

**WE PROSPER
TOGETHER**



SECOND ROUND CATALYST PRE-DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

APRIL 2025



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i. ELIGIBILITY CHECKLIST

Thank you for your interest in applying to *We Prosper Together's* second round Catalyst RFP. Before you begin your application, we encourage you to complete the following eligibility checklist to ensure your proposed project meets the necessary criteria for consideration. Responding “yes” to all of the questions below indicates that the proposed project is eligible.

Question	Yes	No
<p>Does the project serve one or more of the following counties? <i>The following counties collectively form the Capital Region. Only projects located in or directly benefiting these counties are eligible for consideration.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Colusa ● El Dorado ● Nevada ● Placer ● Sacramento ● Sutter ● Yolo ● Yuba 		
<p>Is the funding request for one of the following pre-development project types? Only projects focused on pre-development activities are eligible for Catalyst funding. <i>See page 5 for a detailed list of eligible activities.</i></p> <p>“Exploratory” Projects: Early-stage projects that assess feasibility and develop plans for future work. These projects are not yet fully developed but explore potential opportunities</p> <p>“Last-Mile” Projects: Projects that have completed initial planning or feasibility studies and require a few more actions to become ready for implementation.</p> <p>Unless clearly defined as a pilot project, projects ready for implementation are not eligible for Catalyst funding.</p>		
<p>Does the proposed project support the creation of quality and/or promising jobs in at least one of the following industry sectors?</p> <p>Priority Tradable Industry Sectors <i>(Definitions on pages 6-7 of the RFP)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biotechnology ● Precision Manufacturing ● Working Lands ● Business Services <p>Opportunity Sectors <i>(Definitions on pages 7-8 of the RFP)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Construction ● Healthcare ● Tourism ● Creative Economy 		
<p>Does the proposed project directly benefit disinvested communities in the Capital Region? <i>We Prosper Together recognizes disinvested communities as those experiencing income disparities, systemic racism, racial inequalities, climate change vulnerabilities, historical systemic oppression, geographic isolation and exclusion from traditional systems of opportunity.</i></p>		

I. INTRODUCTION

CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST (CJF)

CALIFORNIA JOBS FIRST (CJF) was established under Senate Bill 162 (SB 162) in September 2021 to boost long-term economic growth and sustainability across California. This program is essential to strengthening the state's economic resilience as we transition to a carbon-neutral future. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CJF supports recovery efforts by helping communities diversify their economies and grow sustainable industries that provide high-quality, accessible jobs for all Californians. CJF seeks to create broadly accessible economic opportunities and address historical inequities by investing in local industries, supporting communities in the transition to a carbon-neutral future, and helping build good-paying, accessible jobs for everyone across the state.

The CJF program follows a four-phase grant process designed to encourage inclusive planning and equitable outcomes for underserved communities throughout the state. The phases include the Pre-Planning Phase, the Planning Phase, the Catalyst Phase, and the Implementation Phase. This approach ensures intentional planning, community engagement, and effective execution, with a commitment to creating opportunities for populations that have historically been underserved. CJF aims to build strong, inclusive local economies and address long-standing inequities by making economic opportunities widely accessible.

VALLEY VISION

VALLEY VISION serves as the main organizer and fiscal agent for the [eight-county](#) California Jobs First initiative in our region, named [We Prosper Together](#). Valley Vision has guided this effort from its earliest stages. Valley Vision's role is to make sure that the economic goals of CJF are reached in a way that benefits everyone, especially communities that have been systematically overlooked in the past.

As a regional leadership organization, Valley Vision is dedicated to advancing economic, environmental, and social equity in Northern California. Focused on uplifting communities through innovative solutions, Valley Vision leads efforts that enhance quality of life, environmental health, and economic resilience. Known as a trusted partner, Valley Vision brings together diverse groups— including local governments, businesses, and community-based organizations— to collaborate on key priorities like workforce development, clean air and climate, and healthy communities. Together, these efforts are building a stronger and more inclusive future for our region.

