**European Social Inclusion Initiative (ESII) Application Form and Instructions**

***Full and Pilot Proposals****: Round II - 2020*

J-PAL’s European Social Inclusion Initiative ([ESII](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/europe/european-social-inclusion-initiative)) funds randomized evaluations of programs and policies aimed at improving the inclusion of migrants and refugees in Europe. J-PAL affiliates, postdoctoral fellows, and other invited researchers are eligible to apply for all categories of funding.

**Types of programs eligible for ESII funding in the second RFP round:**

* Education
* Labor markets (skills training, job market training, employment support)
* Health
* Housing

**Proposal types**

1. Full-Scale Evaluations: Full research projects can be awarded up to €350,000. 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. The expectation is that these projects will result in a paper publishable in a top economics or political science journal.
2. Pilot Studies: Pilot studies may be awarded up to €67,000.[[1]](#footnote-1) ESII will accept pilots 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. Proposals should explain how the pilot will lead to a randomized evaluation in the future.

Pilots should meet the following criteria:

* Researchers seek to answer a particular research question; however, the design and implementation require further testing and piloting.
* Pilot studies should help researchers develop projects that are not yet ready for launch.
* Random assignment does not necessarily need to occur during a pilot study, but applications should explain how the pilot will lead to a randomized evaluation in the future.
* Pilot proposals are not expected to have full power calculations. However, applicants should provide a clear discussion of what minimum detectable effect size (MDE) they consider to be relevant for the study including a rough estimate of the necessary sample size for a full study.
* Applicants should share back-of-the-envelope sense of the potential sample size and power to detect relevant impacts if a randomized evaluation were launched.
* Projects that receive pilot funding are welcome to apply for additional funding in future RFPs.

For this second round of Requests for Proposals, ESII expects to award approximately   
€ 400,000-500,000 in total in research grants.

**RFP timeline**

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| For all proposal applications the deadline is:  **Friday, October 30, 2020**, 11:59 pm Central European Time (CET)  Proposals should be emailed to [esii@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:esii@povertyactionlab.org) |
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**Eligibility criteria**

For both full evaluation and pilot study proposals, the pool of eligible applicants includes J-PAL affiliates, J-PAL postdocs, and ESII invited researchers.

Doctoral student eligibility:

Graduate students may apply for full research projects or pilot studies up to €67,000 if they have a J-PAL affiliate or an ESII invited researcher on their thesis committee at their host university. Note that doctoral students may be awarded a maximum of two grants for pilot/full study funding during their time as graduate students.

Additional application materials

* In addition to the application materials listed in this RFP and provided on the website, the affiliate adviser must provide a letter of support and indicate willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.
* If the affiliate is not based at the student’s host university, a letter is also required from the student’s department confirming that the affiliate is a member of his/her official thesis committee.

Note: Eligible applicants can submit a maximum of three proposals per 12-month period, per initiative. Note: PI and co-PI status are counted towards this limit.

**Off-cycle proposals**

ESII does not accept off-cycle proposals.

**Related Initiatives**

Please do not submit the same proposal to more than one J-PAL or IPA initiative at the same time.

**Instructions**

A complete proposal for full study or pilot funding consist of (i) an application form, which includes a cover sheet and narrative; (ii) an itemized budget; and (iii) letters of support. These materials should be submitted to ESII@povertyactionlab.org by **11:59 p.m. CET on Friday, October 30, 2020.**

**Narrative**

The narrative should not exceed five pages in length, including appendices, and use 12 point font. It should clearly describe the proposed evaluation and include:

1. **A 100-150 word abstract of the study**,which will be added to [ESII web page](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/europe/european-social-inclusion-initiative) if the project receives funding.
2. A summary of the policy problem that motivates this research and how it fits with the list of open research questions laid out in the [ESII Review Paper](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/documents/esii-review-paper.pdf) or other pertinent questions concerning the inclusion of refugees and migrants in Europe.
3. A description of the treatment, evaluation design, target population, and implementing partners. This should include a detailed timeline with approximate dates for when fieldwork will take place, and by when the project will be completed.
4. Power calculations.
5. A comment on whether the research proposal addresses gender issues in any way or if you plan to disaggregate the analysis by gender.
6. A comment on whether the project has scale-up potential and whether the program costs and impacts may be suitable for a cost effectiveness analysis. *(Full studies only)*
7. A comment on whether you plan to publish data collected in an open-access, online database at the end of the evaluation. Note that data publication is required for any project funded by a J-PAL initiative. *(Full studies only)*
8. A discussion of the other evaluation criteria (listed at the end of this document), if not already addressed in the narrative.

