Gender and Economic Agency (GEA) Initiative

**Off-Cycle COVID-19 RFP**

GEA is accepting off-cycle proposals for studies that test innovative solutions to offset the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic on women’s employment and economic agency and that add to our understanding of these disruptions (or opportunities). GEA will consider funding up to $50,000 for research projects in East Africa, Nigeria, South Africa, and South Asia (see below for a list of eligible countries). Proposals requesting less than $50,000 may be better placed to receive full funding due to limited resources. All J-PAL affiliates and GEA invited researchers are eligible to apply, while priority will be given to untenured professors and PhD students of affiliates and invited researchers. Applications are due on August 3 and funding decisions will be announced in early September

## RFP Overview

GEA is accepting off-cycle proposals for studies that test innovative solutions to offset the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic on women’s employment and economic agency and that add to our understanding of these disruptions (or opportunities). This off-cycle RFP round is open to any research related to women's employment and economic agency in light of COVID-19.

A brief, pre-proposal form is due no later than July 13, and applications are due on August 3. Funding decisions will be announced in early September. Applications must follow [J-PAL’s COVID-19 response guidelines](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/blog/3-17-20/j-pals-response-covid-19) and must not increase in-person interactions. All research and technical assistance must take place remotely via phone, email, video calls, etc. and have necessary IRB approvals for any research components.

**Eligibility:** All J-PAL affiliates and GEA invited researchers are eligible to apply. Given COVID-19’s impact on the research of early-career researchers, priority will be given to untenured professors and PhD students of affiliates and invited researchers.

In addition to proposals to implement and evaluate interventions, GEA is also open to proposals to collect data for descriptive analyses related to COVID-19 or to conduct non-experimental evaluations of the impact of policy responses that have been implemented.

**Geographic scope:** Projects in East Africa (i.e. Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda), Nigeria, South Africa, and South Asia (i.e. India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan) are eligible for funding. Projects in other countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia may be considered if relevant to policy priorities in the country.

## Instructions

In advance of applying, please submit a [brief, pre-proposal form](https://forms.gle/2btdaY1fTexTBEsE9) no later than 11:59 p.m. on Monday, July 13, 2020. Proposals for funding consist of: (i) a cover sheet and responses to questions below, saved as single Word or PDF file, titled [PI Name]\_[Topic Name]; (ii) a budget form saved separately as single Excel file, titled [PI Name]\_Budget; and (iii) letters of support saved as PDF. These materials should be submitted via email to GEA@povertyactionlab.org by 11:59 p.m. ET on Monday, August 3, 2020.

**Application Questions:**

1. Please indicate the proposal type that best fits your project
   1. Standard full research project (RCT)
   2. Quasi-experimental study
   3. Descriptive data collection
2. Please indicate whether this project is an add-on to an existing project. If so, please specify to which project are you adding funds and whether this project is an RCT? (Please include the project title, PI names, and, if applicable, original funding J-PAL initiative)
3. Abstract: Please provide a 100 word abstract of the project. This will be added to GEA’s webpage if the project receives funding
4. Proposed project start date and proposed end date
5. Please provide a summary of the policy problem that motivates this research and how it relates to the impact of COVID-19 on women’s employment and economic agency. Please describe how the research may be used to inform specific policies or programs related to COVID-19.
6. Please provide a brief description of the treatment (if applicable), evaluation design, target population, and implementing partners.
7. Please specify how you will recruit your sample (e.g., are you using an existing sample for which you have valid phone numbers)? Please also specify how your protocol takes steps to not increase in-person interactions. If you propose to use secondary data, please indicate the current status of your access to this data (e.g., do you already have the data set or how do you plan to get access)?
8. Is this proposal by an early-career researcher, i.e. untenured professor or PhD students of affiliates and invited researchers?
   1. Untenured professor
   2. PhD student
   3. N/a
   4. Other - please specify
9. Are there any additional points you'd like to make on evaluation criteria (see application instructions) that have not been addressed in the points above? For example, justification for projects outside of the priority geographic scope.

