

# CVI PROPOSAL GUIDELINES: FULL RCTS

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This document contains an [Overview](#), [Budget Guidelines](#), [Application Checklist](#), and [Narrative Template](#) for RCTs. Please read this document carefully before submitting your proposal.

## OVERVIEW

**Submission instructions:** To apply, please submit an application via our online portal, WizeHive. Instructions and links to the applications can be found below, under “Application Checklist”. Complete proposals will be due **Tuesday, June 3, 11:59 PM US Eastern Time via WizeHive**. Please review the RFP Overview and Proposal Guidelines on the [CVI RFP website](#) for details on each proposal type and a complete list of application questions.

Strong RCT proposal applicants will demonstrate:

- a clear research question that is discussed in relation to one or more CVI themes (as outlined in the CVI RFP Overview on [CVI’s RFP webpage](#))
- a robust research design, well-defined research instruments, and sample size estimates justified by pilot data presented in the proposal and how specific available data informs detailed power calculations for any impacts you plan to measure. Where studies are designed to detect differential impacts for men and women, there should be available evidence that large differences in outcomes are anticipated, informing statistical power calculations and justifying related increased data collection costs to allow for gender-disaggregated comparison of impacts.
- a feasible implementation plan, and
- a strong partnership commitment from implementing organizations demonstrated in letters of support (e.g., agreement to research design, sharing of costing information), including indications of the potential for significant scale-up of research findings by partners or scaling organizations.

**Please note:** As a general rule, CVI does not fund pure lab experiments. In very rare cases, a proposal may be considered if a lab-in-field experiment supplements an underlying randomized evaluation, or if the lab-in-field experiment has direct policy implications. For example, Edward Miguel and coauthors’ [lab-in-field evaluation of ethnic bias in Kenya](#) was implemented during Kenya’s national elections to understand how proximity to election dates might affect participants’ ethnic biases.

**Funding per Full RCT award:** CVI grants for full RCTs max out at \$400,000, including any previous CVI funding of any type for the same project. Other J-PAL and IPA funding may also

affect award sizes. **We expect projects of various award sizes, and will carefully check whether the budget size accurately reflects the scope of work proposed.** Note the guidelines on allowable and unallowable costs in the [Budget Guidelines](#) section.

**Timeline:** Funding requests should not extend beyond December 2027. We encourage applicants to be realistic when setting the projected period of performance/end date for their project.

On full project *start dates*, applicants should be aware that MIT takes **approximately 90 days to establish a subaward** from the date you submit all of your setup 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 the award and, in some cases, we may be able to cover those costs (post-award, but pre-IRB) under the award.

The process MIT follows for full/pilot grants is thus:

1. The CVI Review Board sends an official award notification letter.
2. If not already submitted, J-PAL requests your institution's approval of the proposal (letter of transmission) and your institutional IRB approval.
  - a. In the case that IRB approval is not already in place when funding decisions are made, **proposed start dates should reflect time needed to get IRB approval** by the IRB of record, as well as time required to establish a reliance agreement and move forward in the subaward granting process.
3. MIT establishes a subaward to the institution to receive the award.
  - a. As detailed in our RFP Overview, MIT now requires that at least one project PI be employed by the organization receiving the subaward and funds, also known as the Institute to Receive the Award, or ITRA. **Please be mindful that MIT also requires that the IRB determination be held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT** ([See here for further details and FAQ](#) on MIT's policy on subawards, ITRA, and IRB alignment).
4. Institute to receive award invoices MIT for expenses incurred for the project on a cost reimbursable basis.

**Proposal Narrative:** The [Narrative Template](#), below, includes details on what to include in your proposal narrative.