**Budget**

Please submit a detailed project budget using the Excel template provided. To reduce the processing time, please keep the following in mind when designing and submitting your budget:

1. Project Implementation Costs: For full research projects, implementation costs are expected to be borne by the project partners.
2. If there is co-funding for the project, you must complete both the “Total Project Budget” and the “ESII Budget” in the budget template.
3. Awards are normally paid on a cost-reimbursable basis.
4. Overhead charges under ESII are capped at 10% of total direct costs.
5. 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 should include a breakdown of the number of respondents, cost per respondent, etc.
6. Applicants should review J-PAL best practices on questionnaire design and data collection/management in the[J-PAL Research Protocol Checklist](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1iahelPZHoVQkhlTUsxWkJDaG8/view),to ensure they have budgeted for expenses associated with piloting and surveyor training, survey translation, field spot checks, and back checking.
7. Any computer/equipment purchases should include a breakdown of what is being purchased (e.g. how many laptops and the project staff that will be assigned to the equipment).
8. We understand that the cap on overhead or indirect costs under ESII is low and that awardees may have project support costs included in budgets as direct costs. Such costs should be reasonable and explained in the budget narrative.
9. Unallowable costs include those labeled as “incidental,” “miscellaneous,” or “contingency.” Any costs for rent should be explained in the budget narrative.
10. Please note that ESII does not cover PI salaries.
11. It is your responsibility to ensure that the budget you submit is correct and follows your host institution’s policies for costs. If you wait until an award has been made by the ESII Board before obtaining approval from your planned host institution, you risk winning an award that your institution cannot accept. We recommend that as soon as you submit your proposal to ESII (if not before), you share it with your host institution for their review and acceptance. You should make them aware of your plans as early as possible.
12. (*Full studies only)* Policymakers are interested in program costs, as it is one of the key factors in their decision to support a program. Cost data also allows for [cost-effectiveness analyses (CEA)](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/research-resources/cost-effectiveness), which J-PAL may conduct (with permission from the researchers) even if such analysis is not part of an academic paper. To offset the cost of collecting program cost data, the budget template includes a €1,000 line item. ESII will provide a costing worksheet for grantees to update annually. If researchers are unable to collect detailed cost data, researchers are still required to provide estimates of total program cost, average cost per beneficiary, and marginal cost to add another beneficiary.

**Institution/IRB Approval Requirements and research protocols:** If your proposal is accepted for award, the actual funds will be provided under an award from PSE to your host institution. This will require, in addition to your proposal:

* Formal submission approval of the proposal from your institution to the initiative, if not already provided in your proposal.
* IRB approval from your host institution. PSE will require proof of this prior to executing the award with your institution. If you do not have an IRB at your host university, you may use the PSE IRB.

Please note that all projects funded through J-PAL initiatives are expected to comply with the “minimum must do’s” detailed in [J-PAL’s research protocols](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B97AuBEZpZ9zZDZZbV9abllqSFk/view).

**Process**

We aim to set up the subaward within 60 days of receiving all your forms. Assuming IRB approval is in place, we set the period of the award to start from the ESII award date.The process PSE follows for these awards is:

1. The ESII Review Board sends official award notification letter.
2. If not already submitted, J-PAL Europe/PSE requests your institution’s approval of the proposal and your institutional IRB approval.
3. PSE establishes a subaward under that account with your institution.

**Letters of Support**

Please provide the following letters of support:

1. [Full studies only] Letter(s) of support from implementing partner(s) that indicate willingness to share program cost data with J-PAL (through the PI) for the purpose for conducting program cost analysis.
2. If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partner(s).
3. [PhD students applying for funding] A formal letter of confirmation from both the J-PAL affiliate/invited researcher AND also the student’s department confirming that the affiliate/invited researcher is a member of his/her official thesis committee. The letter should indicate the adviser’s willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.

**Submission Instructions**

Please submit an email with the following attachments to ESII@povertyactionlab.org:

1. Save the coversheet and your 5-page narrative (12pt font) as a single Word or PDF file, titled *[PI Name]\_[Topic Name].docx (.pdf)*
2. Complete the separate budget form and save as a single Excel file, titled*[PI Name]\_Budget.xlsx*
3. Submit letter(s) of support from implementing partners as PDF files titled *[PI last name]\_[Supporter].pdf*. Letters of support are encouraged for pilot proposals and required for full studies.

