



The Gradient Fund is an unconventional new vehicle for early-stage investment in research with outsized potential for social impact.

To this end, the Fund exclusively supports work on a curated set of questions posed by practitioners. “Practitioner” means anyone who uses the outputs of university-based research to make consequential choices, whether that be a public policy-maker, philanthropist, investor, activist, or entrepreneur.

If that’s you, you can shape the allocation of the Fund’s capital. We work with people like you to identify, refine and articulate questions and to map these to resources needed to make progress on them (e.g. contextual information, data, access). These then become eligible topics against which researchers can submit grant proposals. Funded researchers commit to a deliverable addressing the practical question posed, in addition to any purely academic outputs.

Because questions determine our capital allocation, we are selective. We seek in particular questions that

- Have a “public good” nature, such that they matter for many people or organizations, not just one;
- Could plausibly lead to large benefits for humanity, particularly when taking issues of equity into account; and
- Are tractable using the toolkit of modern economics, as well as (potentially) other disciplines.

Beyond these criteria we impose no topical boundaries.

Intrigued? Tell us (gradientfund@ucsd.edu) a bit about your work and the kinds of questions you want to see answered.