- When preparing your proposal narrative, please note that the CVI Review Board reviews proposals based on the following evaluation criteria:

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>CVI strategic priority</b> | Does this research embody CVI's guiding principles? Does this study fall within the scope of CVI's research priorities? Is the study based in the initiative focus countries? Refer to the CVI RFP Overview, attached to <a href="#">the</a> |
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|                              | <a href="#">RFP landing page</a> , for additional details on CVI’s thematic and geographic priorities.   |
| <b>Academic contribution</b> | 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? The CVI Review Board rewards innovation, generalizability, and theoretical grounding in proposals. |
| <b>Policy relevance</b>      | Does the study address questions crucial to understanding pressing issues on crime and violence in developing countries? 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?                         |
| <b>Technical design</b>      | 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? What changes could the researchers make to improve the design? For full study proposals, are there sufficiently detailed power calculations?   |
| <b>Project viability</b>     | Is the relationship with the implementing partner strong and likely to endure through the entire study? What is the credibility and policy influence of the implementing partner? 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?                    |
| <b>Research ethics</b>       | Are the risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants, staff and/or community members minimal? Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?<br><br>Please refer to the “Designing responsible research projects” section of the CVI RFP Overview, attached to <a href="#">the RFP landing page</a> , for a more in-depth discussion on research ethics.   |
| <b>Value of research</b>     | Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected lessons learned? Does the study leverage funding from other sources?  |

**Project Costing Exercise:** CVI RCT grantees are requested to collect and share detailed program cost data following the [J-PAL Costing Guidelines](#). Your proposal should touch briefly on your cost collection plans.

**Motivation:** The goal of this exercise in each RCT proposal 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. 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. 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 is demonstrated to be effective<sup>1</sup>.

**Principles and expectations:** While a rigorous cost-effectiveness analysis requires very granular data, J-PAL will provide grantees 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. **Your proposal to CVI should help us understand the potential for a very rough, back-of-the-envelope cost-effectiveness calculation.** 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 (e.g. seeds, equipment, etc.), 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:

- Are there costs in identifying the participant populations? (e.g. costs of doing a census, distributing flyers or other marketing materials, or holding information sessions necessary to implement the program.)
- 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?

## BUDGET GUIDELINES

It is your responsibility that your budget follows your host institution’s policies for costs, and **you must submit a letter from the institution to receive the award that states that they have reviewed your proposal and accepted your budget.**<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on comparative cost-effectiveness analysis, see:

<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/resource/conducting-cost-effectiveness-analysis-cea>. If you have feedback on this exercise, the template, or the underlying rationale, please submit feedback [online](#).

<sup>2</sup> If the organization allows you to submit your proposal without such a letter (due to time constraints or some other reason), please describe this in the notes section of your submission. 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 an RCT proposal budget:** Please submit a detailed project budget using the RCT/Pilot Budget Template provided [at the RFP release page](#). To reduce processing time, please keep the following in mind:

- **Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) Requirements:** RCTs are provided under an award from MIT to the grantee’s host institution. PLEASE NOTE: MIT now requires that at least one project PI be employed by the organization receiving the subaward and funds.
- **IRB Requirements:** MIT requires that the IRB determination must be held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT. If the institution does not have its own IRB, the institution must engage the services of a commercial IRB to review and provide oversight for the research activities. [Heartland](#) and [Solutions](#) provide review of international research and satisfy J-PAL's IRB requirements; fees can be found on their respective websites. Further information about this MIT policy can be found [here, including an FAQ](#). Please consult with J-PAL regarding including the cost of this commercial entity in the project budget.
  - J-PAL requires that the reviewing IRB have IRB Organization (IORG) status with the US Office of Human Protections. [You can look up the IORG status of an IRB here](#).
- Only projects with co-funding should complete both Excel sheets in the template, i.e. both “Total Project Budget” AND “Initiative Budget” (i.e. what you’re requesting from CVI) in the budget template. **If the project has other funders, the proposal should clearly explain the marginal contribution of the requested funds from CVI.**
- **Applications must include a brief budget narrative document detailing the major costs within the budget in addition to the Excel template.**
  - **We also strongly encourage applicants to include budget notes in the column provided in the budget template, specifying input costs for line items within the budget.** Travel costs should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, number of people on a given trip, etc. 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.
- Applicants should review J-PAL best practices on questionnaire design and data collection/management in the [J-PAL Research Protocol Checklist](#), to ensure they have budgeted for expenses associated with piloting and surveyor training, survey translation, field spot checks, and back checking.
- **Awards are normally paid on a cost-reimbursable basis.** However, MIT may agree to advance payments via a milestone payment structure to Institutes to Receive Award that are based in low- and middle-income countries on a case-by-case basis if requested by the research team. Please note that preparing an advance payment model requires

