



**ASCADOR**  
ScaleUp

**Cascador ScaleUp  
prepares growth-stage  
founders to  
successfully deploy  
growth capital and  
build companies that  
endure.**



# What Founders Gain

Cascador ScaleUp is designed to deliver practical, high-impact outcomes you can apply directly to your business.



**Strategy & Scale**



**Capital & Growth**



**Leadership & Network**



# Program Benefits

A high-impact experience designed to support founders with both the capabilities and capital required to scale.

## Bespoke ScaleUp Experience

Tailored guidance built around your company's stage, opportunities, and challenges.

## \$50,000 in Pitch Prizes

Awarded during the in-person intensive and Pitch Day.

## Pathway to ~\$5M/yr Catalytic Fund

Alumni are eligible to apply for funding from Cascador's capital pool of up to \$5M USD per year.

## Travel, Lodging & Meals Covered

For all required in-person program sessions.

## \$5,000 Founder Stipend

Awarded upon successful completion of the program.



# Team Participation

## **C-level Participation**

C-level invited to all relevant virtual sessions e.g Finance, Revenue Generation

## **Exposure for your Team**

Exposure for your team, frees up CEO time to focus on more strategic function

## **Functional Expertise and Advisory Support**

Team education and upskilling to build functional expertise to support the vision of the organization

# ScaleUp Program Eligibility

Everything you need to know before applying.

## Eligibility



2+ years  
in operation



Demonstrable  
Traction

*(Previous cohort avg.  
N1B in annual revenue)*



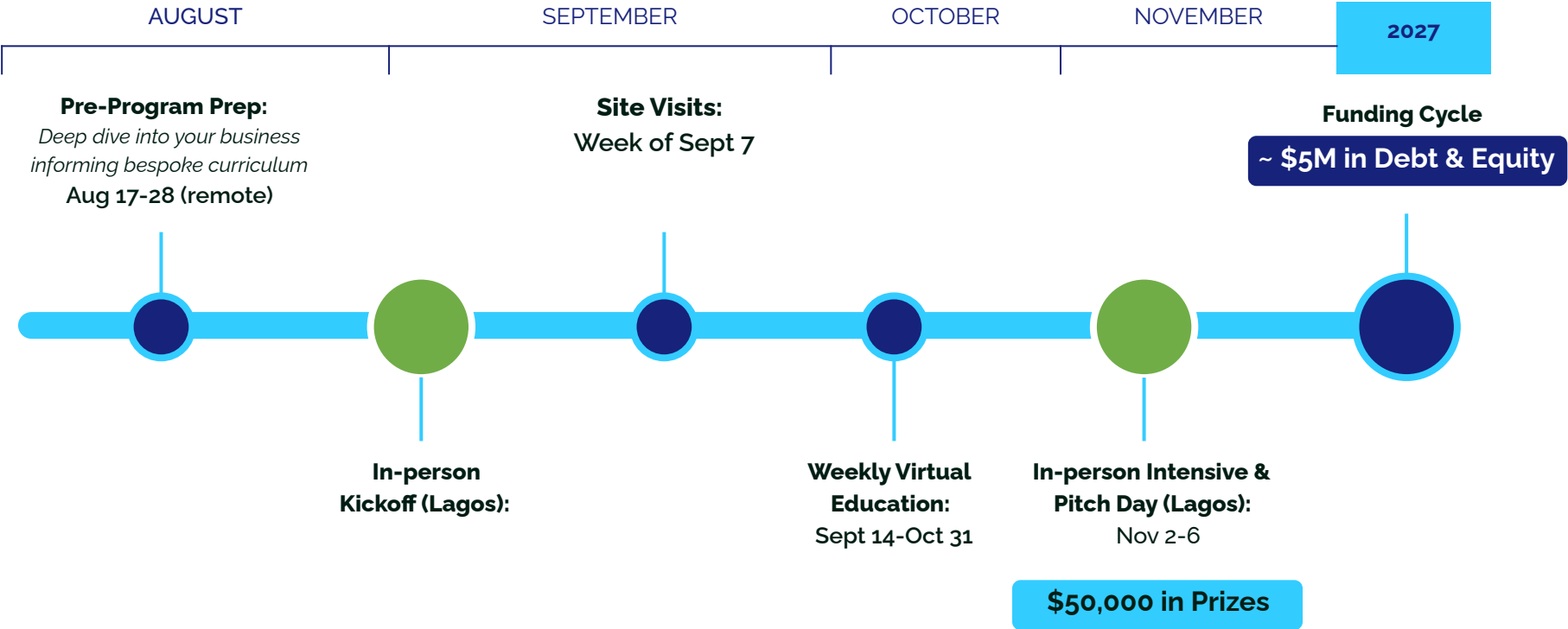
Based or  
operating in  
Sub-Saharan  
Africa