WE PROSPER TOGETHER COLLABORATIVE

WE PROSPER TOGETHER COLLABORATIVE is a partnership of eight-counties: Colusa, El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. [This Collaborative](#) is focused on creating equitable opportunities and uplifting communities across Northern California that have historically been

underserved. With a strong belief that economic success should benefit everyone, the Collaborative brings together resources, partnerships, and strategies to support inclusive growth. *We Prosper Together* works to dismantle systemic barriers and open pathways to quality jobs, educational advancement, and community empowerment for populations that have often been left out of economic progress.

The Collaborative's mission is to ensure that all communities, especially those that have been disproportionately affected by economic challenges, play a vital role in the region's future growth. By centering equity in decision-making processes, *We Prosper Together* is building a resilient and inclusive economy that works for everyone.

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL is the main decision-making body of the Collaborative. Its responsibilities include reviewing recommendations from the broader Collaborative, providing strategic guidance on regional planning efforts, and upholding *We Prosper Together's* core values.

COMMUNITY AND LABOR AMBASSADORS

COMMUNITY AND LABOR AMBASSADORS are a critical link to disinvested communities. They play a vital role in gathering input, fostering engagement, and sharing information about the *We Prosper Together* initiative with disinvested community members across the region. These ambassadors create a two-way communication channel that ensures community voices shape regional priorities and residents stay informed about opportunities and initiatives.

We encourage proposers to connect with Community and Labor Ambassadors to better understand local priorities, build trust, and create solutions that are both impactful and inclusive. A Community Ambassador has been designated in each county of *We Prosper Together's* service area. You can find a list of our region's Community and Labor Ambassadors [here](#).

Applicants are encouraged to pursue collaborative projects and connect with other organizations conducting similar work to strengthen proposals and maximize regional impact.

WE PROSPER TOGETHER REGIONAL PLAN

WE PROSPER TOGETHER'S REGIONAL PLAN, *Strategies for a Thriving and Inclusive Economy*, is a roadmap to guide the Capital Region toward a strong and equitable economy. Shaped by thorough research and broad community engagement, the plan's strategies focus on creating high-quality jobs, connecting disinvested communities to new opportunities, and ensuring equitable outcomes across the region. All applicants are encouraged to read the [full Regional Plan](#) and [Executive Summary](#).

II. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY AND BACKGROUND

THE CATALYST PHASE

THE CATALYST PHASE is a key component of the California Jobs First initiative, which seeks to build long-term economic resilience, workforce inclusivity, and regional competitiveness across California. This phase is designed to accelerate the implementation of strategies identified in each region's *Regional Plan*. By making targeted investments, the Catalyst Phase aims to boost job creation, support high-quality employment, and drive sustainable industry growth. Through these efforts, the Catalyst phase focuses on **advancing high-opportunity industry sectors** that promote environmental sustainability and future-focused growth, **ensuring job creation aligns with long-term economic, environmental, and equity goals**. Building on the momentum of the Planning phase, the Catalyst phase advances these strategies into actionable projects, strengthening capacity in the region's most promising sectors and advancing long-term economic goals.

PURPOSE OF FUNDING

PURPOSE OF FUNDING The goals of funding Catalyst Pre-Development Phase projects are to:

- Invest in industries that will advance environmentally sustainable, future focused, high quality job opportunities.
- Ensure workers and disinvested communities are the primary beneficiaries.
- Advance projects toward implementation readiness, positioning them to compete effectively for future federal, state, or private funding.

QUALITY AND PROMISING JOBS

QUALITY JOBS are occupations that meet the wage thresholds outlined below and offer employer-sponsored benefits.

PROMISING JOBS may not yet meet these wage thresholds or include benefits, but they provide clear pathways to quality jobs within the next 10 years. Together, these jobs create opportunities for workers to earn a livable wage and achieve long-term economic stability.

WAGE THRESHOLD FOR QUALITY JOBS IN THE CAPITAL REGION, BY SUBREGION

Source: *Brooking and Cities GPS analysis*. Found on page 7 of the [Capital Region Economic Assessment Executive Summary](#).

