, particularly those that fill gaps in the current center-left landscape rather than duplicating or redefining existing efforts. We will ultimately choose to fund projects where our investment can have the most profound impact. This could be anything from brand new concepts that require seed money to get off the ground to established operations who are poised to leverage an influx of capital to bring their work to scale.

Investment Budget, Project Support, and Timeline

The Moderate Power Venture Fund will make investments of \$100,000 to \$250,000 in a handful of projects that have the potential to strengthen the center-left ecosystem by May or June, with the expectation that fund recipients will be able to demonstrate some level of meaningful, measurable results by the end of 2024.

In addition to funding, Third Way can provide its selected projects with a variety of strategic and operational support services, if needed, such as fiscal sponsorship, HR and/or payroll systems management, strategic advising, technical expertise, physical office space, and more. Projects selected for second-round review will be encouraged to explore these needs and options with the Third Way senior team.

Selection Criteria

As mentioned above, we are seeking strategic, entrepreneurial projects that meet a critical need for center-left power-building and strengthen the existing infrastructure of political power in our movement. Eligible projects may take a wide variety of formats: a center-left campus organizing group, a rural media platform, a leadership training institute, a community outreach center, a tech innovator, or many, many others. We hope to have our horizons expanded by the breadth of innovative applications—particularly in the areas of communication and organizing, where political moderates have struggled to keep pace with the extremes. We are also open to investment in exceptional people; if a dynamic leader with a groundbreaking idea and cohesive plan of action submits an application, it will receive due consideration.

Our team will review each application with the following criteria in mind:

1. How will this project strengthen and support strategic growth on the center-left? Is there a compelling vision for impact?
2. What is the unique value add? Does this project duplicate or build upon existing efforts?
3. Will our investment in this project have a significant impact and be put to good use? Does the project have strong leadership and a sound strategic plan? How will our funds be deployed to bring the project to scale?
4. What are the short- and long-term project goals?
 - a. Will the project be able to deliver some level of measurable results by the end of 2024, even if those results are a pilot that would need to be replicated or scaled? How would the project measure those results?

Application Process

Please submit your application [HERE](#). Applicants will be contacted directly if they are selected for second round review. Priority consideration will go to applications submitted by **April 1, 2024**.

We expect to contact the first round of promising applicants for further conversation by mid- to late-April, and we hope to select our final investment portfolio and disperse funds by late May or early June of this year.