ESII RFP Round III Application Form and Instructions: **Pilot and Add-on Proposals**

## Round III

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 social inclusion across Europe. J-PAL affiliates, postdoctoral fellows, and other invited researchers are eligible to apply for pilot and add-on funding. **For this RFP round, ESII will allocate a limited amount of funding to support research on education programs in Europe that focus on (1) parental engagement or (2) tutoring interventions. Education interventions falling outside this thematic focus will be considered but priority will be given to these two areas.**

Please note that ESII does **not** accept proposals for full RCTs as part of its third RFP round.

**Proposal types**

1. Pilot Studies: Pilot studies may be awarded up to **€50,000**. 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.

2. Add-on Funding: Funding of up to **€50,000** to support add-on activities to ongoing/past RCTs, such as follow-ups to measure long-term effects.

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 RFP

**Off-cycle proposals**

ESII does not accept off-cycle proposals.

**Instructions**: A complete application for **pilot or add-on funding** consists of (i) an application form, which includes a cover sheet and narrative, (ii) an itemized budget, and (iii) letters of support. Proposals are due by **September 16, 2022 at 5:00 pm CET**. Please send your application documents to esii@povertyactionlab.org

**Narrative:** The narrative (recommended length 3 pages but not to exceed five pages in length including appendices with 12pt font) should clearly describe the proposed evaluation. It should include:

1. **A 100-150 word abstract of the study,** which will be added to the ESII web page if the project receives funding.
2. A summary of the policy problem that motivates this research and how it fits with the list of research priorities laid out on the [ESII page](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/esii).
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, if available.
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.
7. A discussion of the other evaluation criteria (listed at the end of this RFP), if not already addressed in the narrative.
8. A comment on whether you plan to publish data collected in an open-access, online database at the end of the evaluation.
9. New COVID-19 comment: In approximately half a page, please:
   1. Note any elements of the project that relate to COVID-19;
   2. Describe to what extent findings from your intervention may be generalizable beyond a COVID-19 context;
   3. Describe any COVID-related risks to the feasibility of the project and how you will prepare for and mitigate these risks."
10. If the project has other funders, the proposal should clearly explain the marginal contribution of these requested funds.

**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:

1. If there is co-funding for the project, you must complete both the “Total Project Budget” and “Initiative Budget” sheets in the budget template.
2. Awards are normally paid on a cost-reimbursable basis.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
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/open?id=0B1iahelPZHoVQkhlTUsxWkJDaG8),to ensure they have budgeted for expenses associated with piloting and surveyor training, survey translation, field spot checks, and back checking.
7. 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.
8. 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.
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 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.

**Institution/IRB Approval Requirements:**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.

We aim to complete this process within 60 days of receiving all your forms and IRB approvals. We can backdate the award to cover expenses from the Award Date or the date of IRB approval, whichever is later. If a project includes non-Human Subjects work prior to the IRB approval, please let us know following your award and we may in some cases be able to cover those costs (post-award, but pre-IRB) under the award.

**Letters of support:** Please provide the following letters of support:

* [Graduate students applying for pilot funding] Letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher who serves as an adviser on the applicant’s thesis committee. The letter should indicate the adviser’s willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.

**Submission Process:** E-mail esii@povertyactionlab.org with the following attachments:

1. Coversheet and narrative saved as a .docx file titled *[PI last name]\_[Proposal title].docx*
2. Budget template saved as a .xlsx file titled *[PI last name]\_budget.xlsx*
3. Letter(s) of support saved as a .pdf file titled *[PI last name]\_[Supporter].pdf*

**ESII Cover Sheet**

Round III

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR | | INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION | | | |
|  | |  | | | |
| CO-INVESTIGATOR(S) AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION(S) | | | | | |
|  | | | | | |
| *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 on this project 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 previous ESII round of funding?** | | Have you submitted this or a related proposal to **any other J-PAL research initiative?** | | | |
| ☐ Yes If yes, when?  ☐ No | | ☐ Yes If yes, which initiative and when?  ☐ No | | | |
| INITIATIVE FUNDING REQUEST *Check box to right if application is for pilot funding only :* | | | | | ☐ |
| REQUESTED | **€** | TOTALCO-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 actually receive the grant funds

\*\*Please indicate the amount you have received in additional grants or funding for this research.

**Initiative 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?\* |