**Evaluation Criteria**

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| Contribution  /Innovation | Does the study make a significant contribution toward advancing knowledge in the field? Does it answer new questions or introduce novel methods, measures, or interventions? Is there academic relevance? How does the study compare with the existing body of research? Does the research strategy provide a bridge between a practical experiment and underlying economic theories? |
| Policy Relevance | Does the study address questions crucial to understanding pressing issues on migrant inclusion through education, labor markets, health, and/or housing? Does it address the open research questions outlined in the [European Social Inclusion Review Paper](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/documents/esii-review-paper.pdf)? Will results from the intervention have broader implications? How, if at all, will the “lessons learned” have relevance beyond this test case? Is there demand from policy makers for more/better information to influence their decisions in this area? Is there potential for the implementing partner to scale up this intervention? |
| Technical Design | Does the research design appropriately answer the questions outlined in the proposal? Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? If so, does the proposal sufficiently address those threats? Are proposed indicators adequate to measure impact? Can expected outcomes and impacts be observed within the proposed study period and/or sample? What changes could the researchers make to improve the design? For full study proposals, are there sufficiently detailed power calculations? |
| Project Viability | Is the relationship with the implementing partner strong and likely to endure through the entire study? Are there any other logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the study, for example, government authorization or Human Subjects review? For pilots, do researchers describe how piloting activities would inform a full-scale randomized evaluation? |
| Policy Implications | Will results from the intervention have broader implications? How, if at all, will the “lessons learned” have relevance beyond this test case? Is there demonstrated demand from policy makers for more/better information to influence their decisions in this area? |
| Value of Research | Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected lessons learned? Does the study leverage funding from other sources? |
| Geography | Is the study taking place in one or more European countries?\* |

\*List of countries where projects are eligible: Andorra, Albania, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, San Marino, Scotland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

**Grant requirements**

Applicants who are awarded a grant will have to adhere to the following terms of award:

1. **Peer-review proposals**: Grantees may be requested to peer-review proposals in future ESII rounds.
2. **Trial registration**: Within three months of the start date indicated on the proposal, grantees must register their trial with the AEA RCT Registry. Registration includes 18 required fields, such as your name and a small subset of your IRB requirements. The entire process should take less than 20 minutes. There is also the opportunity to include more information, including power calculations and an optional pre-analysis plan. For questions and support with the registry, please contact Keesler Welch ([keesler@mit.edu](mailto:keesler@mit.edu)). (Full studies only)
3. **Annual progress reporting**: Grantees will be requested to provide a brief start-up report, semi-annual financial updates; annual progress reports; a final financial report within 60 days of completion of the award period; and a final project report with preliminary results within four months of completion of the award period. For questions regarding reporting requirements, please email Brittany Bradley ([bbradley@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:bbradley@povertyactionlab.org)).
4. **Collecting and reporting program cost data**: Policymakers are interested in program costs, as it is one of the key factors in their decision to support a program. Cost data also allows for cost effectiveness analysis (CEA), which J-PAL may conduct (with permission from the researchers), even if such analysis is not part of an academic paper. In order to facilitate cost collection, ESII awards include €1,000 to defray expenses associated with collecting cost data. ESII will provide a costing worksheet for grantees to update annually. If grantees are unable to collect detailed cost data, grantees are still required to provide estimates of total program cost, average cost per beneficiary, and marginal cost to add another beneficiary. For questions regarding cost data collection requirements, please email Kyle Murphy (kmurphy@povertyactionlab.org). (Full studies only)
5. **Data publication**: Grantees may be requested to share data collection instruments and methodologies with other grantees. Furthermore, grantees are required to publish data collected online no later than 18 months after completion of field collection of data. J-PAL Global’s research team can provide assistance with publishing data, such as with preparing the data and code, replicating results and tables, and uploading data for publication. Researchers may request a delay in publication for up to five years. For questions regarding data publication requirements, please email research-resources@povertyactionlab.org.[[2]](#footnote-2) (Full studies only)
6. **Participate in ESII activities**: Grantees may be requested to participate in one of the ESII’s activities at a mutually agreed time and place. Activities may include evidence workshops, matchmaking conferences, or presentations to one of the ESII donors.
7. **Credit ESII**: Any presentations and publications, including academic papers, policy briefs, press releases, blogs, and organizational newsletters that emerge from this project should credit the J-PAL European Social Inclusion Initiative with the following text and link: “This research is funded by the J-PAL European Social Inclusion Initiative.”

**ESII Coversheet**

Round II

*Please note that all fields are required*

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| **J-PAL AFFILIATE OR ESII INVITEE AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION** | | | | | |
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| **CO-INVESTIGATOR(S) AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION** | | | | | |
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| ☐ I agree | | By checking this box, all J-PAL affiliates and initiative 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 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 to any other J-PAL research initiative?** | | | | | |
| ☐ Yes  ☐ No | | | If yes, which initiative and when? | | |
| **ESII FUNDING REQUEST *(Check box if application is for pilot funding only)***  ***Pilot study*** ☐ | | | | | |
| **REQUESTED** | **€** | | **TOTAL**  **CO-FUNDED** | | **€** |
| **GRANT PERIOD** | | | | | |
| **START DATE:**  (yyyy-mm-dd) |  | | **END DATE:**  (yyyy-mm-dd) | |  |
| **INSTITUTION TO RECEIVE AWARD\*** |  | | **CONTACT FOR CONTRACTING ISSUES** | |  |

\* Please indicate the institution that will receive the grant funds

1. Please note that full evaluations requesting less than €67,000 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See [J-PAL’s Research Transparency and Reproducibility](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/research-transparency-and-reproducibility) page for more details. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)