

# GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE PROPOSAL GUIDELINES: MULTIDISCIPLINARY GRANTS

Round 24 - Fall 2024 | Request for Proposals (RFP)

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

## OVERVIEW

**Submission instructions:** All applicants must first [submit the required Letter of Interest in WizeHive, our grant management system \(GMS\)](#). Successful applicants will receive an invitation to proceed with their full proposal materials.

Strong multidisciplinary research proposals will combine insights from applied economics and political science with those from other disciplines (including social sciences, humanities and, potentially, natural sciences) to answer pressing governance questions, with a preference for proposals incorporating theory, methods, and/or analytical frameworks drawn from psychology and behavioral science. Multidisciplinary grants must relate to political participation. We strongly recommend that approaches from other disciplines inform how research questions are formulated and answered, not just how inputs and outcomes are measured.

These grants will fund the following activities:

*Type I:* Exploratory research, which may also include travel activities, to (a) address a general topic of interest within the field of governance and (b) propose ideas for how the topic might be explored through a future randomized evaluation that incorporates theory, methods, or analytical frameworks from disciplines outside economics and political science. Proposals do not need to include a detailed program or evaluation design.

*Type II:* Additional research activities on top of an ongoing or recently completed randomized impact evaluation—including (but not limited to) the addition of a new survey module, treatment arm, or qualitative fieldwork—that draw from disciplines outside economics and political science.

Both Type I and Type II activities can include other costs associated with promoting interactions and collaborations between researchers from different disciplines centered around the development of a research project in the governance space (including travel).

GI's research priorities are identified in the Governance Initiative Review Paper (full paper [here](#); executive summary [here](#)) which summarizes existing evidence in governance from primarily economics and political science, with an emphasis on field evaluations.

**Priority will be given to proposals authored by teams that include a researcher outside the applied economics space** (this space includes PhD holders in economics as well as public policy, political science, or similar programs if their focus is on applied microeconomic methods). We also encourage proposals by eligible graduate students (see Eligibility section below). Successful grant proposals will be eligible to apply for larger pilot and full-scale grants during the Governance Initiative's regular RFP process (see [GI RFP Overview](#)).

**Please note:** if J-PAL has already funded part of, or precursors to, this project in a past competition round for any initiative, **the project will not be eligible to receive additional funding unless some preliminary data or findings from the previously funded work is available and shared in the proposal. You may submit this additional material as an addendum to your submission via the GMS.**

**Funding per multidisciplinary award:** Awards are capped at \$30,000. **We expect projects of various 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:** Type I grantees must complete their multidisciplinary work and submit final reports within eighteen months of receiving the award. Type II grantees must complete their multidisciplinary work and submit final reports within twenty-four months of receiving the award.

**Project Costing Exercise:** GI multidisciplinary Type II grantees are requested to collect and share detailed program cost data following the [J-PAL Costing Guidelines](#). **The Application Template includes details on what to include in your proposal narrative.**

**Motivation:** The goal of this exercise in each multidisciplinary (type II) 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 GI 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 GMS 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 a multidisciplinary proposal budget:** Please submit a detailed project budget using the [Multidisciplinary Budget Template](#) provided at the [GI RFP release page](#). To reduce processing time, please keep the following in mind:

- **Institute to Receive Award (ITRA) Requirements:** Multidisciplinary grants 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](#). 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](#).
- Please refer to the [Grant Conditions section in the RFP Overview](#), available at the [GI RFP release page](#) to review all of GI’s award requirements in detail as part of preparing your submission.
- 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 GI) in the budget template. **If the project has other funders, the proposal should clearly explain the marginal contribution of the requested funds from GI.**
- **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.

