

CVI PROPOSAL GUIDELINES: FULL RCTS

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 using the **relevant application link from the [RFP webpage](#), and following the [Applicant Instructions](#)**. Complete proposals will be due **December 15, 2025 at 5:00 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 [Application 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:

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 the
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	RFP landing page , 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? Please refer to the “Designing responsible research projects” section of the CVI RFP Overview, attached to the RFP landing page , 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?

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 effective¹.

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.**²

¹ 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](#).

² 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) and Principal Investigator (PI) Alignment:**
 - The ITRA must employ the PI formally named in the award. This formally-named PI will be the researcher responsible for the subaward agreement, as authorized by the Letter of Transmission. The formally-named PI must be:
 - An employee of the ITRA
 - PI named in the Letter of Transmission
 - The main PI named in the IRB approval and IRB application
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements:**
 - The IRB is held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT. The IRB must have [IORG](#) status and [FWA](#), or
 - If the institution does not have its own IRB, the institution must engage the services of a commercial IRB or third party IRB to review and provide oversight for the research activities.
- 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).
- *Purchase of Assets:* Purchase of assets is not allowed with this funding. Assets are items such as laptops, computers, tablets, cell and satellite phones, monitoring devices, other devices/technology, etc. If you are uncertain, please contact your grant administrator before including any assets in the budget. You may include rentals of these assets in your budget.
- 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

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 [Application 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. If any of your letters are not in English, please upload a version translated to English.
 - 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.

APPLICATION 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.
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 better understand and support our research network. 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 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 better understand and support our research network. 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 to J-PAL*** - 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 [Initiative] round of funding? [Yes, I have submitted or plan to submit this proposal to another initiative/Yes, I have submitted this proposal previously to this initiative/No, I have not submitted or do not plan to submit this proposal to another initiative]
 - a. *[Logic-based if response is "Yes, I have submitted or plan to submit this proposal to another initiative"]* Please include the following:
 - i. Initiative(s), year/season of RFP, and the name of the LOI/proposal you submitted or plan to submit. (e.g., GI Spring 2019 Using Mobile Phones to Improve Service Delivery)
 - ii. Are the PI team, context, and research question the same as in the previously submitted or soon to be submitted proposal?
 - iii. If this proposal is for a similar project, but would be using funds for something different, please explain the difference in terms of what research you're going to be conducting and how you're using the budget
 - b. *[Logic-based if response is "Yes, I have submitted this proposal previously to this initiative"]* Please include the following:
 - i. Year/season of RFP, and the name of the LOI/proposal you submitted or plan to submit. (e.g., GI Spring 2019 Using Mobile Phones to Improve Service Delivery)
 - ii. Are the PI team, context, and research question the same as in the previously submitted or soon to be submitted proposal?
 - iii. If this proposal is for a similar project, but would be using funds for something different, please explain the difference in terms of what research you're going to be conducting and how you're using the budget
 - iv. If the proposal you submitted previously was not funded, could you briefly explain if/how you responded to the feedback?
 - c. *[Logic Based - if either "Yes" response is selected]* **Details about Past and Future Submissions*** [350 words max]
15. **Funding Amount** - Amount of requested funding in USD.
16. **National Location** - In which country or countries will your research or travel take place?
17. **Timeline** - Please write out a timeline with key project activities. [250 words]

Narrative

18. **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. [200 words]
19. **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]
20. **The Policy Problem** - Provide a summary of the policy problem that motivates this research, explaining its importance and how it aligns with the research priorities in the RFP Overview. Save finer details of the intervention for the Intervention Details question below. Describe the knowledge gap your project addresses, how it will advance the field, and why the research is valuable. Support your case with descriptive data, a brief literature review, or other evidence of the problem in this setting. Demonstrate meaningful ex ante uncertainty about the results of the study, i.e., that given existing evidence there are both reasons to believe the intervention(s) studied are promising and also reasons to doubt whether they will achieve their goals. [500 words]
21. **Intervention Details** - Describe the intervention or treatment to be evaluated and how it could potentially improve one or more of the initiative's priority outcomes. Please name the implementing partner(s), specify the target population and how the intervention benefits people living in poverty. [400 words]
22. **Evaluation Design:** Please describe your evaluation design, and how it fits with the topics outlined in the RFP materials. Please include the following:
 1. Details of your evaluation design can include but are not limited to:
 - i. What are the units of randomization and analysis (e.g., individual, household, village, etc.)?
 - ii. What is the method of randomization (e.g., lottery, phase-in, encouragement, etc.)?
 - iii. What is the sample size? How would it be divided into treatment and control?
 - iv. Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? How do you plan to address those threats?
 2. Please include information about data collection and key outcomes:

- i. Succinctly describe your data collection plan and key outcome measures of the study. Please include the data collection partner and your relationship with them.
 - ii. 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.
 - iii. 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.
 - iv. 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. [600 words]
23. **Policy Impact and Potential to Scale** - What is the potential policy impact of this intervention (policies, programs, processes, or delivery mechanisms)? Please comment on the ability of this intervention to potentially scale and translate in different contexts. [400 words]
24. **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. [300 words max]

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

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

25. **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. [200 words max]
26. **Local Researcher Involvement** - Please describe how the project involves researchers local to the project context. [200 words max]
27. **Gender Analysis and Reporting** - Does the proposal address any gender issues? For example, have you taken into account how gender considerations could affect the outcomes of the intervention? 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. [200 words max]
28. **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?