County	Hourly Wage	Annual Earnings
Placer and El Dorado	\$34.30	\$69,972
Nevada	\$33.50	\$68,340
Sacramento and Yolo	\$30.70	\$62,628
Colusa	\$29.50	\$60,180
Yuba and Sutter	\$29.20	\$59,568

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES funded through this RFP must advance economic development that contributes to a **carbon-neutral, climate-resilient economy** while **building capacity for quality job creation** in the four tradable industry areas outlined below. To be eligible for funding, projects must meet the California Jobs First initiative definitions of “Exploratory” or “Last Mile.”

- **“Exploratory” Projects:** These are in the **early stages of development**, focusing on assessing feasibility and creating plans for future work. These projects are not yet fully developed but explore potential opportunities.
- **“Last-Mile” Projects:** These projects have already completed initial planning or feasibility studies and require a few final steps to be ready for implementation.

UNDERSTANDING PRE-DEVELOPMENT

Catalyst funding supports specific **pre-development activities**, which help move a project from concept to being implementation-ready.

WHAT CATALYST FUNDING CAN COVER:

- **Planning and Feasibility:** Activities that assess a project’s viability, such as:
 - Feasibility studies
 - Market analysis
 - Environmental impact assessments, surveys, and remediation
 - Site plans, project designs, and necessary permits
- **Financial and Legal Frameworks:** Costs related to setting up financial and/or legal structures, such as, but not limited to:
 - Legal expenses for forming partnerships or public-private agreements
 - Planning costs to establish financial tools, such as a regional tax financing district

- Development of Community Benefits Agreements
- **Capacity Building:** Investments to strengthen the project team’s ability to plan and execute the project effectively. Examples of potential activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Staffing and training costs for project leadership
 - Development of sustainable infrastructure plans (such as water or waste systems)
 - Professional development for key team members or partners.
 - Financial planning associated with a capital project (such as preliminary budgets and construction financing)
- **Pilot Projects:** Scalable test projects that demonstrate innovative workforce pathways in priority industry sectors, leading to high-quality jobs for disinvested communities. Pilots must also show potential for regional expansion.

In addition to meeting the definition of “exploratory” or “last mile” indicated above, projects are expected to advance pathways to quality jobs in one of the following priority tradable or opportunity industry sectors identified by the We Prosper Together initiative. Priority scoring will be granted to projects that foster growth in a priority tradable industry sector.

HIGH OPPORTUNITY INDUSTRY SECTORS:

PRIORITY TRADABLE INDUSTRY SECTORS:

Applications are expected to advance quality jobs in one or more of the following sectors. While all occupations meeting quality job threshold are encouraged, middle-skill occupations are highlighted within each category.

- **Biotechnology** -This sector is concentrated on innovations in life sciences and food technology, including **biotech, biopharma, agriculture, and food technology**. The region’s strong foundation in research and innovation positions it for growth in high-quality jobs in these fields.

Examples of middle-skill occupations in this sector include: Technicians, including lab, drafting engineering, and mapping technicians; information and records organization specialists; mathematical science occupations, management and supervisory positions, installation, maintenance, and repair workers, and administrative roles.

- **Precision Manufacturing** - This sector includes the manufacturing of high-value-added products containing instrumentation and microelectronics, such as products for **medical devices, next-generation transportation, machinery, robotics, aerospace, and defense**. The region has capacity to produce intricate, highly accurate components to meet stringent specifications and

tolerances. In light of major new investments, this sector presents emerging opportunities in **microelectronics** and **semiconductors, battery production, cleantech, and advanced agricultural equipment**.

Examples of middle-skill occupations in this sector include: Assemblers and fabricators, metal and plastic workers, production workers, installation, maintenance, and repair workers, operators, engineer technicians (drafting and mapping), administrative roles, and managers and supervisors.

- **Working Lands** - This sector focuses on **food, agriculture, and wood product manufacturing**, leveraging the region's natural resources. Key emerging opportunities include **renewable energy production through biomass utilization** and **carbon management**.

Examples of middle-skill occupations in this sector include: dispatchers and distribution workers, material movers and schedulers, production workers, wholesale and manufacturing sales representatives, engineers and technicians, installation, maintenance and repair workers, managers and administrative roles, forest, conservation and logging workers, firefighting and prevention workers, wood, metal and plastic workers, rail transportation workers.