**Budget:** Please submit a detailed project budget using the Excel template [available online](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/files/2020/05/GEA_Full-Study-Budget-Template_2020.xlsx). To reduce the processing time, please keep the following in mind when developing your budget:

1. If there is co-funding for the project, you must complete both the “Total Project Budget” and the “GEA Budget” sheets in the budget template.
2. Awards are normally paid on a cost-reimbursable basis.
3. Applications must include budget notes in the column provided in the budget template, detailing the major costs within the budget. For example, “Travel Costs” should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, etc. “Field Costs” should include a breakdown of the number of respondents, cost per respondent, etc.
4. Universities in high-income countries, generally defined as [OECD member countries](http://www.oecd.org/about/membersandpartners/list-oecd-member-countries.htm), can charge up to 10% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs. Independent non-profits from any location and universities from mid- or low-income countries may charge up to 15% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs.
5. We understand that the cap on overhead or indirect costs under J-PAL initiatives are 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 notes.
6. 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.
7. Unallowable costs include those labeled as “incidental,” “miscellaneous,” or “contingency.” Any costs for rent should be explained in the budget notes.
8. Please note that J-PAL does not cover PI salaries.
9. It is your responsibility that your budget follows your host institution’s policies for costs. As part of your proposal, you must submit a letter from the institution to receive the award that states that they have reviewed your proposal and accept your budget. If the organization allows you to submit your proposal without such a letter (due to time constraints or some other reason), please note this on the Proposal Cover Sheet (under the “Institution to receive grant funds” field). Please note that this applies to all projects, including those going through J-PAL and IPA offices. You should contact J-PAL and IPA offices in advance to make sure you are aware of their policies for proposal review.

**Letters of support:**

1. Full projects are required to provide a letter of support from implementing partners.
2. If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partners.
3. **Evidence of eligibility for PhD students:** To be eligible, a PhD student must have a J-PAL affiliate or an invited researcher as an advisor on their dissertation committee. Those that do not yet have an official thesis committee are also eligible to apply, as long as they submit a formal letter of confirmation from an affiliate or invited researcher that explicitly states: “I am actively responsible for supervising this project/research and anticipate being on the student’s thesis committee.”

**Requirements:** If your proposal is accepted for award, the actual funds will be provided under a subaward from MIT to the “Institute to Receive Award” indicated on your coversheet. This will require, in addition to your proposal:

1. Formal submission approval of the proposal from your institution to the initiative.
2. IRB approvals from your host institution accepting review for the project (the reviewing IRB must have a Federalwide Assurance Number and be willing to establish a reliance agreement), unless the project has been deemed exempt. MIT requires proof of IRB approval prior to executing the award with your institution and releasing funding. We also ask that you provide any local IRB approvals for our records.

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

1. The Review Board sends official award notification letter.
2. If not already submitted, J-PAL requests your institution’s approval of the proposal and your institutional IRB approval.[[1]](#footnote-1)
3. A reliance agreement is established between MIT and the IRB of record which must have a Federalwide Assurance Number. Instructions will be included in the award letter.
4. J-PAL establishes an account with award funds at MIT.
5. MIT establishes a subaward under that account with your institution.

**GEA Coversheet**

Off-cycle COVID-19

*Please note that all fields are required*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| J-PAL AFfiliate or GEA InvITEE and Institutional affiliation | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | |
| CO-Investigator(s) and institutional affiliation | | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | | |
| I agree | *By checking this box, all J-PAL affiliates and initiative special invitees who are co-PIs on this project certify that they will be active, engaged and responsive PIs dedicated to guaranteeing the quality control on all aspects of this research; and that their participation in this project is not merely to provide access to J-PAL resources and funding to anyone else working on this project who is neither a J-PAL affiliate nor an initiative special invitee.* | | | | | | | |
| Title of Proposal | | | | | | Country | | |
|  | | | | | |  | | |
| Partner(s) | | | | Contact (Name, Email, Phone) | | | | |
|  | | | |  | | | | |
| Co-Funder(s) | | | | FUNDED AWARD (PI, Project Title, Amount) | | | | |
|  | | | |  | | | | |
| **Have you submitted this or a related proposal in any previous GEA round of funding?** | | | | | | | | |
| Yes  No | | | | If yes, when? | | | | |
| **Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL research initiative?** | | | | | | | | |
| Yes  No | | | | If yes, which initiative and when? | | | | |
| GEA Funding Request | | | | | | | | |
| Requested | | **$** | | TotalCo-funded | | | **$** | |
| **Grant Period** | | | | | | | | |
| Start Date: (yyyy-mm-dd) | | |  | | End Date: (yyyy-mm-dd) | | |  |
| Institution to Receive Award\* | | |  | | Contact for Contracting Issues | | |  |
| IRB of record | | |  | | IRB CONTACT | | |  |
| ***Do you expect that you will need to set up any sub-awards for this project? (For example: a partner organization, or an organization doing field work)***  ☐ *Yes* ☐ No | | | | | | | | |

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

1. 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. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)