#### *Allowable Direct and Indirect Costs*

- **Please note that GI does not cover PI salaries with the exception of PIs who completed a PhD and are based at academic institutions in middle- or low-income countries.** There are no individual PI limits, but the total budgeted amount for LMIC researcher PI time in aggregate across all co-PIs should not exceed \$3,750 per award.
- **Project Implementation Costs: For multidisciplinary projects, implementation costs are expected to be borne by the project partners.** However, under some circumstances, GI 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 mid- 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 complete all sections in the [GMS](#) by the full proposal deadline. You must upload several

documents to complete your full proposal. 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 detailed power calculations.
2. **Proposal Budget:** Carefully review the Budget Guidelines in this document, then use the [Multidisciplinary Budget Template](#) (available on the RFP page), 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 GMS.
3. **Budget Narrative:** Detail the major costs within the budget, referring to the Budget Guidelines above, in a Word document with the title [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget Narrative].doc(x) for upload to the GMS. 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 GMS:
  - a. *(required for Type II)* letters from each implementing partner, indicating the details of their commitment to partner on the research, and their willingness to share relevant program cost data. Consider including letter(s) from any potential scale-up partner(s).
  - b. *(required for Type I and II)* a letter/document stating the proposed grant host institution's approval of the proposal materials.
  - c. **PhD students applying as the primary PI are required to include a letter of support from a researcher adviser eligible for this call.** The letter should indicate the adviser's willingness to remain involved in a supervisory role throughout the lifetime of the project.
5. **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 travel/proposal development or pilot findings, please submit an addendum detailing the results that inform your multidisciplinary design.

## APPLICATION TEMPLATE

The GMS will require you to address the below prompts. The text provided below each bolded

subsection helps provide guidance on what the GI Board is looking for to effectively evaluate your proposal.

## LETTER OF INTEREST QUESTIONS

### Important Information

1. Please note that this application is for multidisciplinary projects. If you would like to apply for another grant type (travel/proposal development, pilot, or RCT), please see the [GLRFP webpage](#) for application instructions.

Please note that applicants can move back and forth between sections to edit answers before submitting. Applicants can also save their applications, then come back later to make changes before submitting. For more details about how to navigate WizeHive, please see [these instructions](#).

2. **Subaward Setup**

For grants with **human subject research**, once all materials including IRB approvals/exemptions have been received, MIT typically takes 60 days to establish the subaward. Please provide conservative rather than optimistic estimates for start and end dates to reduce the likelihood of needing to submit no-cost extension requests.

### **Institute to Receive Award (ITRA)**

PLEASE NOTE: MIT now requires that at least one project PI be based at or affiliated with the institute that award funds are allocated to. Please enter the ITRA here. Please see this [memo](#) for more information

### **Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

Please be mindful that 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. BRANY, Heartland, and HML all 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](#). 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 provide the current or expected IRB of record. IRB Requirements - If this proposal receives initiative funding, we will ask that you submit the following in the Additional Attachments section:

- All IRB approval(s) or exemption(s)
  - All IRB-approved protocols
  - Any IRB-approved consent forms
3. **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. Details for only 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. [First Name; Last Name; Email Address]
  4. **Select PI Eligibility Category\*** - Indicate how the researcher is eligible for J-PAL Initiative funding. [J-PAL Affiliate; Invited Researcher; PhD Student; J-PAL Postdoc]
    - a. **PhD Student Applicants\*** - If you are a PhD student, please indicate the J-PAL-affiliated researcher who serves or will serve as an advisor on your dissertation committee. [First Name; Last Name; Email Address]
  5. **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.
  6. Below, if you choose "Other" instead of "University," please contact the initiative team to provide more details. The organization mentioned below is the eligible researcher's organization type.
  7. **Organization Type of Eligible Researcher\*** [University; Other]
  8. **Organization Website of Eligible Researcher\***
  9. **Country Where Organization of Eligible Researcher is Based or Headquartered\***
  10. **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. [First Name; Last Name; Role or Title; Email Address]

## 11. PI Certification

- 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.

