DigiFI Africa Request for Proposals: Pilot and Full RCT instructions
The Digital Identification and Finance Initiative in Africa (DigiFI Africa)

INSTRUCTIONS

All applications are **reviewed on a rolling basis**. Proposals for a full RCT or pilot study consists of two stages:

Step 1: Please fill out the pre-proposal form. We will respond to that within 3 weeks and let you know if you should submit a proposal.

Step 2: On receiving a positive response to the pre-proposal form from the DigiFI team, please fill out this DigiFI Application form which we will send to you via email. Please see the guidelines below.

Proposals for full randomised evaluation study or pilot[1] funding consists of (i) an application form, which includes a cover sheet and narrative; (ii) a budget form; and (iii) letters of support. These materials should be submitted to digifiafrica@povertyactionlab.org.

All J-PAL research affiliates, J-PAL invited researchers, J-PAL postdocs, African Scholars, and PhD students with a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher adviser are eligible to apply for a pilot grant.

All J-PAL research affiliates, J-PAL invited researchers, J-PAL postdocs, and PhD students with a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher adviser are eligible to apply for a full randomised evaluation grant. African Scholars are encouraged to reach out to us (digifiafrica@povertyactionlab.org) if they are interested in applying for an RCT grant.

a) Pilot Study: Proposal Guidelines

DigiFI Africa will accept pilot proposals that have a very clear research question and lay the groundwork for a full project by assessing the feasibility of using a randomized evaluation to test a program's impact.

In contrast to full proposals—which require a strong partnership commitment with implementing organizations, a fully developed method of randomization, clear outcome measures, power calculations, and a scale-up plan—a pilot proposal should be at earlier stages of project development. Pilot proposals must clearly articulate the conceptual and methodological distinction between the pilot study and any future follow-on studies, and what exactly the pilot will enable researchers to learn. It is expected that pilot studies will function to assess the feasibility of a full study by establishing research protocols, informing sample size and detectable effects, and assessing implementation processes. Pilots generally are used to test the logistical viability of the program and/or the take up of the program in order to assess the impacts in a

---

[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.

larger study in the future. Pilots grants are appropriate for projects requesting funds to conduct pre-randomization activities.

Pilot studies can:
- Acquire data that is qualitative and quantitative in nature;
- Test the efficacy of an intervention or an evaluation design; and/or
- Develop a high frequency process monitoring system (i.e. help select African governments track progress and challenges among a representative sample of targeted beneficiaries). The goals of the high frequency monitoring systems would include assessing the efficacy of the status quo and/or changes implemented and systematically collecting ongoing dynamic client feedback. Data from these monitoring systems can then inform the design of the RCTs, while also building credibility and trust with the partner government[2].

Please note, Pilot grants may also be used for activities intended to facilitate access to administrative data for designing or conducting an RCT. Examples of these activities include, but are not limited to, negotiating data use agreements, conducting exploratory data analysis and cleaning, or setting up technical access mechanisms.

If graduate students are applying for pilot funding, they are required to include a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher adviser. Graduate students are only eligible to apply for DigiFI if they have a J-PAL affiliate or DigiFI invited researcher on their thesis committee. The letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.

Funding per Pilot award: limited to $75,000 or less.

Timeline: There is no specific timeline requirement for pilots, although in the past these studies have usually taken place within one calendar year. Ultimately this will depend on the project design and related outcomes of interest. Projects that have shorter timelines will be looked on favourably by the review committee.

African Scholars: Resident African Scholars (Researchers who have completed their PhD (in economics or a related field) and who are based at an academic institution based in Sub-Saharan Africa) AND **non-resident African Scholars** (researchers who (a) have completed high school in Africa, (b) have completed their PhD in economics or a related field, and (c) are based in an academic institution outside of Africa) are eligible to apply for the pilot grants. Targeted mentorship will be provided to African Scholars who receive funds from DigiFI. Mentors can include any J-PAL affiliate. African Scholars who do not currently have a mentor can apply to be matched with one after their projects are selected by DigiFI Africa.

Proposal Narrative submission requirements: As part of the application process, applicants should submit a narrative, not to exceed five pages. Pilot applications should address all of the following:

Problem statement
- State the problem that motivates the research.