additional time and additional coordination between MIT and the Institute to Receive Award.

- Funding awarded by CVI is conditional on continued support from our own core donors. If CVI's scheduled funding is reduced, CVI may need to reduce or cancel your award.

#### *Allowable Direct and Indirect Costs*

- **Please note that CVI does not cover PI salaries with the exception of PIs who completed a PhD and are based at an academic institution in a middle- or low-income country.** Full RCTs may cover up to \$8,000 per LMIC researcher PI/co-PI per year, but the total budgeted amount for LMIC researcher PI time in aggregate across all co-PIs should not exceed \$20,000 per year.
- **Project Implementation Costs: For full research projects, implementation costs are expected to be borne by the project partners.** However, under some circumstances, CVI can fund implementation costs where it is a marginal addition to an existing program to offset costs from an experiment (e.g. adding an additional treatment arm or the costs of an encouragement design). These types of costs might include travel, small participant incentives, and/or SMS fees.
  - Proposals requesting funds for implementation are **required to explain why the implementer cannot bear the costs in the budget narrative and must also justify the input costs** (e.g, if texting fees are requested as an implementation cost, the budget narrative should include a breakdown of how many texts are planned, the estimated cost per texts, number of people on a given campaign, etc).
- Universities in high-income countries (according to the World Bank classification) can charge up to 10% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs.
- Non-university non-profits from any location and universities from middle- 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.
- Unallowable costs include those labeled as “incidental,” “miscellaneous,” or “contingency.” Any costs for rent should be explained in the budget narrative.

## **APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

To apply to this RFP, please submit an application via our online portal, WizeHive, using the following links:

- [Travel and Proposal Development Grant](#)
- [Pilot](#)
- [Full RCT](#)

Complete proposals will be due **Tuesday, June 3, 11:59 PM US Eastern Time via WizeHive**. Please review the RFP Overview and Proposal Guidelines on the [CVI RFP website](#) for details on each proposal type and the complete list of application questions.

Please review the template application materials below, including the list of questions you will be asked to answer. **All templates for these documents are provided at the [RFP release webpage](#) and listed below.**

1. **Proposal Narrative:** Guidance pertaining to the narrative prompts is included in the [Narrative template](#) below. Please note that this section requires a research timeline and detailed power calculations.
2. **Proposal Budget:** Carefully review the Budget Guidelines in this document, then use the Full [RCT Budget Template](#) **provided at the [RFP release webpage](#)**, which must be completed in its entirety and saved as a single Excel file with the title: [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget].xls(x) for upload to the portal.
3. **Budget Narrative:** Detail the major costs within the budget, referring to the Budget Guidelines above, in a Word or PDF document with the title [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget Narrative].doc(x) for upload to the portal. This document is required in addition to the Proposal Budget -- i.e. notes included in the Excel sheet do not suffice.
4. **Letter(s) of Support:** 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 for upload to the portal:
  - a. Letters from each implementing partner, indicating the details of their commitment to partner on the research, and for RCTs, their willingness to share relevant program cost data. Consider including letter(s) from any potential scale-up partner(s).
  - b. A letter/document stating the proposed grant host institution's approval of the proposal materials.
  - c. **PhD graduate students applying as the primary PI are required to include a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher adviser on their thesis committee.**
    - a. The letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role over the project's lifetime and should generally come from the same adviser who supported the student's initial CVI exploratory grant application, if applicable.
    - b. Graduate students who have not previously applied for travel/proposal development grants must also include documented evidence of successful

pilot activities. Please note that in some cases, due to restrictions at the institution that will receive the funding awarded, the adviser may be asked to add his/her name to the subaward and IRB documents. Letters can be sent separately by advisers via the forthcoming online portal or included in the applicant's submission packet.