## 12. PI Certification\* - Do you certify the above statements? [Yes; No]

## 13. 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.

## 14. Demographic Information Confirmation\* - Please confirm that every PI/co-PI has completed the questions in the above-linked survey. You may select "Not Yet" so as to finish other questions. However, if you submit the application without "Yes" selected, your application will not be considered (until the surveys are complete). If you select

"Yes" and PIs or co-PIs have not completed their surveys, their applications will not be considered until the surveys are complete. [Yes; Not Yet]

## Project Details

15. **Full Title of Proposal\*** [30 words max]
16. **Past and Future Submissions\*** - Have you submitted or do you plan to submit this LOI and proposal to any other J-PAL Initiative RFP, including in any previous [initiative] round of funding? [Yes/No]
  - a. **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, Multidisciplinary). Additionally, please explain how the project has progressed since it was last submitted to the initiative, and explain how you addressed the feedback that was provided with your last submission. [350 words max]
17. **Funding Amount\*** - Amount of requested funding in USD. [2 decimal places]]
18. **Proposed Period of Performance Project Start Date\*** - What is the proposed start date for this J-PAL grant's subaward activities?
19. **Proposed Period of Performance Project End Date\*** - What is the proposed end date for this J-PAL grant's subaward activities?
20. **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. Please note that this abstract will be added to the Initiative's webpage if the project receives funding. [250 words max] (Abstract\_\_c | 15,000)
21. **Research Focus Areas and/or Cross-Cutting Themes\*** - Please indicate which GI focus areas or themes your proposal relates to; these are described in detail in the RFP materials. [Political Participation, Corruption and Leakages, State Capacity]
22. **Initiative Alignment\*** - Please briefly describe how the project aligns with the initiative's research focus areas and/or cross-cutting themes, as described in the RFP materials, initiative research agenda, or initiative review paper. [250 words max]

## Location

23. **National Location\*** - In which country or countries will your research or travel take place?

## MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPLICATION QUESTIONS

### Important Information - Type I and Type II

1. Please note that applicants can move back and forth between sections to edit answers before submitting. Applicants can also save their applications, then come back later to make changes before submitting. For more details about how to navigate WizeHive, please see these instructions.
2. **GI Funding Request\*** - Indicate by checking the appropriate box whether the application is for Type I or Type II funding – see application instructions (i.e., the materials on the RFP website) for details. Type I - new exploratory research; Type II - Additional research activities on top of an ongoing or recently completed RCT.
3. **Timeline** - Please write out a timeline with key project activities. [250 words max]
4. **Existing Research Project (Type I and Type II)** - Are you applying to fund additional research as part of an existing research project previously funded by J-PAL (e.g., a second proposal development grant continuing from a prior proposal development grant, a pilot grant building on a travel/proposal development, a full RCT building on a pilot, etc.)?
  - a. **Existing Research Project Details** - If the above answer is yes, please provide the title and/or J-PAL grant number of your previously funded project. [250 words max]

### Narrative

5. **Please complete the appropriate questions/section of this application based on whether you are applying under a Type I or Type II proposal. Leave the non-applicable questions/section blank.**
6. **Research Focus Areas and/or Cross-Cutting Themes\* (Type I and Type II)** - Tell us if your focus areas or themes have changed since submitting your Letter of Interest by adding this information here. GI's research focus areas and/or cross-cutting themes are: Political Participation, Corruption and Leverages, State Capacity
7. **Multidisciplinary Connections (Type I and Type II)** - Please discuss the proposal's connection to multidisciplinary research frameworks and questions, and how these



frameworks and key research questions relate to or differ from frameworks and key questions in the [Governance Review Paper](#) (executive summary [here](#)).

8. **Policy Motivation\* (Type I and Type II)**- 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]
9. **Potential Policy Impact\* (Type I and Type II)** - 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. 1) How will it meet the needs of your partner? 2) Will results from the intervention have broader implications? 3) How, if at all, will the “lessons learned” have relevance beyond this test case? 4) Is there demand from policy makers for more/better information to influence their decisions in this area? [250 words]
10. **Uncertainty of Study’s Results\*** - 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. [250 words]
11. **Target Population and Context\* (Type I and Type II)** - 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? [350 words max]
12. **Unique Contribution to the Field (Type I and Type II)**- Please describe what knowledge gap you are addressing and how it will advance the field. Specifically:
  1. Explain the project’s potential to provide a unique scientific contribution.
  2. Provide a brief literature review to demonstrate the uniqueness of your project.
  3. Does the study answer new questions or introduce novel methods, measures, or interventions?
  4. How does the study compare with the existing body of research?
  5. Does the research strategy provide a bridge between a practical experiment and underlying economic theories?Note that a full reference list can be attached in the "Additional Attachments" section. [500 words max]
13. In the **Innovative Intervention Details & Evaluation Design (Type II Only)** question below, please describe the intervention or treatment to be evaluated:
  1. State how the intervention is either innovative or uses a straightforward intervention to study a big question.
  2. 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.

