

J-PAL INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE (IGI)

Request for Proposals (Spring 2023)

J-PAL's Innovation in Government Initiative (IGI) is calling for proposals to fund technical assistance to governments to adapt, pilot, and scale evidence-informed innovations that have been previously evaluated with a randomized evaluation(s) and found effective in improving the lives of people living in poverty. J-PAL affiliated and all eligible invited researchers (as defined under "[6. Eligibility](#)") can submit applications in collaboration with government partners, J-PAL regional offices, and other collaborators. **Please submit a short Letter of Interest (LOI) by 11:59 p.m. US ET on Friday, May 19, 2023. Applicants whose proposals are confirmed to be eligible are requested to submit full proposals by 11:59 p.m. US ET on Friday, June 30, 2023.**

IGI encourages highly scale-relevant proposals in its priority areas of livelihood interventions, cash transfers, and health. We encourage proposals that aim to boost livelihood outcomes at scale through the provision of skills, capital, and opportunities, ideally in Sub-Saharan Africa. We also encourage proposals focusing on scaling and improving the delivery of government cash transfer programs and cash benchmarking.

SPRING 2023 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) TIMELINE:

DATE	MILESTONE
Apr 10, 2023 (Monday)	Request for Proposals Opens
May 19, 2023 (Friday)	Letter of Interest (LoI) Deadline
June 30, 2023 (Friday)	Proposal Submission Deadline

July	Board Review of Proposals
Aug	Funding Decisions Announced

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
1. MOTIVATION	4
2. IGI'S FUNDING PRIORITIES	4
3. PROPOSAL TYPES	5
4. FOCUS AREAS AND GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES	7
4.1 Boosting livelihood outcomes at scale through the provision of skills, capital, and opportunities	7
4.2 Scaling and improving the delivery of government cash transfer programs and cash benchmarking	7
4.3 Health	8
5. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES	8
6. ELIGIBILITY	9
7. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION MATERIALS	10
8. ACTIVITIES FUNDED	10
9. GRANT CONDITIONS	12
10. REVIEW PROCESS	13
ANNEX I: REVIEW CRITERIA	15
ANNEX II: J-PAL REQUIREMENTS ON EVIDENCE BASE FOR CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR SCALING PROJECTS	21

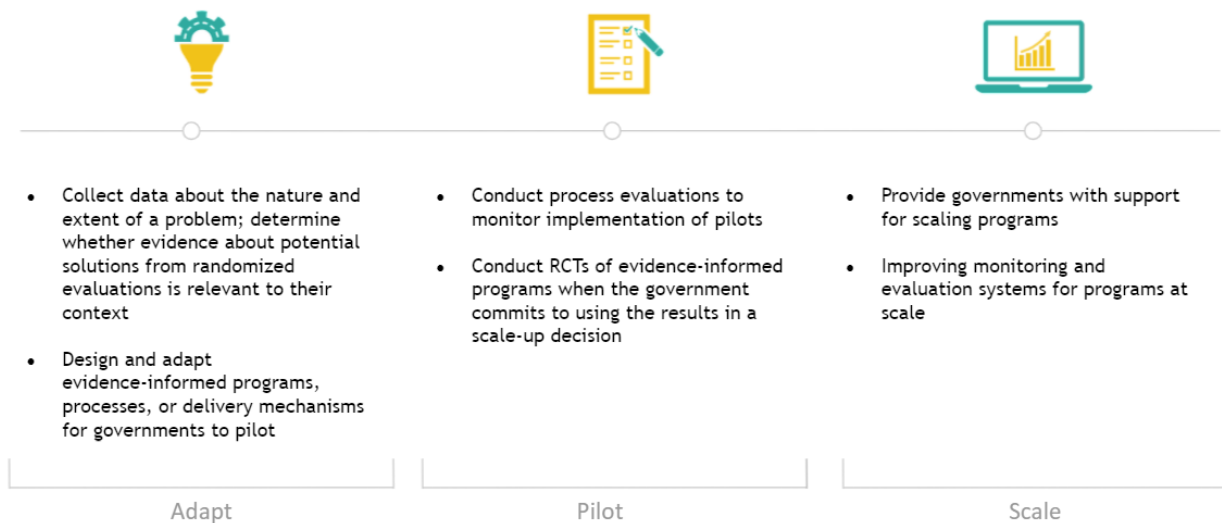
1. MOTIVATION

Many governments around the world are eager to use evidence to improve the effectiveness of their social programs and policies, especially when it comes to essential services like health and social assistance. Meanwhile, universities and research organizations are producing and synthesizing evidence from rigorous impact evaluations that can be used to design and improve these programs and policies. However, demand from governments and good research are not enough to change lives. Using evidence to inform change at scale also requires a deep understanding of context and systems, coupled with political will, a policy window, and implementation capacity. Identifying these opportunities and building strong partnerships to apply evidence takes time and resources.