- c. Graduate students with a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher adviser who does not reside at the student's host university must also include a formal letter of confirmation from the student's department head confirming that the adviser is a member of the student's official thesis committee.
5. **AI Validation and Test Accuracy data:** Proposals that include **Artificial Intelligence (AI) or any new specialized technology should include validation and test accuracy data in the proposal**, showing that the technology successfully does what it intends.
6. **(Possible) Addendum:** If your proposal builds on completed pilot findings, please submit an addendum detailing the pilot results that inform your RCT design.

## NARRATIVE TEMPLATE

This template is intended to give researchers a sense of the questions they will be asked to address in the online WizeHive portal.

Exact wording and sequencing of questions is subject to change.

### Important Information

1. **Primary Eligible Researcher** - Please identify one researcher who is eligible for J-PAL Initiative funding. This may be the principal PI or any eligible co-PI. Only details for one primary eligible researcher are required in cases where there's more than one eligible researcher. Other PIs who are eligible can be added as co-PIs.
2. **PI Eligibility Category** - Indicate how the researcher is eligible for J-PAL Initiative funding.
3. **PhD Student Applicants** - If you are a PhD student, please indicate the J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher who serves or will serve as an advisor on your dissertation committee.
4. **Organization Name of Eligible Researcher** - Please tell us the name of the organization the eligible researcher (i.e., the professor or PhD student) is affiliated with.
5. **Organization Type** - As a reminder, researchers must be based at a university to be eligible. If you have questions, please contact the initiative team at [cvi@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:cvi@povertyactionlab.org).
6. **Organization Website of Eligible Researcher**

7. **Country Where Organization is Based or Headquartered**
8. **Team Members & Roles** - Please add all your project team members and indicate their role(s) on the project/application below. If you do not have any other team members please add yourself below as applicant and Primary PI.  
Role options are: Applicant; Primary PI; Co-PI; Research Lead at Implementing Organization; Reporting Contact; Secondary Reporting Contact; IRB Contact; Finance Contact; Collaborator; Contact for Contracting (e.g., grant manager or research administrator); Other (please specify role or title).  
If you are the applicant and a PI (or another role), indicate so by adding yourself as an applicant and then again as a PI. As the applicant, you will be receiving all notifications related to this application. For each team member please provide: First Name, Last Name, Role or Title, Email Address
9. **PI Certification** [accept certification to proceed]
  - a. I certify that any listed eligible researchers have agreed to be active, engaged, and responsive PIs or advisors on this project. Eligible researchers who are involved have confirmed they will be dedicated to guaranteeing quality control on all aspects of this research and that their participation is not merely to provide access to resources and funding to other project team members who would otherwise be ineligible.
  - b. I certify that all eligible researchers are up to date on reporting for all existing grants, across all J-PAL initiatives.
  - c. I certify that, if I receive award funding, I will submit all necessary materials for award setup within six months from the date of award notice, barring any extenuating circumstances.
10. **Demographic Information** - J-PAL is collecting information about all project teams, including demographic information, to support our efforts to promote diversity in our research network and funding opportunities. As the applicant, please send the language and [link](#) included below to all PIs/Co-PIs on your proposal research team. Provide your proposal name and each member's role (as you listed them on the application) when you send out the blurb. Completion of this step is required for all primary investigators on your research team. If you have any technical problems with completing this step please email [help@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:help@povertyactionlab.org) or the initiative team directly.