---

[2] If you are interested, please see our J-PAL brief of leveraging administrative data for monitoring systems.

- Include evidence of the problem and describe how the problem is important in relation to the transformation of African economies.

Unique Contribution to Literature
- Succinctly outline the questions you seek to address.
- What knowledge gap and/or ambiguity among existing evidence are you addressing, and how will this research advance the field? How does the proposed research relate to DigiFI Africa's framing paper?
- Pilot proposals must include a brief literature review and explain the project's potential to provide a unique scientific contribution if fully-developed. Be sure to clearly articulate the distinction between the pilot research and any follow on research you anticipate that could constitute a full-scale RCT.

Policy relevance
- The policy problem that motivates the partnership and how this proposal would address the problem.
- How does the government intend to use the evidence generated by the proposed research?

Description of treatment(s)/policy intervention and/or high frequency process monitoring plan
- If available, describe the intervention that you plan to test or the strategy you will use.
- Establish a plausible link between the proposed approach under consideration and the hypothesized channel for impact.
- If relevant, clear plans for the high frequency process monitoring implementation, as well as the planned policy support provided to the government.
- If there is any survey component, please explicitly include the number of individuals surveyed.

Research Outcome
- Describe, specifically, what researchers can expect to learn from this pilot study. Will it pilot an intervention? Will it provide qualitative data to inform the intervention design?
- In what specific ways will the pilot prepare researchers for a full research project?

Target population
- What population does the intervention attempt to impact?
- What data do you intend to collect with regard to gender? We require data to be disaggregated by gender for pilots and full RCTs and highly encourage studies to include impacts along women empowerment metrics and consider gender in their sampling design and power calculations

Partners
- Describe your current partner(s) for implementation and scale-up and others you are considering or targeting as the project develops.

Ethical concerns: 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?

Potential ethical risks [Optional]: Please discuss, if applicable, any ethical considerations that you feel warrant discussion but are not covered by your existing or planned IRB review. It is fine to leave this

section partly or entirely blank; please detail only issues that are not or will not be covered by your IRB that you feel are potentially important enough for the review committee to be aware.For more details, see here.

COVID-19 comment In approximately half a page, please:
- Note any elements of the project that relate to COVID-19;
- Describe to what extent findings from your intervention may be generalizable beyond a COVID-19 context;
- Describe any COVID-related risks to the feasibility of the project and how you will prepare for and mitigate these risks.

---

b) Full-scale RCT: Proposal Guidelines

These grants are for studies at a more mature stage of development that use randomized evaluations to understand the impact of innovations in identification, digital payments and governance. Applicants must demonstrate:
1. A clear research question that is related to the DigiFI framing paper themes;
2. A robust research design, well-defined research instruments and sample size estimates;
3. A feasible implementation plan;
4. A strong partnership commitment from implementing organizations, including indications of the potential for significant scale-up of research findings by partners or scaling organizations; and
5. A letter from the partner government ministry outlining their commitment to the research process.

See the following table outlining detailed proposal narrative requirements.

Funding per Full-scale RCT: The total awarded to a single project, including any DigiFI Africa funding for proposal development or piloting, will not exceed $400,000.[3] These grants are for research projects at a mature level of development. Not only must the research question be clear, but applicants must also demonstrate a commitment from implementing partners, a method of randomization, well-defined instruments, and sample size estimates. Proposals can also be submitted for funding the continuation of research projects that have already started without DigiFI funding (including those for which field data collection has been completed).

Timeline: Funding requests should not extend beyond 2022.

African Scholars: Resident African Scholars (Researchers who have completed their PhD (in economics or a related field) and who are based at an academic institution based in Sub-Saharan Africa) AND **non-resident African Scholars** (researchers who (a) have completed high school in Africa, (b) have completed their PhD in economics or a related field, and (c) are based in an academic institution outside of Africa) **who have successfully completed a pilot funded by J-PAL** (with a mentor) are eligible to apply for full-scale RCT grants.