3. 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:

4. Succinctly describe your data collection plan and key outcome measures of the study. Please include the data collection partner and your relationship with them.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. 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:

8. What are the units of randomization and analysis (e.g., individual, household, village, etc.)?

9. What is the method of randomization (e.g., lottery, phase-in, encouragement, etc.)?

10. What is the sample size? How would it be divided into treatment and control?

11. Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? How do you plan to address those threats?

**14. Innovative Intervention Details & Evaluation Design (Type II Only)** - Please answer the prompts above in the space below. [1000 words max]

**15. Value of Research\* (Type I and Type II)** - Does the proposal make a compelling case for the value of the research based on at least one of the following?

- There is prior evidence indicating that this is a promising intervention
- This is an intervention into which considerable resources are being, or will be, invested

**16. Outcomes of Interest\* (Type I and Type II)** - Please select from the options in the dropdown

- 17. Outcomes and Measurement (Type II Only)** - Please describe the outcome variables, how they relate to the initiative, and how you plan to measure the outcome variables. [250 words max]
- 18. Mechanisms (Type II Only)** - 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]
- 19. Data Publication (Type II Only)**- 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. Please see J-PAL's Data and Code Availability Policy for more information about data publication:

 [Data\\_code\\_availability\\_policy\\_2020.pdf](#)

[Yes; No]

**20. Power Calculations (Type II Only) [700 words max]**

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.

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

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

**21. Project Costing Exercise (Type II Only) [500 words max]**

GI would like to see the research team's plan for how they will gather, interpret and share program implementation cost data. Please outline the approach that you will take to collect and report costing data for the intervention you are evaluating.

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:

1. 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.
2. Which elements will be considered costs of implementation, and which elements will be considered evaluation costs?
3. What types of cost data do you anticipate collecting?
4. When in the data collection process would you collect each of these types of data, and how?
5. 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?
6. 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?

**22. Gender Implications, Analysis, and Reporting (Type I and Type II)**

- 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? Since funded projects are required to report on gender-disaggregated impacts, briefly explain whether you will disaggregate gender impacts or why this would not be feasible.

**23. Gender Implications, Analysis, and Reporting\* (Type I and Type II)** - Please answer the prompts above in the space below: [500 words max]

**24. Implications on Equity and Social Inclusion\* (Type I and Type II)**- 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]

**25. Local Researcher Involvement\* (Type I and Type II)** - Please describe how the project involves researchers local to the project context. [250 words max]

- 26. Scalability and Translatability Potential\* (Type I and Type II)** - Please comment on the ability of this intervention to potentially scale and translate in different contexts. [500 words max]
- 27. Validation and Test Accuracy Data (Type I and Type II)** - 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.

### TYPE I Only

- 28. Statement of Topic** - Please address the general topic of interest and current ideas on how the question might be explored through a randomized evaluation that incorporates multidisciplinary frameworks. Exploratory proposals do not need to include a detailed program or evaluation design [300 words max]
- 29. In the Pathway to an RCT and Impact question below, describe how results from this pilot would inform a future RCT?**
1. Describe, specifically, what researchers and practitioners can expect to learn from this pilot study. Will it pilot an intervention? Will it provide qualitative data to inform intervention design?
  2. How could the findings meet the needs of policymakers or development practitioners? Outline a specific plan for how you will share your findings and outputs with partners (e.g., data). How will the implementing partners and other stakeholders become aware of the findings and benefit from the data and other such outputs (e.g., descriptive statistics) generated from this pilot study?
  3. In what specific ways will the pilot prepare researchers for a full RCT project? Outline the hypothesized pathway and scope for impact. Clearly establish a plausible and promising link between the proposed approach to be tested and the hypothesized channel for impact.
  4. Do you expect these impacts to vary across geographic region, population, or context?
  5. Indicate the reliability of existing evidence from pilot studies or relevant expert opinion in your research context.
  6. Include preliminary or pilot data available in support of your hypotheses, models and/or theories of change.
- 30. Pathway to an RCT and Impact\*** [500 words max]