Feel free to cut and paste this suggested language in an email to send to the PIs and Co-PIs on your team:

*J-PAL is collecting information about all project teams, including demographic information, to support J-PAL's efforts to promote diversity in the J-PAL research network and funding opportunities. J-PAL*

*is requiring all PIs and Co-PIs on our research team to complete this [short form](#). This data will only be accessible in disaggregated, identifiable form to select J-PAL staff. Aggregate, anonymized data will be used to report to key partners such as donors and may be included on our website.*

## **Project Details**

11. **Full Title of Proposal** [30 word max]
12. **Proposed Period of Performance Project Start Date** - What is the proposed start date for this J-PAL grant's subaward activities?
13. **Proposed Period of Performance Project End Date** - What is the proposed end date for this J-PAL grant's subaward activities?
14. **Past and Future Submissions** - Have you submitted or do you plan to submit this proposal or a related proposal to any other J-PAL Initiative RFP, including in any previous CVI round of funding?
15. **Details about Past and Future Submissions** - If you answered yes above, please state which initiative(s), year/season of RFP, and the name of the LOI/proposal you submitted or plan to submit. Example: GI Spring 2019 Using Mobile Phones to Improve Service Delivery. Are the PI team, context, and research question the same as in the previously submitted proposal? Please explain whether the project received funding and what type of funding it received (Travel/Proposal Development, Pilot, RCT, Scale). Additionally, please explain how the project has progressed since it was last submitted to CVI, and explain how you addressed the feedback that was provided with your last submission. [350 words max]
16. **Funding Amount** - Amount of requested funding in USD.
17. **National Location** - In which country or countries will your research or travel take place?
18. **Timeline** - Please write out a timeline with key project activities. [250 words]

## **Narrative**

19. **Abstract** - Write a study abstract, including the project description, research question, and intervention or treatment to be evaluated. Discuss the project's technical design, what is going to happen during the project, the practical value of your project, the conceptual value of your research, and the distributional implications of your work. Provide context about proposed partners and a timeline. Please note that this abstract will be added to the Initiative's webpage if the project receives funding. [250 words]
20. **Research Focus Areas/Initiative Themes** - Please indicate which CVI focus areas or themes your proposal relates to; these are described in detail in the CVI RFP Overview on the RFP landing page. [choose from a dropdown list]

21. **Policy Motivation** - Provide a summary of the policy problem that motivates this research and how it fits with the topics outlined in the RFP materials. [250 words]
22. **Potential Policy Impact** - Please briefly describe the potential policy impact of this intervention (policies, programs, processes, or delivery mechanisms), including whether and how the project could inform policy or program design in this context or more broadly. How will it meet the needs of your partner? 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? [250 words]
23. **Target Population and Context** - What population(s) does the intervention attempt to impact? What characteristics do they have? Do you have any comments on this target population and context’s alignment with the initiative's priorities? [250 words]
24. **Intervention Details** - Please describe the intervention or treatment to be evaluated. State how the intervention is either innovative or uses a straightforward intervention to study a big question. Could the intervention potentially improve one or more of the initiative’s priority outcomes and benefit people living in poverty? The intervention, or innovation, can be introducing new or making changes to existing programs, processes, technologies, or delivery systems. [250 words]
25. **Evaluation Design:** Provide a brief description of the evaluation design, and how it fits with the topics outlined in the RFP materials. Does the research design appropriately answer the questions outlined in the proposal? Please include the randomization method, treatment groups, and describe any combinations of the interventions.

Please include information about data collection and key outcomes: succinctly describe your data collection plan and key outcome measures of the study. Please include the data collection partner and your relationship with them. What are your intermediate and final outcomes? How will these be measured? When will you take measurements, and how frequently? If there are more than two treatment groups, please list them using numerals.

Include preliminary, pilot, or other available descriptive data in support of your hypotheses, models, and/or theories of change. Indicate the reliability of this existing data from this research context. In the "Additional Attachments" section, you may also attach more detailed pilot data and results as an appendix (that does not count as part of the character/page limits for this proposal narrative), but please highlight in this section of your narrative the key details to ensure reviewers take them into account.