---

[3] Proposals with a compelling reason for requesting more than $400,000 may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Proposal Narrative submission requirements: To submit an application for a full-scale RCT proposal, applicants should submit a narrative, not to exceed five pages, which must include all of the items in the following table:

Problem statement -- *State the problem that motivates the research and how stakeholders could benefit from evidence.*
- How is the problem important in relation to the transformation of African economies? Describe the magnitude(s) and type(s) of government system inefficiencies and/or welfare problems this research seeks to address.
- Demonstrate knowledge of which economic actors are already engaging in the practices and institutions in this context under investigation, the potential for others to engage, and their current barriers to doing so.
- Do the results of this evaluation have wider implications? i.e. how, if at all, will the "lessons learned" have relevance beyond this test case?

Unique contribution to literature -- *What knowledge gap are you addressing, and how will it advance the field?*
- Proposals must explain the project's unique scientific contribution.
- Succinctly outline the questions you seek to address.
- Directly map the potential contribution to ideas in DigiFI Africa's framing paper.

Policy relevance
- The policy problem that motivates the partnership and how this proposal would address the problem.
- How the government intends to use the evidence generated by the proposed research.

Target population -- *What population does the intervention attempt to impact?*
- Does this approach target a specific region or demographic group or people involved in a specific sector?
- Do other populations face the same conditions as your target group, and could they potentially benefit from the innovation(s) evaluated here? How large is the population that could benefit if the intervention were scaled up?
- How, if at all, will the intervention—or broader implications of the research—improve the lives of marginalized persons (low-income, women and socially excluded groups)?

Description of treatment(s) -- *Describe the intervention that you plan to test.* You should:
- Describe the intended treatments and clearly articulate how these individuals are selected as well as assigned.
- Include a succinct description of the hypothesis that underpins your proposed intervention.
- If relevant, clear plans for the high frequency process monitoring implementation, as well as the planned policy support provided to the government.
- If there is any survey component, please explicitly include the number of individuals surveyed.

Hypothesized impacts on social welfare and wellbeing, and cost-effectiveness -- *How will this impact the target population?*
- Outline the hypothesized pathway and scope for impact of digital identification and payment systems.
- Clearly establish a plausible and promising link between the proposed approach to be tested and

---

the hypothesized channel for impact.
- Indicate the reliability of existing evidence from pilot studies or relevant expert opinion in your research context.
- Do you expect these impacts to vary across geographic region, population, or context?
- Include preliminary or pilot data available in support of your hypotheses, models and/or theories of change.

Gender dynamics
- How does this project address social, financial, or other barriers faced by women and girls? In what specific ways does this project investigate related outcomes for women and girls?
- Describe how gender and intra-household dynamics play a role in this case. Wherever possible, projects are expected to commit to collecting gender disaggregated results. How will your research design allow you to report on gender-differentiated impacts? If you consider this irrelevant in the context of your research, please provide a compelling justification.

Evaluation design and data collection
- What are the units of randomization and analysis (e.g. individual, household, village, etc.)?
- What is the method of randomization (e.g. lottery, phase-in, encouragement, etc.)?
- Is this part of a larger or ongoing evaluation?
- What are the intermediate and final outcome indicators? How will these be measured?
- When will you take measurements and how frequently?
- What are the foreseeable threats to the internal validity of this study? (e.g. compliance, attrition, spillovers, etc.)?

Power calculations
- Please describe your power calculations (effect size, take up/compliance, variance, clusters, observations per cluster, rho). We strongly encourage applicants to be very detailed in the presentation of power calculations.
- What is the minimum detectable effect size? Why do you believe this is an appropriate size?
- What data and assumptions did you use for these estimates?

Partners and capacity development -- *Who will you work with, and how will you work together?*
- Applicants should identify government partners, implementing partners (those involved in the evaluation itself) and scaling partners (those involved in scale-up of successful interventions), which may be the same or separate sets of organizations.
- Is there indication that partners or involved stakeholders would be interested in interim outputs or final results? How will this range of stakeholders become aware of the results and benefit from the data and interim outputs (e.g. baseline descriptive statistics) generated from this evaluation? Outline a specific plan for how you will share interim outputs you generate, beyond the usual meetings and presentations of final results.
- Investigators are strongly encouraged to seek cost-sharing from partners to demonstrate demand for the research findings. We suggest this is mentioned in the signed letters of support included with your submission.

Ethical concerns: 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?