Preference for  
ventures with  
meaningful social  
impact



# ScaleUp Program Dates



# Application Process & Key Details



All applicants begin with a 15-minute preliminary application



Selected founders are invited to complete a full application



Semi-finalists submit additional materials, including financials



Finalists are selected for interviews



Cohort participants are notified by August 1

Applying early increases your chances of receiving a Pitch Day invitation

# SELECTION CRITERIA

Making a strong Application



**CASCADOR**

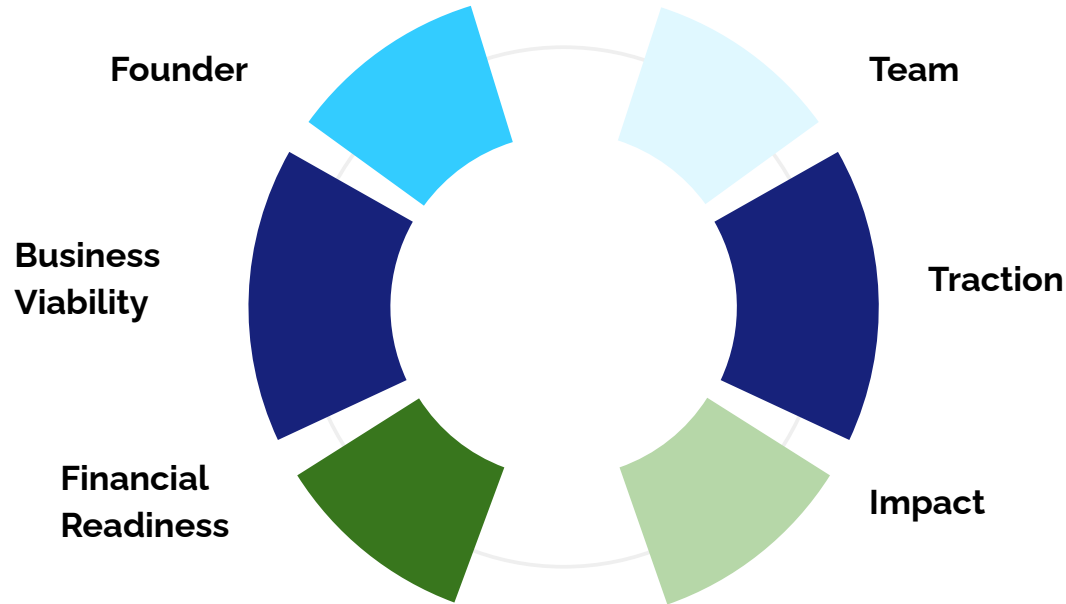
# Principles of a Strong Application

**A strong application makes it easy for us to understand, believe, and trust in you, your team and your business**

1	<b>Clarity</b>	If we don't understand it, you've already lost. Simple, direct language, no buzzwords
2	<b>Brevity</b>	Say more with less. Answer questions directly, and cut what does not add value
3	<b>Numbers over narratives</b>	Show, don't tell. Back up your claims with numbers
4	<b>Consistency</b>	Your story, traction and model should all line up
5	<b>Self-awareness</b>	Strong founders don't pretend to be perfect. Be clear on risks and gaps
6	<b>Coachability</b>	Strong founders want to learn

# What we're assessing in your application

We are assessing 6 things in your application



We're not looking for perfection!

# Gold Standard Guidelines

- We've provided guidance to help you shape the **perfect responses** .
- But, **we don't expect perfect answers** or for you to meet every criterion.
- What matters more is that you are **open and honest** about your challenges and support needs.
- That's exactly what Cascador ScaleUp is designed for!



# 1. Founder



## Q: Is this the founder we should bet on?

### We look for:

- Clarity:**  
Articulation of business, market, and challenges
- Track record:**  
Achievements, leadership potential, genuine interest in impact
- Founder-Market Fit:**  
Domain expertise, lived experience
- Coachability:**  
shows humility and coachability when pushed

### ● Strong Signals

- Clear, direct answers (no fluff)
- Knows numbers cold
- Honest about gaps (not over-polished)

### ● Weak Signals:

- Buzzwords, vague strategy
- Avoiding hard questions
- Overconfidence without evidence

## 2. Team



### Q. Can this team actually execute at scale?

#### We look for

**Leadership:**

Co-founders or senior leadership are in place

**Functional Completeness:**

Finance, Operations, Sales/Growth, Tech

**Commitment:**

Senior leadership has been working together for a while (>1years)

**Strong Signals**

- Founder is not the bottleneck
- Senior people in key roles (finance, ops, sales)
- Evidence of strong hiring decisions

**Weak Signals:**

- Founder doing everything
- Missing critical roles
- Junior team in senior roles
- Growth plan doesn't match team capability