Details of your evaluation design can include but are not limited to: 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.)? What is the sample size? How would it be divided into treatment and control? Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? How do you plan to address those threats? [800 words]

26. **Value of Research** - What knowledge gap does your project address, and how will it advance the field? Provide a brief literature review to highlight its uniqueness, compare it with existing research, and explain its potential contribution, including any novel methods, measures, or interventions. Make a case for the research's value by citing prior evidence of its promise or significant current or anticipated investment. A full reference list may be attached in the "Additional Attachments" section. [500 words]
27. **Mechanisms** - Through what mechanisms do you expect the treatment to affect outcomes of interest? How will you test these mechanisms? What is the theorized causal relationship between the intervention and the outcomes to be tested? [250 words max]
28. **Power Calculations** - Please provide detailed, convincing, and well-justified power calculations, e.g., based on current or past pilot data, existing literature, admin data of ongoing operations, etc., for any impacts that the research team plans to measure. Include and describe effect size, take up/compliance, variance, clusters, observations per cluster, rho). Power calculations should quantitatively demonstrate that the study is well-powered enough to detect effects on the outcome(s) of interest that would be practically or conceptually meaningful. Proposals should articulate which null hypotheses are relevant for this exercise and why (in particular, not assuming that the null of zero impact is necessarily the relevant one).

Be sure to answer these two questions:

1. What is the minimum detectable effect size? Why do you believe this is an appropriate size?
2. Clearly state what data and assumptions you use for these estimates. Always discuss take-up, and do not assume take-up will be 100% for the purposes of power calculations. [700 words max]

For more detailed information about power calculations, see this resource:

<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/resource/power-calculations>

29. **Implications on Equity and Social Inclusion** - Please provide a comment on whether the research proposal addresses equity or social inclusion, in any way. Topics of social inclusion include, but are not limited to, gender, income level, location, ethnicity, race, language, citizenship status, disability, and at the intersection of those factors. Explain whether and how the project design allows us to learn about baseline differences between and differential impacts on groups mentioned above. Explain what reasons (if

any) there are to expect that the intervention(s) studied may have disproportionate benefits for disadvantaged groups. [500 words max]

30. **Local Researcher Involvement** - Please describe how the project involves researchers local to the project context. [250 words max]
31. **Gender Implications and Analysis\*** - Does the proposal address any gender issues? For example, have you taken into account how gender considerations could affect the outcomes of the intervention? [250 words max]
32. **Gender Reporting** - Does the proposal disaggregate data and outcomes by gender? Pilot and RCT projects are required to report on gender-disaggregated impacts: Please briefly explain whether you will disaggregate gender impacts or why this would not be feasible. [500 words max]
33. **Project Costing Exercise** - CVI would like to see the research team's plan for how they will gather, interpret and share program implementation cost data. Please write about a half-page that outlines the approach that you will take to collect and report costing data for the intervention you are evaluating. [500 words max]

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 collection in light of this reporting requirement.

*Suggested prompts:*

- Discuss your rough assessment of what the intervention, in its scalable form without associated research costs, is anticipated to cost per beneficiary reached or per benefit achieved.
- Which elements will be considered costs of implementation, and which elements will be considered evaluation costs?
- 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 collection exercise most valuable in the context of your research, given the goals of the exercise outlined above?

34. **Scalability and Translatability Potential** - Please comment on the ability of this intervention to potentially scale and translate in different contexts. [500 words max].
35. **AI: Validation and Test Accuracy Data** - Proposals that include Artificial Intelligence (AI) or any new specialized technology should include validation and test accuracy data in the proposal, showing that the technology successfully does what it intends. If applicable, please provide that validation and test accuracy data here, or attach it in the "additional attachments" section. If not applicable, please write "N/A." [300 words max]

**Potential Risks** - Please answer the following questions below to the best of your ability. If any of the questions do not apply, please write Not Applicable:

36. **Completion** - Are there any technical, logistical, ethical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the project (e.g., implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding)? How do you plan to monitor and prevent/address these types of risks throughout the project? [200 words max]
37. **Implementing Partners** - Please discuss any information about the implementing partner(s) that could pose ethical, reputational, or legal risks (e.g., child safeguarding, corruption or misuse of funds, etc). If applicable, what proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks? [200 words max]
38. **Child Safeguarding** - Particularly for projects working with children, what child safeguarding risks exist? [200 words max]
39. **Participants, Staff, Community Members** - For each of the groups below, please describe any potential unintended consequences or risks of this project to them. What proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks? [200 words max]
- Program and research participants
  - Staff (e.g., implementing partners, research assistants, enumerators)
  - Community members (e.g., untreated members of a household, untreated neighbors, or broader communities if the treatment might have spillover or downstream effects beyond the study sample)
40. **Contractual Limitations** - Are there any contractual limitations on the ability of the researchers to report the results of the study? If so, what are those restrictions, and who are they from? [150 words max]

## **IRB and ITRA**

**Institutional Review Board (IRB) Information** - Please be mindful that MIT requires that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determination must be held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT. The PI at the ITRA must be listed as the main PI on the

IRB. If the institution does not have its own IRB, the institution must engage the services of a commercial IRB to review and provide oversight for the research activities. [Heartland](#) and [Solutions](#) provide review of international research and satisfy J-PAL's IRB requirements; fees can be found on their respective websites. Further information about this MIT policy can be found [here](#) and [here](#). Consult with J-PAL regarding including the cost of this commercial entity in the project budget. J-PAL also requires that the reviewing IRB have IRB Organization (IORG) status with the US Office of Human Protections. [You can look up the IORG status of an IRB here.](#)

**Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record** - If the project has not received an IRB exemption and IRB review is required, please look up the current or expected IRB of record. IRB Requirements - If this proposal receives initiative funding, we will ask that you submit:

- a. All IRB approval(s) or exemption(s)
  - b. All IRB-approved protocols
  - c. Any IRB-approved consent forms [*Instructions*]
41. **Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record** - Provide the name of the IRB of Record.
42. **Is this IRB of Record IORG certified?**
43. **Local Legal Requirements Certification** - All PIs and Co-PIs certify that they understand they must adhere to all local legal requirements, including obtaining local IRB approval and government research permits, where applicable. Do you agree? Y/N.
44. **Data Publication** - Please confirm you plan to publish data collected in an open-access, online database at the end of the evaluation. Data publication is required for projects funded by a J-PAL initiative, unless researchers request an exemption (which J-PAL has the discretion to deny) for legal, ethical, or proprietary reasons. Y/N.

**Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) Information** - PLEASE NOTE: MIT now requires that at least one project PI be employed by the organization receiving the subaward and funds. Please look up the ITRA here. Please see this [memo](#) for more information [*Instructions*]

45. **Institute to Receive Award (ITRA)** - Please indicate the institution that will receive the grant funds.
46. **Contact at Institute to Receive Award (ITRA)** - Please provide contact information for the person who will be in charge of the contract at the ITRA.

## **Budget**

**Note:** Purchase of Assets - Should your proposal be successful, you may be required to remove any assets (i.e., laptops, tablets, etc.) from your budget. This is because of a donor's assets policy.

Please create your budget with this in mind. Rentals of such items are allowed and the preferred way to address needs for assets like laptops.

47. **Budget Upload** - From the [RFP website](#), download and complete the pilot budget template. There are two tabs: one for the initiative-specific budget and one for the project budget (i.e., the initiative specific budget plus any other sources of funding you may have). When done, please reupload both attachments in the budget tab of the online application portal. Please note that these are formatted specifically for this application. Please do not remove the formatting, change any of the formatting, or create new columns. *[Upload]*
48. **Budget Narrative Upload** - Please justify the expenses outlined in your budget in a Word document with the title [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget Narrative].doc(x), and upload it here. This document is required in addition to the Proposal Budget. Notes included in the Excel sheet do not suffice. *[Upload]*