- **Business Services** - A key driver of the region's economy, this sector includes technical services, business administration, legal services, management consulting services, advertising, and marketing, among others. Accelerated by the presence of state government and regional connections to national and global markets, business services are a major driver for the region's economy. Additionally, this sector has the capacity to support a dispersed workforce due to the opportunity of remote work, providing opportunities to diversify areas of the region with limited source economies.

Examples of middle-skill occupations in this sector include: Business operations specialists, IT and computer occupations, information record specialists, sales representatives, supervisors and managers, legal support workers, financial specialists, advertising, sales and public relations, and administrative roles.

OPPORTUNITY INDUSTRY SECTORS:

While growing tradable sectors and increasing job opportunities in these sectors is key to growing a prosperous, resilient, and sustainable economy, it can take time for targeted investments in sector growth to generate new jobs. Therefore, it is equally important to invest in strategies that connect communities to the **quality jobs** that are currently available, many of which are in local-serving sectors. Project applications will also be eligible for funding if they advance **quality jobs** in any of the following:

- **Construction** - The regional construction industry grew steadily between 2012 and 2022, with job growth in the sector accounting for more than 20% of all jobs created in the region during that period. Demand for skilled construction workers continues to rise, pushed higher by the need to backfill positions held by retiring workers. Federal and state investments in infrastructure and climate adaptation create additional opportunities for industry growth. These investments can be leveraged for maximum effect if deliberate actions are taken to diversify contractor pools and

expand access to pathways into these careers.

- **Healthcare** - The healthcare sector is a very large employer in the region, with many major medical systems. Healthcare concentrates a reasonably high proportion of opportunity jobs. Several sub-sectors like hospitals and outpatient care centers feature even greater shares of occupational roles with higher wages, including well-established professional and credentialing ladders that create a clear pathway for workers to navigate toward economic mobility.
- **Tourism** - This local-serving sector has historically been an important contributor to our regional economy, particularly in the Tahoe subregion. Businesses in this industry run the gamut from small and micro businesses to casinos, outdoor expedition providers, boutique hotels, convention venues, major resorts, and tribal casinos. Wineries and agritourism operations attract people to agricultural areas and provide much-needed revenue for rural communities. Outdoor recreation provides a major draw for visitors from throughout California and beyond.
- **Creative Economy** - Outreach and engagement across the different subregions revealed the desire for the arts and the creative economy to be better represented across the industry clusters, given that they play a crucial role in almost every industry (e.g., through design, marketing, etc.). Our region recognizes the need to include the creative economy within the broader job market by integrating it into various sectors, promoting job opportunities, and fostering a culture that appreciates and utilizes creative skills.

ECONOMIC EQUITY PRIORITIES

For We Prosper Together, economic equity is considered the just and fair inclusion of disinvested communities into the economic fabric of the Capital Region to ensure they advance economically and reach their full potential. Projects must prioritize economic equity by creating pathways for empowerment and social mobility for our unique disinvested populations. In addition to meeting the definition of “exploratory” or “last mile” indicated prior, and advancing one of the priority or opportunity industry sectors identified by the We Prosper Together initiative, proposed project plans must intentionally incorporate inclusionary strategies to ensure direct benefit to our disinvested communities. The Capital Region’s economic equity priorities are introduced below, with the full details available [here](#):

- **Community-Centered Inclusionary Practices** - Focus on community-centered, inclusionary practices that prioritize the unique and holistic needs, strengths, and perspectives of disinvested populations.
- **Economic Inclusionary Approaches** - Advance economic mobility for residents of disinvested communities through participation as workers and business owners.
- **Data Informed and Transparent Alignment and Coordination** - Include transparent programmatic procedures and community-involved decision-making.

To be considered for Catalyst funding, proposals must clearly demonstrate the involvement of and benefit that future implementation will have on disinvested populations.

