



GORDIAN KNOT STRATEGIES
Trust Us To Unlock Your Impact



TRARO



U.S. Endowment
for Forestry and Communities

Case Study

Smarter Impact Screening with TRARO®: From 55 Proposals to 5 Investable Opportunities with Speed and Accuracy

ABOUT

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities is a not-for-profit public charity collaborating with partners in the public and private sectors to advance systemic, transformative, and sustainable change for the health and vitality of the nation's working forests and forest-reliant communities.



Gordian Knot Strategies helped us launch our impact investing program. They provide high-quality analysis and leadership that allowed us to develop a program that reflected our values and needs and that was informed by superior research and diligence from GKS.

– **Peter Stangel,**
Chief Development Officer,
US. Endowment

THE CHALLENGE

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities needed to efficiently identify and assess high-impact investment opportunities from a large pool of applicants in the forestry and rural development space. The process required robust screening criteria, mechanisms to boost overall field capacity, and maximize resource efficiency for both funders and applicants.

OUR SOLUTION

GKS established a two-stage selection process for the Endowment as part of its 2025 Impact Investing RFP. The first stage was TRARO®, which screened and scored projects, grouping them into three categories:



The TRARO® Scorecard generated for each assessment gave each proponent clear and tailored guidance to enhance its project design and proposal quality, regardless of the score. As a result, applicants were empowered to assess their own investment readiness, with 42% opting out of the RFP process. Many proponents leveraged the feedback to improve the submission under the second full proposal stage. The Endowment had the benefit of considering full RFP proposals only from optimally designed project submissions, saving it time and effort.

THE IMPACT

- \$6.5 MILLION** designated **impact investment** budget
- 42%** of initial applicants self-opted out of the RFP, **saving significant time** for both themselves and the Endowment.
- 240 HOURS** saved by using TRARO®, enabling **fast and confident decisions**

TRARO
Narrative Export

Project Summary

Organization	
RFP Name	US Endowment Round II
Exported On	February 16, 2025
Status	Final

Every applicant received a tailored TRARO® Scorecard with actionable feedback.

3.5
MONTHS
FROM SCREENING TO
SHORTLIST

55
TRARO®
SCORECARDS
DELIVERABLES

32
RFP
SCORES

5
INVESTMENT
MEMOS

- SCREENING
- DUE DILIGENCE
- PROPOSED TERM SHEETS
- WEBINAR

CONTACT: info@gordianknotstrategies.com

LINKEDIN: www.linkedin.com/company/gordian-knot-strategies

WEBSITE: www.gordianknotstrategies.com

**BOOK A
DISCOVERY CALL**