Potential ethical risks [Optional]: Please discuss, if applicable, any ethical considerations that you feel warrant discussion but are not covered by your existing or planned IRB review. It is fine to leave this section partly or entirely blank; please detail only issues that are not or will not be covered by your IRB that you feel are potentially important enough for the review committee to be aware. For more details see here.

COVID-19 comment In approximately half a page, please:
- Note any elements of the project that relate to COVID-19;
- Describe to what extent findings from your intervention may be generalizable beyond a COVID-19 context;
- Describe any COVID-related risks to the feasibility of the project and how you will prepare for and mitigate these risks.

> **Full-scale RCT: Project Costing Guidelines** - See the template for Full Research Proposal submissions (Appendix 3).

DigiFI Africa grantees are requested to collect and share detailed program cost data. In policy outreach activities, J-PAL has found that policymakers often ask how much a program or intervention costs, and collecting detailed cost data allows for cost-effectiveness analysis. While a rigorous cost-effectiveness analysis requires very granular data, J-PAL will provide grantees with a basic cost collection template, alongside basic reporting templates, which helps researchers gather the figures for the various cost categories. The template includes a sheet to assist with calculation of a "total program cost," and a sheet to calculate high-level cost figures that are of greatest interest to policymakers, allowing for a very rough, back-of-the-envelope cost-effectiveness calculation. This can assist policymakers when they are choosing how to allocate resources between different programs or deciding to replicate or scale up a program that has demonstrated to be effective[4].

The goal of planning for this exercise is to ensure that the research team has plans from the outset to collect cost data for all "ingredients" needed to implement a program or intervention, excluding the costs of evaluating the impact of that program. When planning your cost data collection and approach to cost effectiveness analysis, you should consider not only the costs of any inputs offered to participants, but also the costs of facilities and utilities, implementation staff, transport, and any other costs required to conduct the program. You may find it useful to consider the following questions when constructing your plan to collect relevant cost data and filling out the template provided as Appendix 3:
- Are there costs in identifying the participant populations? Are there training costs for program staff implementing the intervention?
- Are there costs borne by participants (consider opportunity costs, subsidized components of the program, etc.)
- Are there activities that are reduced in size or discontinued as a result of this intervention being introduced? These might indicate cost savings from this intervention.
- Are there implementation monitoring costs involved, necessary to track progress or ensure compliance with plans to achieve effective implementation?

---

[4] For more information on comparative cost-effectiveness analysis, see here. If you have feedback on this exercise, the template, or the underlying rationale, please submit feedback online here.

Budget Guidelines (Both Pilot and Full RCT)

It is your responsibility that your budget follows your host institution's policies for costs. As part of your proposal, **you must submit a letter from the institution to receive the award that states that they have reviewed your proposal and accept your budget.** If the organization allows you to submit your proposal without such a letter (due to time constraints or some other reason), please note this on the proposal cover sheet (under the "Institution to receive grant funds" field).

Please note that this applies to all projects, including those going through J-PAL and IPA offices. You should contact them in advance to make sure you are aware of their policies for proposal review and give them enough time to meet the proposal deadline.

Guidelines for completing a Pilot and RCT proposal budget: Please submit a detailed project budget using the Excel template provided. To reduce processing time, please keep the following in mind when developing your budget:

- If there is co-funding for the project, you must complete both the "Total Project Budget" and "Initiative Budget" sheets in the budget template. If the project has other funders, the proposal should clearly explain the marginal contribution of the requested funds from DigiFI Africa.
- A budget year is considered as a 12 month period starting from the start of the project funding and should be completed as such in the budget template provided.
- **All applications must include budget notes in the column provided in the budget template, specifying the costs within the budget.** For example, Travel Costs should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, etc. Field costs that are detailed clearly in the budget [e.g. (# of respondents) x ($/respondent) = $ total) don't require additional justification in the budget narrative.
- **Applications must include a brief budget narrative document detailing the major costs within the budget.** For example, travel costs should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, etc. If field costs are detailed in the budget template (number of field staff, roles, rates, etc.), they do not need further explanation in the budget narrative.
- Applicants should review J-PAL best practices on questionnaire design and data collection/management in the [J-PAL Research Protocol Checklist](#) and [Data code availability policy](#) to ensure they have budgeted for expenses associated with piloting and surveyor training, survey translation, and back checking.
- Awards are normally paid on a cost-reimbursement basis.
- Please denote the costs by calendar year in which the expenditures are taking place and not by fiscal year or year from project start date.