# 3. Business Viability



## Q. Can this business work at scale?

### We look for:

- Customer:**  
Clarity on the customer & their problem
- Value proposition:**  
Clear explanation of what value you add to customers
- Revenue model:**  
Obvious how you make money on repeat
- Unit Economics:**  
Positive gross margins with the potential to scale
- Acquisition Channels:**  
How you acquire customers is clear

### ● Strong Signals

- Who the customer is and how you acquire them is clear
- Revenue model is obvious and repeatable
- Clear unit economics

### ● Weak Signals:

- "We just need capital to scale"
- No clarity on customer acquisition
- Big projections, no operational clarity

## 4. Traction



### Q. Is there real evidence of demand and momentum?

#### We look for:

- Paid Demand:**  
Evidence that customers are paying
- Growth:**  
Momentum in customers, order value, revenue
- Repeatability:**  
Proof that demand can happen consistently
- Quality:**  
Metrics show commercial progress, not just activity

#### ● Strong Signals

- Growing paid demand
- Clear traction metrics over time
- Repeat customers or repeat usage

#### ● Weak Signals:

- Vanity metrics (downloads, impressions, signups without revenue)
- One-off contracts with no evidence of repeatability
- Big projections, but weak historical performance

## 5. Financial Readiness



### Q. Can we trust you to deploy and manage capital in the future?

#### We look for



#### Story-Model Alignment:

Financials clearly reflect the business narrative



#### Cash Understanding:

Clear grasp of cash flow, working capital, and timing



#### Financial Discipline:

Ability to track, explain, and defend key metrics



#### Strong Signals

- Model ties directly to how the business works
- Revenue built from customers  $\times$  price  $\times$  frequency
- Clear understanding of margins and cost structure



#### Weak Signals:

- Model contradicts the pitch
- Profit clear, but no understanding of cash flow or working capital
- Round-numbers
- Missing key costs (e.g. capex, logistics, operations)

## 6. Impact



### Q. Does this business create meaningful impact - and will it scale?

#### We look for:



#### Clarity of Impact:

Clear articulation of who benefits and how



#### Embedded Impact:

Impact is part of the core business model (not an add-on)



#### Scalability:

Impact increases as the business grows



#### Measurability:

Ability to quantify and track outcomes

#### ● Strong Signals

- Clear definition of target beneficiaries
- "We create jobs" without specifics
- Quantified metrics (e.g. customers served, costs reduced, jobs created)
- Evidence that impact will grow with scale

#### ● Weak Signals:

- Generic SDG references
- "We create jobs" without specifics
- Impact separate from the business model
- No clear way to measure or track impact

# Video Submissions - Opportunity to really stand out

3 areas of the application where you can really stand out



## Value Proposition Video

1 min video, good sound quality

Introduce your business covering:

- problem
- customer
- solution



## CEO Video

1.5min video max,  
good sound quality

- Your personal strengths & weaknesses
- What personal support you need to succeed in 2026



## Team Video

1.5min video max,  
good sound quality





- Describing your leadership team
- Explain why each person is uniquely qualified to scale this business

# Killer Value Proposition Video



## Q. Are you solving a clear problem for a specific customer in a superior way?

### What we look for:

-  **Clear customer:**  
Specific description of your customer
-  **Clear problem:**  
Real and large unmet demand
-  **Clear solution:**  
Jargon free explanation of what your product / service is
-  **Quantifiable:**  
Numbers to back the scale or the opportunity

### Strong Signals

- Clear customer demographics, behaviours or shared pain points
- Problem is measurable and urgent
- Solution is differentiated and superior
- Clarity of language

### Weak Signals:

- Generic customer with no identified pain point
- Generic, undifferentiated solution
- Problem is not quantifiable

# Killer CEO Video



**Q. Do you understand yourself as a leader well enough, and will you accept the coaching needed to scale this business?**

## What we look for:

-  **Self-Awareness:**  
Clear personal strengths and weaknesses
-  **Honesty:**  
Not over-polished or defensive
-  **Coachability:**  
Actively seek opportunity to become stronger

## Strong Signals

- Specific, showing real reflection
- Honest (not faux weaknesses like "I work too hard")
- Connects strengths and weaknesses to business
- Articulates exactly where support is needed

## Weak Signals:

- Generic answers ("I work too hard", "I'm a perfectionist")
- No real weaknesses
- No connection to the business
- No clear ask for support

# Killer Team Video



## Q. is the team uniquely qualified to succeed?

### What we look for:

- **Team strength**
- **Role clarity**
- **Execution capability**
- **Founder judgment in hiring**

### ● **Strong Signals**

- Clear structure (no rambling)
- Each key leader is: Named, Role defined, Relevance explained
- Direct link between team and business needs

### ● **Weak Signals:**

- Listing names and titles only
- Generic praise ("very hardworking", "great team player")
- No link between experience and the business
- Missing key roles or unclear ownership



**GOOD LUCK!!**



**THANK YOU!**