29. **AI Technology Type:** Does the intervention being studied use AI (including machine learning, heterogeneous treatment targeting, generative AI, etc.)?

30. **If you selected that it is based on LLMs, please also answer all of the following:**

- a. Which LLM is being used and why?
- b. Will a qualified human (e.g., teacher, healthcare worker, extension agent) review and verify the AI's output before this output is used?
- c. If yes, please describe their role and qualifications. If no human in the loop is present, explain why the intervention is still unlikely to cause harm even if the LLM's output is inaccurate.

31. **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:

32. **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]

33. **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]

34. **Child Safeguarding** - Particularly for projects working with children, what child safeguarding risks exist? [200 words max]

35. **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)

36. **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? [200 words max]

Institutional Review Board and Institute to Receive Award

37. Institutional Review Board (IRB) Information

Please be mindful that MIT requires that either

- a. The IRB is held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT. The IRB must have iOrg status and FWA (as described below). The PI at the ITRA must be listed as the main PI on the IRB, or
- b. If the institution does not have its own IRB, the institution must engage the services of a commercial IRB or third party IRB to review and provide oversight for the research activities.

For the IRB to be considered allowable, it must meet the following criteria as determined by MIT and J-PAL:

1. **IORG status** with the US Office of Human Protections. An IRB's status can be checked by consulting the database of IORGs [here](#).
2. **Federalwide Assurance (FWA)** with the US Office of Human Protections. Status can be checked by consulting the same database as above (link [here](#)).
3. If the IRB is not at the ITRA, then a proof of payment or proof of affiliation is required. Affiliation can be proven with documentation outlining the contractual relationship between the two entities (ITRA and IRB). This proof is most commonly a proof of payment from the ITRA to the IRB. MIT will not accept an Interagency Agreement (IAA) as this documentation.

Approved commercial IRB solutions are [Heartland](#) and [Solutions](#). These IRBs provide review of international research and satisfy J-PAL's IRB requirements; fees can be found on their respective websites. Please ensure that you include the cost of the IRB in your project budget.

More information on ITRA/IRB/PI alignment and FAQs can be found [here](#).

38. Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record

If the project has not received an IRB exemption and IRB review is required, please provide 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

39. Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record - Provide the name of the IRB of Record.

40. Is this IRB of Record IORG certified?

41. 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.

42. 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.

43. Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) and Principal Investigator (PI) Alignment

The ITRA must employ the PI formally named in the award. This formally-named PI will be the researcher responsible for the subaward agreement, as authorized by the Letter of Transmission that is submitted at the Proposal and Award stages. The formally-named PI must be:

- a. An employee of the ITRA
- b. PI named in the Letter of Transmission
- c. The main PI named in the IRB approval and IRB application

44. Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) - Please indicate the institution that will receive the grant funds.

45. 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 is not allowed with this funding. Assets are items such as laptops, computers, tablets, cell and satellite phones, monitoring devices, other devices/technology, etc. If you are uncertain, please contact your grant administrator before including any assets in the budget. You may include rentals of these assets in your budget.

46. 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]*

47. **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

48. **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]*
49. **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]*
50. **Potential Scale-Up Partner Letter of Support** - If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partners. *[Upload]*
51. **Additional attachments** - Please attach any relevant materials discussed in your answers to the previous questions. *[Upload]*
52. *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

53. **Partnership Status** - Have you established communication with relevant stakeholders including but not limited to government agencies and implementing partners, for research collaboration?
- a. 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.

- b. If you are adding a co-funder as a partner, in the Partnership Details section please 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.
54. **Name of Partner Organization** - Indicate the name(s) of the partner organization.
55. **Role of Partner Organization** - Indicate the role of the organization identified related to this project.
56. **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]
57. **Point of Contact Based at the Partner Organization*** - Please provide details about your point of contact at the partner organization.
 - a. First Name*
 - b. Last Name*
 - c. Role or Title
 - d. Email Address*
58. **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]
59. **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 the RFP landing page , for additional details on CVI's thematic and geographic priorities.
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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? Please refer to the “Designing responsible research projects” section of the CVI RFP Overview, attached to the RFP landing page, 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?