Allowable Direct and Indirect Costs
- **Project Implementation Costs: For full research projects, implementation costs are expected to be borne by the project partners.**
- Universities in high-income countries (generally defined as the US, Canada, Western Europe, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, Israel, and wealthy Middle Eastern countries) can charge up to 10% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs.
- Non-university non-profits from any location and universities from mid- or low-income countries may charge up to 15% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs.

- We understand that the cap on overhead or indirect costs under this initiative is low and that grantees may have reasonable project support costs included in budgets as direct costs. Such costs should be reasonable and explained in the budget narrative.
- Any computer/equipment purchases should include a breakdown of what is being purchased (e.g. how many laptops), as well as the project staff that will be assigned to the equipment.
- Please note that the DigiFI Africa Initiative does not cover PI salaries in general.
- African Scholars[5], who apply for pilot grants/full RCTs either as the lead PI or a co-PI, may include a salary to cover their own time in their budget. Any costs towards the salary of an African Scholar should be explained in the budget narrative. This does not apply for proposal development grants.
- Unallowable costs include those labeled as "incidental," "miscellaneous," or "contingency." Any costs for rent should be explained in the budget narrative.

LETTER OF SUPPORT GUIDELINES

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 affiliate, the J-PAL office, and the government.

1. Full RCT and Pilot projects are required to provide a letter of support from the government and any other implementing partners. Such letters should state:
    a. The government's support for the activities proposed
    b. How the government plans to use the results of the research or other activities to strengthen its policymaking
    c. How it sees a long-term partnership with J-PAL (or our other partner organizations like IPA where appropriate) to be valuable
    d. What costs will be shared by the government 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

    Note: We understand that in some cases it may not be feasible or appropriate to have the government partners include all of the items above in their letter. In such cases, please secure a more general letter of support from the government and address the remaining points in your proposal narrative.

2. A letter from the receiving institution of the award is required to show that they have reviewed your proposal and accept your budget. If the organization allows you to submit your proposal without such a letter (due to time constraints or some other reason), please note this on the Proposal Cover Sheet (under the box for Receiving Institution).

3. To be eligible, PhD students must have a J-PAL affiliate or DigiFI Africa invited researcher on their thesis committee. This adviser must provide a letter of support and indicate willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.

---

[5] **Resident African Scholars:** Researchers who have completed their PhD (in economics or a related field) and who are based at an academic institution based in Africa. **Non-resident African Scholars**: Researchers who (a) have completed high school in Africa, (b) have completed their PhD in economics or a related field, and (c) are based in an academic institution outside of Africa.

4. Resident and non-resident African scholars[6] are required to submit an agreement with their mentor. Agreements are not required for the application but will need to be submitted prior to the disbursement of funds.

Applicants are welcome to engage with the Initiative staff prior to the application deadline to discuss the general direction and feasibility of the proposed idea. DigiFI is also committed to building partnerships and researchers are strongly encouraged to speak with Initiative staff.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Carefully review the Proposal Application Guidelines in this document. Each proposal should follow the instructions for either the Pilot Study or a Full-scale RCT proposal. Applicants must submit a completed version of all of the following documents by the submission deadline. No information and/or documents from applicants will be accepted or considered after the closing date unless otherwise requested by the DigiFI Africa Secretariat.