We Prosper Together recognizes disinvested communities as those experiencing income disparities, systemic racism, racial inequalities, climate change vulnerabilities, historical systemic oppression, geographic isolation and exclusion from traditional systems of opportunity.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

This funding opportunity is focused on early-stage planning and development. This section outlines the types of projects that are **not** eligible for this funding round.

1. **Construction Projects** – Any project that is ready to begin construction or involves building new facilities is not eligible for Catalyst funding. This type of project may qualify for Implementation Phase funding instead, which will open after January 1, 2025.
2. **“Ready-to-Go” Projects** – Projects that are fully prepared to start immediately (i.e., those that have completed all planning, permits, and pre-development work) are also not eligible for Catalyst funding.

III. ELIGIBILITY AND REPORTING

ELIGIBLE ENTITIES

The following is a list of entities eligible to apply for funding:

- Nonprofit organizations
- Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)
- Academic institutions
- Local governments
- Community foundations
- Labor organizations

Note: While private businesses cannot lead an application, they are encouraged to participate as partners.

Applicants may submit multiple project proposals. Each proposal must be submitted separately. Entities are allowed to act as fiscal agents for multiple organizations.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Grantees must submit regular progress reports including the following:

- **Monthly Progress Reports:** Summarize the project’s progress according to the work plan including key milestones achieved, measurable objectives and performance indicators, challenges encountered, adherence to the budget, and fiscal reporting. Reports should include photos of the project's advancements whenever available along with impact stories and/or testimonials.
- **Final Project Report:** A comprehensive final report summarizing the current and anticipated impact of the project on economic conditions, disinvested communities, and climate impacts. Include the full timeline of activities highlighting project successes, measurable outcomes, challenges encountered, final budget summation. This report should also include anticipated next steps and/or actionable recommendations for transitioning to the next stage of development. Project proposals involving the development of a pilot program should indicate next steps in program expansion.

IV. PROJECT TIMELINE AND TOTAL AWARD AMOUNTS

FUNDS AWARDED

FUNDS AWARDED will support activities from the date of award through September 30, 2026. There is no specified minimum or maximum award, awards are recommended to be up to \$1,000,000. A total of \$4 million in funding is available.

APPLICATION AND FUNDING TIMELINE

RFP Release	April 18, 2025
Proposers’ Webinar (Optional)	April 23, 2025, 10:00 am - 11:30 am
Virtual Grant Writing Workshops (Optional. RSVP required)	April 28, 2025, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm April 29, 2025, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Applications Due	June 15, 2025, by 11:59 pm
Approximate Award Notifications	July 25, 2025
Approximate Start Date	August 1, 2025
End Date	Projects must be completed by September 30, 2026

PROPOSER'S WEBINAR

PROPOSER'S WEBINAR: Potential applicants are encouraged to attend an optional proposers' webinar regarding this funding opportunity. The webinar will be held virtually on April 23, 2025, from 10 AM to 11:30 AM. [To register please follow this Link](#). The webinar will cover key information about the application and address participant questions. Attendance is not required, however, it is strongly recommended. Please review the application materials before attending. A recording will be posted on our website for those who are unable to attend.

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOPS

GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP: Multiple virtual and in-person grant writing workshops will be available to support applicants interested in the Catalyst funding opportunity. The workshops are intended to empower community-based organizations in proposal writing and provide participants with practical guidance on how to clearly and effectively communicate project ideas. For more information and to register for the virtual workshops, [follow this link](#).

V. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Applications are due **no later than 11:59 PM Pacific Time on June 15, 2025**, and must be submitted through the [Submittable platform](#). Incomplete applications will not be eligible, and proposals received after 11:59 PM Pacific Time on June 15, 2025, will not be reviewed.

Please submit questions regarding this RFP to info@weprosperitogether.org. Questions and answers will be posted on [this live-updated Question & Answers document](#).

