

# J-PAL North America Request for Letters of Interest on Behavioral Insights & Crime

J-PAL North America (J-PAL NA) supports randomized impact evaluations of innovative social programs and policies that can provide insights for learning which policies work best and why.

This request for letters of interest welcomes proposals from researchers or practitioners on behavioral interventions that aim to improve community health, increase social cohesion, and reduce crime. Interventions tested should (1) employ a strategy related to behavioral science or changing community norms and (2) relate to crime and violence prevention as a primary or secondary policy goal. All projects funded must either be randomized evaluations or preparatory work to support a later randomized evaluation, and project funding can only be awarded to US institutions.

J-PAL North America will select projects based on the relevance to the proposal call and the potential policy impact of the proposed program to be studied.

## **APPLICATION DOCUMENTS**

Interested applicants should submit the application coversheet at the bottom of this document, followed by a letter of interest (of no more than two pages) detailing project ideas and prospective sites. The letter should include:

- (1) The policy question or challenge related to community health, crime, or social cohesion that motivates the application. In describing the challenge, it would be beneficial to provide some evidence of the challenge, including any relevant statistics.
- (2) A brief description of the behavioral approach to addressing the policy challenge that the applicant is interested in exploring. Any preliminary evidence that suggests these existing or potential approaches work or will work would be helpful.
- (3) A description of existing data collection efforts related to the program, including data collected by the applicant and others on outcomes the program is thought to affect, and whether any of these data would also be available for individuals assigned not to receive the program.
- (4) Preliminary thoughts on how the program might be allocated by random assignment. For example, this might describe how oversubscribed program slots could be allocated by a lottery; how eligible beneficiaries of an undersubscribed program could be randomly encouraged to sign up; or how pilot programs, or programs that are

being expanded to new locations, could provide opportunities to randomly select who receives the program first.

(5) A general timeline for the project. Some preference will be given to projects that can begin quickly and produce preliminary results on a short timeline; we are also open to providing supplemental funding projects that are already underway.

Letters of interest should be sent to Ben Struhl, J-PAL NA Policy Manager, at [bstruhl@mit.edu](mailto:bstruhl@mit.edu) before **5 PM EST on Friday, November 18, 2016**.

Semifinalists will be invited to submit five page full proposals that provide more details on the program in question. We anticipate funding all or nearly all projects that are invited to submit full proposals.

#### *Types of Proposals:*

1. Support for Full Research Projects (eligible for funding of up to \$150,000): supports research projects at a mature level of development with method of randomization, power calculations, etc. This grant cannot provide sole funding for a full evaluation but can supplement existing funds to contribute to a large-scale evaluation.
2. Pilot Studies (eligible for funding of \$50,000 or less): studies with a clear research question where further testing and pilot testing could guide design and implementation; random assignment does not necessarily need to occur during a pilot study, but pilot must directly lead to a randomized evaluation.
3. Travel / Project Development Grants (up to \$5,000): exploratory work to develop a randomized evaluation related to the research themes of the RFP.

#### **WHO CAN APPLY?**

We welcome letters of interest from researchers of any academic affiliation; from city, state or federal government partners interested in evaluating an existing program; or from non-profit partners. As a condition of the grant, funding will only be awarded to projects that include a PI from the J-PAL or University of Chicago Crime Lab research networks (including affiliates or special invitees) as part of the research team.

Applicants that are not already part of the J-PAL or Crime Lab research networks should indicate in their application their willingness to work with a J-PAL or Crime Lab researcher if a suitable research partner can be found; for semi-finalists who are not already part of the J-PAL or Crime Lab networks we will work with applicants to help match them with a J-PAL or Crime Lab eligible affiliate that is acceptable to the applicant and a good fit for the project.

## REVIEW BOARD

The Review Board is composed of J-PAL North America's Scientific Directors, [Amy Finkelstein](#) and [Lawrence Katz](#), as well as [Jens Ludwig](#), J-PAL's Crime Sector Chair and Director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab, and [Quentin Palfrey](#), J-PAL North America's Executive Director.

## FUNDING

This RFP is funded by the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#).

## TIMELINE

Week of October 31, 2016 – Request for Letters of Interest Issued

Friday, November 18, 2016 – Letter of Interest Submission Deadline

By Monday, December 5, 2016--Semifinalists Asked to Submit Full Proposal

Friday, December 16, 2016—Full Proposal Deadline

Week of January 23, 2017 –Results Announced

## EVALUATIONS

View a [list of projects](#) funded by J-PAL NA.

## CONTACT

For questions about this request for letters of interest, please email Ben Struhl, J-PAL NA Policy Manager at [bstruhl@mit.edu](mailto:bstruhl@mit.edu).

# J-PAL NA Behavioral Insights & Crime LOI Coversheet

Fall/Winter 2016

|  |    |  |    |
|--|----|--|----|
| <b>NAME OF PRIMARY APPLICANT AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION</b>   |    |  |    |
|  |    |  |    |
| <b>CO-APPLICANTS AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION</b>   |    |  |    |
|  |    |  |    |
| <b>TITLE OF PROPOSAL</b>   |    | <b>COUNTRY (MUST BE US)</b>                            |    |
|  |    |  |    |
| <b>PARTNER(S)</b>  |    | <b>CONTACT (Name, Email, Phone)</b>                    |    |
|  |    |  |    |
|  |    |  |    |
| <b>CO-FUNDER(S)</b>  |    | <b>FUNDED AWARD (PI, Project Title, Amount)</b>        |    |
|  |    |  |    |
|  |    |  |    |
| <b>Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL research initiative?</b>   |    |  |    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes<br><input type="checkbox"/> No  |    | If yes, which initiative and when?                     |    |
| <b>J-PAL NA FUNDING REQUEST</b> <i>(Check applicable box(es))</i>  |    |  |    |
| <i>Full research project</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Pilot study</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Travel/project development grant</i> <input type="checkbox"/> |    |  |    |
| <b>REQUESTED</b>   | \$ | <b>TOTAL</b>   | \$ |
|  |    | <b>CO-FUNDED</b>                                       |    |
| <b>GRANT PERIOD</b>  |    |  |    |
| <b>START DATE:</b>   |    | <b>END DATE:</b>                                       |    |
| (yyyy-mm-dd)   |    | (yyyy-mm-dd)   |    |
| <b>INSTITUTION TO RECEIVE AWARD*</b>   |    | <b>CONTACT FOR CONTRACTING ISSUES (NAME AND EMAIL)</b> |    |

By checking this box, all parties on this project certify that they will be active, engaged and responsive, and dedicated to guaranteeing the quality control on all aspects of this research.

\* Please indicate the institution that will actually receive the grant fund