## TYPE II

31. **Abstract** - Please be sure to highlight both the main evaluation and the multidisciplinary angle in the abstract. Please note that this abstract will be added to GI's webpage if the project receives funding [150 words max]
32. **Statement of Topic** - Please clearly summarize the ongoing or recently completed randomized evaluation and how you propose to expand the research with GI funding (e.g. overview of additional survey modules, treatment arms, qualitative fieldwork, etc.) [300 words max]

## Potential Risks (Type I and Type II)

33. **Please answer the following questions below in detail:**
  - a. **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?
  - b. **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?
  - c. **Child Safeguarding** - Particularly for projects working with children, what child safeguarding risks exist?
  - d. **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?
    - i. Program and research participants
    - ii. Staff (e.g, implementing partners, research assistants, enumerators)
    - iii. 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)
  - e. **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?
34. **Potential Risks\*** - please answer the prompts above in the space below. [1000 words max]

## Institutional Review Board and Institute to Receive Award (Type I and Type II)

### 35. 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.](#)

### 36. 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

**37. Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record** - Provide the name of the IRB of Record below.

**38. Is this IRB of Record IORG certified?** [Yes; No]

**39. 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? [Yes/No]

**40. 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 provide the name of the ITRA here. Please see this [memo](#) and [FAQs document](#) for more information.

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

## Budget - Type I and Type II

### 42. Budget Template

From the [RFP website](#), download and complete the multidisciplinary 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 the budget in the budget section of the online application portal. Please note that the budget is formatted specifically for this application. Please do not remove the formatting, change any of the formatting, or create new columns.

**43. Budget Upload\***

**44. 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.

## Letters of Support & Additional Materials

**45. Letter of Support from Implementing Partner** - Multidisciplinary proposals (Type I) are not required, but encouraged, to submit a letter of support from an implementing partner. Multidisciplinary proposals (Type II) are required to provide a letter of support from the implementing partner on their underlying evaluation, as well as from any new implementing partners that will be included as a part of their new proposed research activities. 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.

**46. Letter of Transmission\*** - Type I and Type II projects 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.

**47. Potential Scale-Up Partner Letter of Support** - If available, applicants should also include letters of support from potential scale-up partners.

**48. Are you applying as a PhD Student?\***

[Yes/No]

**d. 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.

- i. **Request for Letter of Support\*** - Please enter the following information to send a request to your advisor to upload their letter of support. Your

application cannot be submitted until they upload their letter of support.

[Email; Name; Role or Title]

49. **Additional attachments** - Please attach any relevant materials discussed in your answers to the previous questions.

## Partnership Questions (Type I and Type II)

50. **Partnership Status\*** - Have you established communication with relevant stakeholders including but not limited to government agencies and implementing partners, for research collaboration? [Yes; No]

e. **Name of Partner Organization\*** - Indicate the name(s) of the partner organization.

f. **Role of Partner Organization\*** - Indicate the role of the organization on this project. If you are adding co-funders, you will not be able to submit until you (a) indicate the amount of received or committed funding, (b) add the funded proposal or project title, and (c) add the name of the primary PI for the co-funded proposal or project.

[Co-funder; Scale-up Partner; Other; Research Implementation Partner; Intervention Implementation Partner; Government Partner] [Partner\_Role\_\_c: Co-funder; Scale-up Partner; Other; Research Implementation Partner; Intervention Implementation Partner; Government Partner]

i. **If you selected "Other" above, please explain the role of your partner.**

g. **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. Please include any potential partnership risks. [250 words max]

h. **Point of Contact Based at the Partner Organization\*** - Please provide details about your point of contact at the partner organization.

- i. First Name\*
- ii. Last Name\*
- iii. Role or Title\*
- iv. Email Address\*
- v. Phone Number\*

51. **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.





# J-PAL

ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB

**52. Interest in Co-Funding** - In the "Interest in Co-Funding" box below, tell us if you are interested in applying for co-funding from [Development Innovation Ventures \(DIV\)](#), 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]