### Letters of Support & Additional Materials

49. **Letter of Support from Implementing Partner** - RCTs are required to provide a letter of support from their implementing partner. This letter should indicate a willingness to work with the research team and an agreement to share program cost data with J-PAL (through the PI) for the purpose of conducting a cost-effectiveness analysis. *[Upload]*
50. **Letter of Transmission** - RCTs are required to provide a letter or document stating approval of the proposal materials and budget from each proposed institute to receive award (ITRA). Please note that MIT policy states that the project PI needs to be at the ITRA and that the ITRA should provide the IRB (either using the Institute's IRB or a third party IRB). The Project PI must be the PI on the IRB. *[Upload]*
51. **Potential Scale-Up Partner Letter of Support** - If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partners. *[Upload]*
52. **Additional attachments** - Please attach any relevant materials discussed in your answers to the previous questions. *[Upload]*
53. *For PhD students only* - **J-PAL Affiliate or Invited Researcher Letter of Support** - PhD student applicants are required to submit a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher who serves as an adviser on the applicant's dissertation committee. This letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to advise the student throughout the project's lifetime. Please note that in some cases, the adviser may be asked to add their name to the financial award and IRB documents. *[Upload]*

### Partnership Questions

54. **Partnership Status** - Have you established communication with relevant stakeholders including but not limited to government agencies and implementing partners, for research collaboration?
- If this project takes place in a country that has a J-PAL office but it is not the host institution, please detail the reasoning in the Partner Description question below. Your answer will help us understand how J-PAL offices can be more competitive and better respond to the needs of PIs.
55. **Name of Partner Organization** - Indicate the name(s) of the partner organization.
56. **Role of Partner Organization** - Indicate the role of the organization identified related to this project. If you are adding a co-funder as a partner, please add more details under the question “Co-funder Details” farther down.
57. **Partner Description** Please provide a brief description of the partner(s), the partner’s involvement in project activities, and any in-kind or financial support they have committed or provided to the project. [250 words max]
58. **Point of Contact Based at the Partner Organization\*** - Please provide details about your point of contact at the partner organization.
- First Name\*
  - Last Name\*
  - Role or Title\*
  - Email Address\*
59. **Co-funder Details** - If you are adding co-funders, indicate the total amount of received or committed funding, the funded proposal or project title, and the name of the primary PI for the co-funded proposal or project.
60. **[Co-funded projects only] Additional contribution of funds** - What is the additional contribution of these requested funds?
61. **Interest in Co-Funding** - In the "Interest in Co-Funding" box below, tell us if you are interested in applying for co-funding from the [Fund for Innovation in Development \(FID\)](#) or other donors in J-PAL’s network? Would you potentially like assistance from J-PAL staff in preparing a proposal to these donors? Please note that assistance will be provided on a case-by-case basis, but the first possible step is assessing interest. [150 words max]
62. **Additional Information** - Please review CVI’s proposal evaluation criteria below, and provide additional discussion relevant to the evaluation criteria if not already addressed in the fields above. [500 words max]

## Evaluation criteria

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| CVI strategic priority | Does this research embody CVI’s guiding principles? Does this study fall within the scope of CVI’s research priorities? Is the study based in the initiative focus countries? Refer to the CVI RFP Overview, attached to <a href="#">the RFP landing page</a> , for additional details on CVI’s thematic and geographic priorities.  |
| Academic contribution  | 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? The CVI Review Board rewards innovation, generalizability, and theoretical grounding in proposals. |
| Policy relevance       | Does the study address questions crucial to understanding pressing issues on crime and violence in developing countries? 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? 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? What is the credibility and policy influence of the implementing partner? 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?                    |
| Research ethics        | Are the risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants, staff and/or community members minimal? Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?<br><br>Please refer to the “Designing responsible research projects” section of the CVI RFP Overview, attached to <a href="#">the RFP landing page</a> , for a more in-depth discussion on research ethics.   |
| 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?  |