1. **Cover Sheet** (see Appendix 1): This document must be completed in its entirety;
2. **Proposal Abstract**: In 3-5 sentences, describe your research question and the context of your evaluation. This will be added to DigiFI Africa's website if the project receives funding. The abstract should include (i) a basic problem statement, (ii) the approach being evaluated, and (iii) what questions the research will answer.
3. **Proposal Narrative:** This document
   a. **must not exceed five pages** in length
   b. **must address all of the items discussed in the relevant Proposal Application Guidelines (Pilot study or Full-Scale RCT)**
   c. should be written in Calibri font, Size 11 and may be single spaced;
   d. should be saved as a single Word file including both the cover letter and proposal narrative, with the title: [PI Last Name, First Name] [Topic Name].doc(x).
4. **Proposal Budget** (see Appendix 2): The matching excel template (Proposal Development grant budget; Pilot or RCT budget) must be completed in its entirety using the and saved as a single Excel file with the title: [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget].xls(x);
5. **Budget Narrative:** details the major costs within the budget. For example, travel costs should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, etc. If field costs are detailed in the budget template (number of field staff, roles, rates, etc.), they do not need further explanation in the budget narrative.
6. **Project Costing Exercise** (see Appendix 3): For Full-Scale RCTs only, you must include approximately a half a page that outlines the proposed approach to collecting and reporting costing data for the intervention you are evaluating (see guidelines, above).
7. **Letter(s) of Support**: See the Letter of Support Guidelines. Please obtain a letter of support from the following, each saved as a single PDF file with the title [PI Last Name, First Name] [Name of Organization Letter of Support].pdf:
   a. Letters from each implementing partner (including government), indicating the details of their commitment to partner on research and (for full-scale studies) their willingness to

---

[6] **Resident African Scholars**: Researchers who have completed their PhD (in economics or a related field) and who are based at an academic institution based in Africa.
Non-resident African Scholars: Researchers who (a) have completed high school in Africa, (b) have completed their PhD in economics or a related field, and (c) are based in an academic institution outside of Africa.

share relevant program cost data. Consider including letter(s) from any potential scale-up partner(s).

b.   A letter/document stating the host institution's approval of the proposal materials.

c.   Graduate students applying for pilot funding are required to include a letter of support from a researcher adviser eligible for this call (see the cover page of this document). The letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.

d.   Resident and non-resident African scholars[7] are required to submit a letter from their mentor. Letters are not required for the application but will need to be submitted prior to the disbursement of funds.

8.   *(African scholars - both resident and non-resident - applying for pilot funds only)* Please attach your CV, saved as [African scholar name_CV.pdf] and complete the second page of the cover letter.

9.   **Submit an email** with all of the above attachments to the DigiFI Africa Secretariat at digifiafrica@povertyactionlab.org with the subject line: DigiFI Africa Round 3 rolling RFP Proposal: PI Last Name, First Name

Deadline for proposal submission: Rolling review

REQUIREMENTS

If your proposal is accepted for award, the actual funds will be provided under a subaward from UCT to the "Institute to Receive Award" indicated on your cover sheet. This will require, in addition to your proposal:

1.   Formal submission approval of the proposal from your institution to the DigiFI Africa team. This approval should be provided in your proposal to DigiFI Africa.

2.   IRB approval from your host institution accepting review for the project, unless the project has been deemed exempt. UCT requires proof of IRB approval prior to executing the award with your institution and releasing funding. We also ask that you provide any local IRB approval for our records. Affiliates are asked to adhere to all local legal requirements, including obtaining local IRB approval and government research permits, where applicable

PROCESS

The process UCT follows for processing DigiFI Africa awards is as follows:

1.   The DigiFI Africa Staff sends an official award notification letter.

2.   If not already submitted, you will need to provide formal institutional approval of the proposal and your institutional and local IRB approval.

3.   In certain cases, approval from UCT's IRB will also be required; UCT reserves the right to review if required. At a minimum IRB is required from the host institution.

---

[7] **Resident African Scholars:** Researchers who have completed their PhD (in economics or a related field) and who are based at an academic institution based in Africa.
Non-resident African Scholars: Researchers who (a) have completed high school in Africa, (b) have completed their PhD in economics or a related field, and (c) are based in an academic institution outside of Africa.

4. J-PAL Africa informs the UCT contracts office of the award.

5. UCT establishes a subaward with your institution.

DigiFI requires that there is a sub-awardee PI at the Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) who will be responsible for overseeing the work on the ground. This may be one of the academic co-PI's or it may be a non-academic PI, such as the Executive Director or Director of Research of the ITRA. This person must be formally affiliated with the ITRA. Affiliation could be as a professor, associate professor, staff, fellow, or some other type of relationship that is recognized by the university or organization. A J-PAL Affiliation or J-PAL Invited Researcher status does not constitute an official affiliation with J-PAL regional office host universities.