APPLICATION DETAILS AND RATING:

To ensure a complete and reviewable application, applicants must submit the following information, excluding budget information and references. Applications will be rated according to the following criteria:

IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

- Organization name
- Organization Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN)

- Organization address
- Primary contact information (name, position, email, and phone number)
- Project name
- Counties within the We Prosper Together region the proposed project will serve
- Brief description of what your organization would do with these funds (30 words or less. If selected for funding, this description would be used on public facing materials)
- Total funding requested

ORGANIZATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS (24 points)

- Demonstrate the lead organization’s ability to manage and execute the project, including mission, history, and experience with similar work. (300-800 words)
- Provide evidence of the organization’s successful delivery of past projects, with specific outcomes and impact. (300-800 words)
- Outline the organization’s methods and practices for ensuring effective reporting and compliance during the project. (300-800 words)
- List the key personnel and partners involved in the project.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (40 points)

- Provide a clear summary of the project’s main objectives, outcomes, and the planned activities to achieve them. (300-800 words)
- Describe how the project will directly contribute to the creation of high-quality and/or promising jobs in the Capital Region. For guidance on wage thresholds and definitions of quality and promising jobs, refer to page 7 of the [Capital Region Economic Assessment Executive Summary](#).
- Describe how the project will mitigate climate impacts and outline measurable actions for this purpose. (300-800 words)
- Detail the ways in which disinvested community members will be actively involved in the planning and design of the project. (300-800 words)
- Describe how the project will directly benefit disinvested communities. (300-800 words)

SECTOR ALIGNMENT (16 points maximum)

The project must align with one of the priority tradable or opportunity sectors. Projects aligned with priority tradable industry sectors will be awarded sixteen points; projects aligned with opportunity sectors will be awarded eight points.

- Explain how your project directly supports and contributes to one of the priority tradable

industry sectors. (300-800 words)

- Explain how your project directly supports and contributes to one of the opportunity industry sectors. (300-800 words)

WORK PLAN (24 points)

- Provide a timeline with specific dates for project milestones, key activities, and deliverables, including clearly delineated roles and responsibilities.
- Detail your community engagement efforts and/or how you will conduct outreach to historically marginalized and disinvested populations within the project area.
- Provide measurable objectives and performance indicators for tracking the progress of pre-development activities. The following are provided as examples and are not an exhaustive list.
 - Completion of Key Pre-Development Milestones: Examples include securing necessary permits or approvals, completing site assessments, feasibility studies, or environmental reviews.
 - Stakeholder Engagement and Buy-In: Examples include conducting community engagement sessions with measurable participation, establishing formal agreements with stakeholders.
 - Detailed Project Planning: Examples include completing architectural or engineering designs, preparing a comprehensive project timeline and risk assessment.
 - Project Advancement and Development: Examples include submitting grant applications or other funding proposals, securing funding commitments.
 - Data Collection and Analysis: Examples include gathering and analyzing baseline data to inform project planning, completing demographic, market, or environmental analyses.

PROPOSED BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE (16 points)

- Provide a detailed, itemized budget with categories such as personnel, materials, travel, and subcontractors.
- Provide a budget narrative explaining how each cost was calculated and why it is essential for successful project completion.
- Provide fiscal contact information for any questions about the budget.

REFERENCES

Provide two funding references with the following details:

- Name, email, and phone number of the primary contact.

- A brief summary (one paragraph) of the project associated with each reference.

References should be able to speak to:

- Your organization’s capacity to successfully deliver the proposed work.
- Your ability to meet reporting requirements and adhere to the approved budget.

APPLICANT/ORGANIZATION DOCUMENTATION FOR CONTRACTING

The following documentation does not need to be submitted with the proposal package, but will be necessary to finalize a contract:

- Evidence of eligibility to conduct business in California
- List of Board of Directors or governing body
- Most recent audited financial statements or financial statements covering the previous twelve months
- Insurance Certificates (demonstrating coverage for general liability, workers’ compensation, etc.)
- Other information or documentation as required or requested by the state of California

APPENDICES (OPTIONAL)

- Letters of Support
- Additional supporting documents, such as resumes of key staff, case studies, or past project summaries, if relevant to the application.

VI. INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS

Applications that do not include all required documents or fail to follow submission instructions will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.

VII. QUESTIONS AND INQUIRIES

For questions related to this funding opportunity, please email info@weprosperitogether.org with the

subject line: "We Prosper Together Catalyst RFP Inquiry."