AIR AND WATER LAB 2024 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pilot Research Proposals Application Form and Instructions

INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals for AWL research funding for pilots (up to US$75,000)[1] consist of (i) basic contact and logistical information; (ii) a proposal narrative; (iii) a budget; and (iv) letters of support.

If you are interested in applying, please first reach out to the relevant lab team member below to learn more about matchmaking opportunities and requirements:

- India (SARWA): Sanjana Gorti at sgorti@povertyactionlab.org
- Cape Town, South Africa (WAE Lab): Margaret Andersen at mandersen@povertyactionlab.org

Please submit complete applications as one PDF to the relevant contact above and CC awl@povertyactionlab.org and kcai@povertyactionlab.org.

Deadlines for submission:

- India (SARWA): Pilot and proposal development grant applications accepted on the same schedule as K-CAI's RFP: EOIs are due February 29, 2024, and full proposals are due April 4, 2024.
- Cape Town, South Africa (WAE Lab): Pilot and proposal development grant applications accepted on a rolling basis.

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[1] Please note that full evaluations requesting less than $75,000 are considered full research projects and evaluated accordingly. The criteria for pilot funding apply only to proposals requesting funds to conduct piloting, or pre-randomization, activities.

COVERSHEET AND NARRATIVE

SECTION: COVERSHEET

Please note that all fields are required.

TITLE OF PROPOSAL	COUNTRY

J-PAL AFFILIATED or INVITED RESEARCHER(S)

INSTITUTION TO RECEIVE FUNDS (J-PAL REGIONAL OFFICE)*

NON-J-PAL CO-PI(s) (Institutional Affiliation)

☐	*By checking this box, all J-PAL affiliates and invited researchers who are co-PIs on this project certify that they will be active, engaged, and responsive PIs dedicated to guaranteeing the quality control on all aspects of this project; and that their participation in this project is not merely to provide access to J-PAL resources and funding to anyone else working on this project who is neither a J-PAL affiliate nor K-CAI/AWL invited researcher.*

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	CONTACT (NAME, EMAIL, PHONE)

CO-FUNDER(S)	FUNDED AWARD (PI, Project Title, Amount)

Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL funding initiative?	
☐ Yes ☐ No [Select One]	If yes, which initiative and when? [Look-Up]

Requested	$	Total co-funded	$
GRANT PERIOD			
Start date: (yyyy-mm-dd)		End date: (yyyy-mm-dd)	
Institution to receive award*		Contact for contracting issues	
Some projects will not be conducting research involving human subjects. However, if this project will involve research on human subjects, please fill out the two boxes below.			
IRB OF RECORD		IRB CONTACT	
We are also in touch with other funders and occasionally share proposals that are relevant to their interests. If you **do not** want this proposal shared with them, please check this box: ☐			

* Please note: AWLs are embedded impact labs between J-PAL regional offices and specific government partners so receiving institutions should be the relevant J-PAL office except in rare cases.

SECTION: NARRATIVE

<u>Instructions:</u> Please include a short response (12pt font, single spaced) to each of the following subsections. Questions with asterisks (*) are required.

Abstract: Please provide an abstract of the proposed research project(s). This will be added to AWL web pages if the project receives funding. *

Focus area: Which focus areas does this project fall under? *Select One or More:*

☐ clean air   ☐ clean water

☐ water availability/access   ☐ climate change adaptation
☐ climate change mitigation   ☐ pollution reduction
☐ energy access

The problem and opportunity: A summary of the context and policy problem/opportunity that motivates this research, including the available evidence of the problem in this context, and how it fits with the government partner's priorities on clean air and water, or other policy priorities in environment, energy, or climate change identified by the government and/or in the AWL RFP Overview. *

The innovation: A description of the intervention to be evaluated and how it could potentially improve access to clean air and water.[2] Innovations can be introducing new or making changes to existing programs, processes, technologies, or delivery systems. *

Research design: Please describe the research design for the pilot, including the research question(s), sampling, outcome measures, and data collection. Please describe how this research could lead to an RCT that can advance the academic literature, including potential market failures this research seeks to address, or the underlying economic model you will use/analyze. Describe how you intend to measure key outcomes related to air quality, water quality, pollution, or water access.*

The target population and context: A brief description of the target population to be reached and any comments on the alignment with the Air and Water Labs' goals to improve clean air and water access where it is most urgently needed. *

The partnership: A brief description of the government partner (and any other implementing partners involved in the project), the history of the partnership, the partner's involvement in project activities, and any in-kind or financial support they have committed or provided to the project. Please include any potential risks to the partnership. *

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[2] If the innovation is not focused on air and water but another priority issue related to climate, environmental, or energy policy, please describe how it could improve the well-being of people or the planet.

Demand-driven research: A comment on how this proposal responds to requests for support from your government partner. Please include how the government partner has displayed prior commitment or expressed demand for evidence. Please also include the potential pathways for the project to inform policy or program design, expansion, and/or implementation decisions and/or develop into a full scale RCT. *

Potential risks: Please answer the following questions below in detail.*
- Are there any technical, logistical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the study (for example, implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding) and how does your team plan to address/overcome them?
- Are there any risks of unintended negative consequences of the intervention and/or research for program participants and/or staff and if so, what are they? What proactive measures has your team taken to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?