For more than a decade, the J-PAL network and our partners have built long-term partnerships with governments around the world to [increase the use of evidence in policy](#), and adapt and scale programs and policies informed by evidence. Together we work with government partners on their policy priorities, helping to determine whether and how evidence is relevant to their context, supporting them in piloting programs and policies leveraging this evidence, and building systems for data-enabled program delivery and monitoring. We believe supporting governments during this middle phase is critical to bridge the gap between the generation of promising evidence and the effective delivery of evidence-informed policies and programs at scale. As such, IGI aims to fund technical assistance to governments to adapt, pilot, and scale evidence-informed innovations that have been previously evaluated with a randomized evaluation(s) and found to improve the lives of people living in poverty.

2. IGI'S FUNDING PRIORITIES

Applicants to the current RFP can request funding to support technical assistance to government partners to adapt, pilot, or scale evidence-informed innovations that have been previously evaluated with a randomized evaluation(s) and that have the potential to improve the lives of people living in poverty. Innovations can be new programs or policies, or changes to existing programs, policies, processes, or delivery systems. Proposals should clearly be demand-driven, focused on issues that the government partner has identified as priorities. IGI has a strong preference to fund partnerships in low- and middle-income countries. Projects in Sub-Saharan Africa will be especially prioritized for livelihood and health interventions. Funding can be used to provide support at various stages in the scaling process, including support to:



IGI accepts proposals for work across a range of contexts: In some cases, applicants are supporting a government partner to adopt an evidence-based innovation at scale after collaborating together on a randomized evaluation that had promising results. In other cases, applicants are collaborating with a government partner to apply insights from one or more randomized evaluations conducted in other contexts to the partner's local context. In either case, we look for clear demand from government partners and high potential for adoption of evidence-based policies or programs at scale, including detail on how the project will contribute to evidence being used in specific policy decisions.

3. PROPOSAL TYPES

IGI will consider three types of proposals that can be used to provide technical assistance to policy partners at various stages in the scaling process:

1) Adapt

Up to approximately \$75,000, suggested period of performance: one year

This type of support is for projects where the government partner has identified the potential evidence-informed solution, but more work needs to be done before they can pilot a scalable version of it. These grants can be used to support the government partner in designing and adapting evidence-informed programs, policies, or delivery mechanisms to their context and systems so that they are ready to begin piloting it. This can include collecting data about the nature and extent of a problem to determine whether potential solutions are relevant to the context (i.e., conducting a needs assessment or scoping/feasibility study).

2) Policy Pilot

Up to approximately \$100,000–200,000, suggested period of performance: two to three years

This type of support is for projects where the partner is ready to pilot the evidence-informed solution but would like technical support in either setting up a pilot, making sure it maintains fidelity to the evidence in terms of the program features that drove positive impacts, and/or monitoring pilot implementation quality. These grants can be used to support the government partner in piloting a scalable version of an evidence-based solution, including: preparing for the pilot (training, program manuals, etc.), conducting process evaluations to monitor implementation quality, analyzing pilot results and if successful, helping the partner to make a case for further scale.

3) Scale

Up to approximately \$300,000, suggested period of performance: three to four years

This type of support is for projects where the partner has already piloted a version of the evidence-informed solution in their context (either in a randomized evaluation or policy pilot) or elsewhere, with sufficient justification that the solution has been responsibly adapted and contextualized. Based on previous results, the government partner would like to move forward with a scale-up and would like technical support in expanding the program more widely. This grant can support a range of activities that can include but are not limited to: conducting analysis to help them secure key approvals for the scale-up, ensuring implementation and rollout protocols maintain fidelity to the evidence in terms of the key program features that drove positive impacts, and/or setting up low-cost partner-owned monitoring systems for programs at scale to report periodic progress to key decision-makers.

Applying evidence responsibly: Drawing on evidence from randomized evaluations is not enough to determine whether a program or policy is relevant and appropriate for a particular context and feasible for a government to implement well. This also requires a deep understanding of theory, the local context and systems, and analysis of descriptive data. Such an understanding is often gained through the process of adapting the program model to local institutions and systems and then piloting one or more versions of it to see if high-quality implementation is feasible. Applications seeking to apply evidence in a new context should include a formal scoping process to work with the government partner to diagnose the problem and determine whether evidence is relevant, as well as a process for adapting and piloting the program model in the new context before scaling.

