

## AIR AND WATER LAB 2024 RFP

Scaling Proposals Application Form and Instructions

### INSTRUCTIONS

**Instructions:** Proposals for AWL scaling funding in India and South Africa<sup>1</sup> are submitted to the King Climate Action Initiative (K-CAI) Board.<sup>2</sup> They consist of (i) basic contact and logistical information; (ii) a proposal narrative; (iii) a budget; and (iv) letters of support. Please note that full proposals are due by **11:59 am ET on Thursday, April 4**. Applicants are **required to submit a letter of interest** by 11:59 am ET on Thursday, February 29 before submitting a full proposal.

**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](mailto:sgorti@povertyactionlab.org)
- Cape Town, South Africa (WAE Lab): Margaret Andersen at [mandersen@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:mandersen@povertyactionlab.org)

Please submit complete applications as one PDF to [awl@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:awl@povertyactionlab.org) and CC [kcai@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:kcai@povertyactionlab.org).

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<sup>1</sup> Projects in Egypt should be submitted to the Egypt Impact Lab following their [RFP timeline and instructions](#).

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the total amount awarded to a single project, including any Air and Water Lab funding, will not exceed \$400,000.

## 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)		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>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 invited researcher.</i></p>	
IMPLEMENTING PARTNER(S)	CONTACT (NAME, EMAIL, PHONE)	
CO-FUNDER(S)	FUNDED AWARD (PI, Project Title, Amount)	
<p><b>Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL funding initiative?</b></p>		

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		If yes, which initiative and when?	
<b>Scaling Award Type:</b> Adapt (up to \$100,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Policy Pilot (up to \$250,000) <input type="checkbox"/> Full Scale-up (up to \$400,000) <input type="checkbox"/>			
Requested	\$	Total co-funded	\$
<b>GRANT PERIOD</b>			
Start date: (yyyy-mm-dd)		End date: (yyyy-mm-dd)	
Institution to receive award*		Contact for contracting issues	
<i>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.</i>			
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 <b>do not</b> want this proposal shared with them, please check this box: <input type="checkbox"/>			

\* 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

**Instructions:** Before proceeding, please consult K-CAI’s RFP Overview and Annex 1 below to confirm that your project meets the required evidence base for scaling projects. Please include a short response to each of the following subsections.

Questions with asterisks (\*) will be required.

**Abstract:** Please summarize the partnership to adapt, pilot, and/or scale an evidence-informed innovation with a specific partner(s). This will be added to AWL webpage if the project receives funding. *\*[suggested answer format: 150 - 200 words]*

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

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> clean air                 | <input type="checkbox"/> climate change mitigation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clean water               | <input type="checkbox"/> climate change adaptation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> water availability/access | <input type="checkbox"/> pollution reduction       |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> energy access             |

**The problem and opportunity:** A summary of the context and policy problem/opportunity that the government partner has identified that motivates the partnership and a description of how this proposal will address the problem. Please reference the available evidence of the problem in this context, and how it fits with the government partner’s priorities on clean air and water.<sup>3</sup> *\* [suggested answer format: Up to 250 words]*

**The innovation:** A description of the innovation the partner will explore adapting, piloting, and/or scaling as well as a brief summary of the experimental evidence on this innovation to date, particularly in relation to AWL priorities like clean air, clean water, and/or water availability.<sup>4</sup> Innovations can be new programs or changes to existing programs, processes, technologies, or delivery systems. *\* [suggested answer format: Up to 250 words]*

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<sup>3</sup> or other policy priorities in environment, energy, or climate change identified by the government and/or in the AWL RFP Overview.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

**Existing evidence:** Please upload the corresponding written document(s) on which your scaling proposal is based. Additional information on required documentation is outlined in Annex 1.\* [*Attach with email submission*]

**Depth of impact:** Please include a brief note on the effect size(s) found in the previous RCT(s) of this innovation for these and any other relevant outcome areas, whether they were economically significant, and whether you expect the effect size to be similar in magnitude, lower, or higher in this context and why. \* [*suggested answer format: up to 500 words*]

**Locally grounded:** Please include a clear rationale for why the innovation may be relevant or appropriate for the proposed context.\*

**Scale-up potential:** A summary of how the government partner plans to use the

AWL-funded technical assistance in specific decisions about expanding or scaling an evidenced-informed innovation. \*Please comment on the following: [*suggested answer format: 500 words*]

- *Breadth of impact:* If the partner decides to/succeeds in scaling the innovation, how many people could it potentially reach and when? What is the average income level of the target population?
- *Environmental impacts:* What is your projection of the potential pollution that will be abated as a result and when, or your projection of improvements in air and/or water quality or availability, or other environmental or climate impact?
- *Likelihood of success:* Please include your subjective assessment of how likely this scale-up is to happen (i.e. X% likely to happen) if the pilot phase goes well. What are the main factors that could prevent this innovation from scaling and how do you plan to address them?