Gender: A comment on whether the research proposal addresses gender issues in any way, including analysis disaggregated by gender, and any information on gender dynamics that could impact the research. Please note that funded projects will be required to collect and report on gender-disaggregated data, as outlined in the AWL RFP Overview under the "Grant Conditions" section. *

Response to previous feedback: If you have submitted a proposal for this project to an Air and Water Lab or K-CAI in a previous RFP, explain whether the project received funding, what type of funding it received (Travel/Proposal Development, Pilot, RCT, Path-to-Scale). Additionally, please explain how the project has progressed since it was last submitted to an AWL or K-CAI, and explain how you addressed the feedback that was provided with your last submission *(only required for projects that have previously applied for AWL or K-CAI funding)*

Additional information: A discussion of the other evaluation criteria (listed at the end of this document), if not already addressed in the narrative.

BUDGET

Instructions: Please submit a detailed project budget using the Excel template available online. To reduce the processing time, please follow the instructions for the lab to which you are applying, found at the following links:*

SARWA (J-PAL South Asia AWL)	Information to be added by February 6, 2024
WAE Lab (J-PAL Africa AWL)	Information to be added by February 6, 2024

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Instructions: Please provide the following letters of support, as applicable.

- Applicants for pilot funding are encouraged to submit letters of support if available, especially from government and implementing partners.
- If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partners.
- PhD students are required to include a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or K-CAI/AWL invited researcher who is an adviser on their dissertation committee at their host university. The letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to remain involved over the project's lifetime and should generally come from the same adviser who supported the student's initial travel/proposal development grant application if applicable. Graduate students who are applying for pilot or full study funding but have not previously applied for travel/proposal development grants must also include documented evidence of successful pilot activities. Please note that in some cases, due to restrictions at the institution that will receive the funding awarded, the adviser may be asked to add his or her name to the subaward and IRB documents.
- If the funding is being disbursed to a different institution than the J-PAL Regional Office for this Lab, a letter from the receiving institution of the award may be requested to show that they have reviewed your proposal and accept your budget.

ANNEX I: EVALUATION CRITERIA

For pilot applications, the AWL regional reviewers will consider the following general criteria in making funding decisions:

Criterion	Scale	Help text *Excellent = 4; Above average = 3; Below average = 2; Poor = 1*
Innovation	1-4	Will the research make new contributions to the body of knowledge relevant to the proposed research question? Does it answer new and challenging questions, or introduce novel methods or measures? Is the policy / program being evaluated novel and innovative?
Technical Merit	1-4	Is the research designed effectively to answer proposed questions, and is the research question well-articulated? Are the indicators, timeline, and sample size estimates appropriate, given the outcomes to be measured? Consider the potential threats to the internal validity of the study. Does the proposal sufficiently address those threats?
Policy Relevance	1-4	Has the proposal demonstrated government demand for the proposed research and convincingly argued the importance of the evidence gap for policy? And is it likely that the study will engage and provide valuable information to the government to effect change at scale? Is there potential for the study to answer questions relevant for other policymakers and practitioners beyond the implementing partner? (E.g. will the results speak to commonly used approaches?)
	1-4	*Commitment to speed*: Does the proposal instill confidence in the researchers' commitment to timely sharing of interim outputs and final results with implementing and/or policy partners?

		Does the proposal identify explicit strategies to create opportunities for the partners and others to learn from results quickly? (E.g. use of high-frequency / non-survey data sources, strategies to measure impacts on intermediate outcomes?)
	1-4	*Path to use of results*: Does the proposal discuss potential programming or scale up decisions that the research could inform? Does the partner seem committed to using results? Is there potential for this pilot to inform an RCT proposal to AWL or K-CAI?
Alignment with AWL measures of success	1-4	*Potential to benefit people in poverty:* Does the proposal make a good case for why answering the proposed research question and the proposed intervention has the potential to generate benefits for people living in poverty?
	Yes / No	*Tracking impacts*: Does the proposal discuss which AWL priority metrics will be collected? Is the methodology for calculating these impacts appropriate? The AWL requires grantees to track one or more of the following: air quality, water quality, pollution, and/or water availability/access, Please see the Air and Water Lab's RFP overview for which metrics are expected to be tracked. If the project is focusing on another environment, energy, or climate change priority for the government outside air and water, have the applicants adequately described their outcome measurement in the proposal?
Logistical Viability	1-4	Do the partners seem appropriate for the project and is the relationship likely to endure through the entire study? Does the proposal convincingly address technical, logistical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the study (for example, implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding)?

		Are the risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants and staff minimal? Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?
Overall Recommendation for Funding	1-4	Do you recommend this proposal for funding given your overall review, and particularly your assessment of its "value for money?" *Scoring*: Fund without hesitation = 4 Fund if nothing better (meets the bar, but is not an outstanding value for money) = 3 Would not fund (just below the bar) = 2 Strongly opposed to funding = 1

ANNEX II: ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES

Please reference the administrative notes for the lab to which you are applying, found at the following links:

SARWA (J-PAL South Asia AWL)	Information to be added by February 6, 2024
WAE Lab (J-PAL Africa AWL)	Information to be added by February 6, 2024