IGI expects to award several grants during this funding round. Projects can receive up to US\$300,000 per round, but the typical grant will be between US\$25,000 and \$200,000. The total amount awarded to a single project in its entire life cycle will not exceed US\$500,000 except in special circumstances.

4. FOCUS AREAS AND GEOGRAPHIC PRIORITIES

IGI prioritizes proposals in its three focus areas: livelihood interventions, cash transfers, and health. Exceptional proposals outside of the areas of focus may be considered for funding, though funding for these proposals is limited. We will give preference to proposals in our priority areas if we receive a strong pipeline of such proposals. In the past, IGI has also had ear-marked funding for education. With the launch of J-PAL's education initiative, the [Learning for All Initiative \(LAI\)](#), which has a significant focus on catalyzing evidence use and scale, including through scale grants that IGI used to make, we encourage prospective applicants to direct their application to [LAI's RFP](#). LAI will be accepting proposals twice a year, starting mid-May 2023. If you are uncertain or have questions about whether your proposal qualifies, please email IGI@povertyactionlab.org

4.1 Boosting livelihood outcomes at scale through the provision of skills, capital, and opportunities

Through generous support from the Livelihood Impact Fund (LIF), IGI has a portion of the funding available for this funding round reserved for evidence-based interventions that support livelihoods - boost productivity, income, or consumption - at scale through the provision of skills, capital, and opportunities, with a strong preference to fund partnerships in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The Fund is interested in supporting partnerships between governments, J-PAL affiliated and/or J-PAL invited researchers, and J-PAL offices or other partners to provide technical assistance to a government to adapt, scale, or improve design and/or delivery of:

1. **Big-push or multifaceted transfer programs** that foster a transition to more secure livelihoods through the provision of productive assets, skills training and coaching, consumption support, etc (ex - the Graduation approach),
2. **Large social protection programs** that boost productivity, income, or consumption and improve livelihoods, and/or
3. **Risk protection interventions** such as social insurance programs that increase resilience at scale in the face of shocks.

Under this priority area, we expect to award up to \$300,000 to 1–3 projects that meet the special provisions of this area and all core criteria of IGI.

4.2 Scaling and improving the delivery of government cash transfer programs and cash benchmarking

Through generous support from the MCP Family Foundation, IGI has a portion of the funding available for this funding round reserved for increasing the rigorous evidence base on and/or adoption at scale of cash transfer programs for people living in poverty in low- and middle-income countries.

The Foundation is interested in supporting partnerships between governments, J-PAL affiliated and/or J-PAL invited researchers, and J-PAL offices or other partners to provide technical assistance to a government to:

1. **Scale or expand** a government cash transfer program based on evidence from randomized evaluations,
2. **Improve the design and/or delivery** of an existing large government cash transfer program, using insights from evidence from randomized evaluations, and/or
3. **Conduct a randomized evaluation** to compare the impact of cash transfers to other non-cash transfer-based government programs that aim to reduce poverty (i.e., cash benchmarking). Note: IGI typically does not fund randomized evaluations; however, given the interest of our donor, we encourage any type of proposal outlined in this section, including for cash-benchmarking randomized evaluations. In addition to evaluation costs, the donor also allows its funds to be used to fund the cost of the cash transfers themselves in the context of a cash-benchmarking evaluation.

Under this priority area, we expect to award up to \$375,000 to 1–3 projects that meet the provisions of this area and all core criteria of IGI.

4.3 Health

IGI encourages scale relevant proposals focused on improving the reach, quality, and take-up of health services and products in Sub-Saharan Africa. We expect to award up to \$110,000 to 1-2 projects that meet all the core criteria of IGI.

5. CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

IGI will also prioritize partnerships that explore one or more cross-cutting themes that we believe are important for effectively implementing programs or policies at scale and drawing general lessons for others working to scale evidence-informed social programs with governments. Applicants should include a short summary of how incorporating one or more of the themes below in their proposals might enhance the scalability, reach, or likelihood of success, or lower the cost of the intervention or cost to IGI.

1. **Technology- and data-enabled program delivery and monitoring:** Phones, tablets, digital transfers, and other technologies have the potential to improve and reduce the costs of program delivery and monitoring.
2. **Implementation science:** Piloting and pressure-testing different implementation models before selecting one for scaling can help identify models that are both feasible to implement well and lead to sufficient take-up and use among program participants.
3. **Cost analysis:** Analyzing the costs of various program or policy options are critical inputs for policy decisions, so collecting cost data early and systematically is critical.