**The activities:** The proposed activities that the AWL will fund and how they will contribute to achieving the end goal along with a clear timeline and milestones. We particularly encourage applications to scale up evidence-informed innovations with the original implementing partner on the randomized evaluation. Applications seeking to apply evidence in a new

context should include a formal scoping process to diagnose the problem and determine whether past evidence is relevant, as well as a process for adapting, piloting, and monitoring the innovation in the new context before scaling it up.\* [*suggested answer format: 750 words*]

**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, any in-kind or financial support they have committed or provided to the project, and the names and titles of the main contact(s) and the roles they will play over the course of the project. Please note whether they are likely to be transferred during the project. Include the dates of upcoming elections and/or administration changes and discuss whether these are likely to affect the project. For private sector partners, please comment on your confidence that AWL funding would not simply displace investments those companies would make anyway because they make good business sense.\* [*suggested answer format: 350 words*]

**Demand-driven technical assistance:** A comment on how this proposal responds to requests for support from the government partner. Please include how the government partner has displayed prior commitment or expressed demand for using evidence.\*

**The institutionalization of the partnership:** Do you hope to make this a long-term partnership or is it already part of one? If the key contact is transferred, are there other stakeholders who are equally invested? Are you planning to enter into an institutional MoU?\* [*suggested answer format: 250 words*]

- Since building partnerships with decision-makers requires on-the-ground presence, does the project have necessary institutional support of the regional J-PAL office?
- What is the level of J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher involvement in terms of providing high-level leadership, guidance, and advice to staff and policy partners?

**Power calculations:** \*required of projects with a randomization component, such as replication trials and RCTs at scale

**Potential risks:** Please answer the following questions below in detail.\*  
[*suggested answer format: up to 250 words*]

- Are there any technical, logistical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the project (for example, implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding)? Does this potential scale-up present any unintended opportunities for unintended harm, corruption, or misuse of funds? How do you plan to monitor and prevent/address both of these types of risks throughout the project?
- Are there any potential unintended consequences of this project or potential scale-up for program participants and/or J-PAL or partner staff and if so, what are they? What proactive measures has your team taken to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?

**Implementation and cost documentation:** Please comment on what efforts you will make to collect implementation costs and document implementation details and scale-up processes so these can benefit other policymakers and researchers and staff at J-PAL. \*[ *suggested answer format: 150 words*]

**Timeline:** Please provide a clear project timeline including short-term markers of success; a Gantt chart is preferred. \*

**Response to previous feedback:** If you have submitted a proposal for this project to K-CAI or an AWL 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 K-CAI or an AWL, and explain how you addressed the feedback that was provided with your last submission (only required for projects that have previously applied for K-CAI or AWL funding)

**Additional information (optional):** Please discuss the other criteria that will be used by the Air and Water Lab and K-CAI Review Board to evaluate this proposal, if not already addressed in the narrative. [*suggested answer format: 250 words*]

**Gender (optional):** *J-PAL aims to fund innovative research that also*

*investigates how climate intersects with any number of topics including gender, inequality, etc.* A comment on whether the proposal addresses gender issues in any way, including analysis disaggregated by gender, and any information on gender dynamics that could impact the scaling.

## **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	Information to be added by February 6, 2024
WAE Lab	Information to be added by February 6, 2024

## **LETTERS OF SUPPORT**

**Instructions:** Please provide the following letters of support along with the proposal. Letters of support are not a mere formality but rather should indicate a well-thought-out partnership between the J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher, the J-PAL office, the policy/implementing partner(s), and other partners.\*

(i) **Government and Implementing Partners:** All projects are required to provide a letter of support from the government and any other implementing partners. Such letters should state:

- a. The support for the activities proposed
- b. How the partner plans to use the results of the research or other activities to support specific scaling decisions and strengthen policymaking. Any details about the potential reach of the scaled-up program.
- c. How the partner sees a long-term partnership with J-PAL to be valuable.
- d. What costs will be shared by the partner and an initial total budget amount (if exact costs are not available, then a broad commitment to pay for implementation or other costs is sufficient)
- e. Willingness to share program implementation cost data with project for the purpose of conducting program cost analysis.
- f. **Note:** We understand that in some cases it may not be feasible or



appropriate to have the partner include all of the items above in their letter. In such cases, please secure a more general letter of support and address the remaining points in your proposal narrative.

(ii) **Receiving Institution:** If the institution receiving funds is not 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.

(iii) **Relevant J-PAL Regional Office:** [If the applicant is not itself a J-PAL office] A letter from the relevant regional J-PAL office that has responsibility for the project country. Please email the Executive Director from the relevant J-PAL office **at least 3 weeks in advance of the RFP deadline** to ensure that the office has enough time to produce their letter of support, which requires a thorough review of the proposal and budget. J-PAL regional offices can use the template for their letter of support [available online](#).

a. J-PAL offices may be able to provide support in facilitating connections to policymakers, researchers, supporting key policy partnerships, and implementing technical assistance. If this is something you are interested in, please discuss it with the relevant J-PAL Executive Director as part of your J-PAL office letter of support to discuss what kind of support may be available. Any relevant J-PAL office support should be included in the project budget.

b.

(iv) **J-PAL Affiliated and/or K-CAI Invited Researcher:** The J-PAL affiliated and/or K-CAI invited researcher can complete this short [Affiliate Letter of Support form](#) and submit it along with the rest of your application.