APPENDIX 1: PROPOSAL COVER SHEET *(Please note that all fields are required)*

J-PAL AFfiliate or DigiFI Africa Invitee and Institutional affiliation		
Co-Investigator(s) and institutional affiliation		
I agree	*By checking this box, all J-PAL affiliates and initiative special invitees 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 research; 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 an initiative Invited Researcher.*	
Title of Proposal		Country
Partner(s)	Contact (Name, Email, Phone)	
Co-Funder(s)	Funded Award (PI, Project Title, Amount)	
Have you submitted this or a related proposal in any previous DigiFI Africa round of funding?		
Yes No	If yes, when?	
Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL research initiative?		
Yes No	If yes, which initiative and when?	
DigiFI Africa Funding Request (Check box if application is for pilot or off-cycle funding only) Pilot study Off-cycle		

J-PAL
ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB
AFRICA

Requested	$	Total Co-funded	$
Grant Period			
Start Date: (yyyy-mm-dd)		End Date: (yyyy-mm-dd)	
Institution to Receive Award* and Subaward PI		Contact for Contracting Issues	
IRB of record		IRB Contact	

Additional information required for resident and non-resident **African Scholar applicants only**

African Scholar checklist: Please confirm the following criteria for the lead PI. Please complete EITHER the Resident African Scholar eligibility checklist OR the Non-resident eligibility checklist.	
Resident African Scholar:	**Non-resident African Scholar:**
❏ Lead PI is a researcherProfessor at an academic institution **in Africa**	❏ Lead PI is a researcher at an academic institution **outside of Africa**
❏ Lead PI has completed his/her PhD in economics or a related field	❏ Lead PI has completed his/her PhD in economics or a related field
	❏ Lead PI completed high school in Africa

❏ Does the pilot project clearly define a pathway to a full randomised evaluation.
   ❏ For more information on the definition of a randomised evaluation see this resource.
   ❏ For detailed support in better understanding randomised evaluations, we encourage Scholars to enroll in the J-PAL MicroMasters, especially the course Designing and Running Randomized Evaluations. Scholarships to cover the exam fee are available to African Scholars through DigiFI. Please register for the African Scholars database if interested.

Google scholar account

Nationality of African scholar

Motivation for applying to the Initiative

Please indicate your willingness to engage with Initiative staff before funding decision

Please indicate your willingness to engage and participate in research mentorship programme with J-PAL Affiliate or selected academic

Do you have a mentor? (Mentors can include J-PAL Affiliates or Research Advisor at J-PAL Africa)
yes no (if not, we will match you with one)

If you do have a mentor, what is their name and which academic institution are they based?

APPENDIX 2: BUDGET TEMPLATES

For the DigiFI Africa Proposal Budget Templates please see Excel templates at the RFP release page. Please see the general budget template and the budget template for African Scholars.

APPENDIX 3: COSTING EXERCISE (for Full-Scale RCT Proposals)

The DigiFI Africa board would like to see the research team's plan for how they will gather, interpret and share program implementation cost data. **Please provide a half-page appendix with your application that outlines the approach you will take to collecting and reporting costing data for the intervention you are**

evaluating[8]. For more information on the content guidelines for this section, please see the Project Costing Exercise section of the RFP. Potential questions to consider include:

- Which elements will be considered costs of implementation, and which elements will be considered evaluation costs?[9]
- What types of cost data do you anticipate collecting?
- When in the data collection process would you collect each of these types of data, and how?
- How will you partner with those organizations and staff responsible for implementing the intervention to understand and report the associated costs in these identified categories?
- Report any challenges you anticipate facing in collecting or reporting this data. How would you plan to address these challenges to make the cost-effectiveness analysis exercise most valuable in the context of your research, given the goals of the exercise outlined above?

---

[8] This appendix will not count towards the page limit of the application.

[9] We acknowledge that it can be a challenge to distinguish implementation costs from evaluation costs and see the value in making a plan during the proposal phase to identify and address the challenges and potential opportunities for effectively determining the full costs of the program/intervention in question. Please use this section to outline the rationale of your approach to cost-effectiveness analysis.