## **ANNEX I: J-PAL REQUIREMENTS ON EVIDENCE BASE FOR CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR SCALING PROJECTS**

Scaling proposals applying to AWLs must be based on **direct evidence** from one or more **randomized evaluations**,<sup>1</sup> at least one of which should have been **conducted by a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher and/or funded by a J-PAL initiative**.

1. Details on the one or more randomized evaluations on which the

project is based must be provided in **writing** to the Air and Water Lab and the K-CAI Review Board in one of the following **formats**, rank-ordered with most preferred format noted first:

- i. Peer-reviewed published paper

<sup>1</sup> Many scale projects are based on an evidence base that is broader than one randomized evaluation. See, for example, the [Evidence to Policy case studies](#) on J-PAL's website.

- ii. Working paper that was released publicly at least six months prior<sup>2</sup> to the date on which a project proposal is submitted to a J-PAL initiative for funding and/or the date on which a J-PAL office initiates a request to relevant decision-makers for approval to provide substantive scale support.
- iii. Working paper that is meaningfully publicly available<sup>3</sup>
- iv. Working paper not yet meaningfully publicly available

2. The written document should provide **sufficient detail on the design and results** of the one or more randomized evaluations on which the project is based to enable the relevant decision-makers to understand and assess the quality and strength of the evidence base underpinning the proposed scale project, including both internal and external validity. Contents that would be useful for the relevant decision makers to make their decisions include:

- i. Description of context, intervention, RCT design, and data sources
- ii. Balance tables
- iii. First stage regression results (if design requires strong first stage)
- iv. ITT regression results for at least one primary outcome, robust to different specifications, including standard errors for construction of confidence intervals
- v. Checks for and responses to any threats to randomization: differential attrition, spillovers, etc.
- vi. Interpretation of results

<sup>2</sup> This timeframe ensures there is greater certainty that results do not change following initial public release.

<sup>3</sup> Meaning the working paper can be found via a relatively straightforward online search, is on the researcher's website and/or online CV, and is not in an obscure or otherwise difficult-to-find, but literally public, site.

- vii. An assessment of and considerations relevant to the generalizability of the evidence to the context in which the proposed project is to take place<sup>5</sup>
- viii. Policy implications/recommendations

## ANNEX II: EVALUATION CRITERIA

For all scaling applications, K-CAI/AWL will consider the following general criteria in making funding decisions:

Criterion	Score	Help text <b>Excellent = 4; Above average = 3; Below average = 2; Poor = 1</b>
<b>The Proposed Solution</b>		
Policy Relevance	1-4	Does the project address problems or opportunities that are important to the government partner and, if addressed, could generate meaningful benefits to program participants? Did the proposal make a clear case for why the solution may be relevant or appropriate for the proposed context based on descriptive data, knowledge of local systems and institutions, and existing evidence?
Evidence-informed Solution	1-4	What is the strength of the existing evidence on the effectiveness of this type of solution in achieving one or more of the Air and Water Labs' goals to improve clean air and water access where it is most urgently needed? How big or small was the impact and was it large enough to justify program expansion given its costs?  (For projects with a randomization component, such as replication trials and RCTs at scale) Do the power calculations convincingly demonstrate the ability to detect each of the proposed impacts to be measured?
Potential to Benefit People in Poverty	1-4	Did the proposed solution improve the lives of people living in poverty in previous RCTs? Does the proposal make a good case for why the scalable version has the potential to meaningfully benefit people living in poverty? What are the average income levels of the target program participants, in both levels and relative to the national or local average?

<sup>5</sup> "Context" is defined broadly here to include, e.g., geography, demographic group, capacity of implementation partner, etc.

Cost-effectiveness	1-4	Does the proposal include convincing analysis that the solution can be cost-effective, including existing cost-effectiveness estimates if available (such as cost per unit of pollution abated or cost per unit of the relevant health outcome improved)? Or, does the proposal incorporate cost collection and analysis to inform a scaling decision in its activities?
Scale-up Potential	1-4	Is there potential for the partner to widely scale up the innovation in the future? What commitment has the partner expressed to move forward with implementing the scale-up if the pilot is successful? How many people will the scaled-up program reach and over what timeframe?
Implementation Risks	1-4	Are the risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants and/or staff minimal? Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?
<b>The Partnership</b>		
Commitment to Use Evidence in Decision-making	1-4	Is there demonstrated demand from the partner to use evidence from the proposed technical assistance and/or past research to make a key decision about expanding the innovation? Is the partner committing its own resources, especially finances, to this project?
Viability of the Partnership	1-4	Is the relationship with the partner(s) strong and likely to endure through the entire life of the project? Are there any logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the proposed activities, for example, government authorization or potential transfer of key decision-makers?
Overall Recommendation for Funding	1-4	Do you recommend this proposal for funding given your overall review? 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
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**ANNEX III: ADMINISTRATIVE NOTES**

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

SARWA	Information to be added by February 6, 2024
WAE Lab	Information to be added by February 6, 2024