6. ELIGIBILITY

All J-PAL affiliated researchers, J-PAL regional office invited researchers, researchers invited to any of J-PAL's other initiatives (hereafter jointly referred to as "eligible invited researchers"), J-PAL post-docs, and J-PAL offices are eligible to apply in collaboration with their government partners and other collaborators. J-PAL offices that are applying to IGI are required to have a J-PAL affiliate or eligible invited researcher involved in the project as a scientific advisor.¹ All proposals may include collaborators outside of this network including other researchers and NGO partners.

IGI will only consider projects with a specific government partner(s) and will prioritize government partners in low- and middle-income countries. For all IGI projects, the implementing partner has to be a government body or a non-governmental partner delivering services through government infrastructure (e.g. government schools, clinics, etc.) with the government actively involved in the partnership. Government partners can be national, state, regional, provincial, city, etc., including individual ministries or agencies. Governments must be the main recipients of technical assistance, but governments cannot be the receiving institutions of funds. Receiving institutions can include J-PAL offices, IPA offices, and other non-governmental partners working with J-PAL affiliated and eligible invited researchers.

All IGI projects must be based on direct evidence from one or more randomized evaluations, at least one of which should have been conducted by a J-PAL affiliate

¹ The Affiliate Letter of Support, a required part of the application, must detail the ways in which the affiliate(s) and/or eligible invited researcher(s) plans to be involved. A template is available on the website and application form.

or invited researcher and/or funded by a J-PAL initiative and the results of which must be available in writing (preferably in the public domain). Applicants must provide details on the one or more randomized evaluations on which the project is based. Additional information on required documentation is detailed in [Annex II](#).

If you are uncertain about whether your team or proposal is eligible, please email IGI@povertyactionlab.org.

7. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION MATERIALS

J-PAL initiatives, including IGI, are transitioning to using an online portal for all proposal submissions, proposal reviews, invoice submissions, and grantee reporting. To apply to IGI's Spring 2023 RFP, you will first need to register via our online portal. Please navigate to the portal and follow the instructions to complete your registration.

We request that you submit your LOI by the preferred deadline of 11:59 p.m. US ET on Friday, May 19, 2023. Applicants whose proposals are confirmed to be eligible are requested to submit full proposals by 11:59 p.m. US ET on Friday, June 30, 2023. All registration and application instructions for our Spring 2023 RFP can be found on the [IGI webpage](#).

8. ACTIVITIES FUNDED

Proposals can include a wide range of activities, including but not limited to:

- **Scoping research:** Proposals can include research and data collection to determine whether scaling the evidence-based policy or program is likely to be feasible and be relevant and appropriate in the specific context. *(for Adapt and Policy Pilot proposals)*
- **Innovation design support:** Staff and/or NGO technical support to the government in designing and adapting the evidence-informed policy, program, process, or delivery mechanism to pilot. *(for Adapt and Policy Pilot proposals)*
- **Pilot innovation costs:** Proposals can include some pilot implementation costs. IGI does not fund the implementation costs of scale beyond the pilot phase, as this funding should be secured by the government or from another third-party source. *(for Policy Pilot proposals)*
- **Capacity building:** As long as they directly contribute to the adoption at scale of an effective innovation, proposals can include capacity-building activities to help the government design monitoring and data systems to track their performance. Proposals must demonstrate why these activities are essential for achieving the end goal. *(for Adapt, Policy Pilot, and Scale proposals)*
- **Embedding staff:** Hiring or seconding a part- or full-time staff member with relevant expertise to work directly with the government partner during the

scaling process, either embedded in the government body itself or just working closely with them. (for *Adapt, Policy Pilot, and Scale proposals*)

- **Monitoring and process evaluations:** Data collection for process evaluations to monitor the implementation of government pilots, analyzing pilot results and if successful, helping the partner make a case for broader adoption at scale. (for *Policy Pilot and Scale proposals*)
- **Scaling support:** Providing governments with technical support for scaling successful pilots and improving systems for monitoring and evaluation programs or policies at scale. (for *Scale proposals*)
- **Randomized evaluations:** Unlike other J-PAL funding initiatives, funding randomized evaluations is not IGI's main goal. However, we recognize that in some cases rigorous evidence of effectiveness at scale and in the same context is a critical input for a government's decision about whether and how to adopt a program or policy at scale. In these exceptional cases, IGI allows proposals that include partial funding for randomized evaluations. Proposals that include randomized evaluations must include additional information in their proposals, including a description of (a) the research activities and intervention design; (b) target population; (c) evaluation design; (d) other implementing partners besides the government partner; (e) power calculations; and (f) details on the government's commitment to use the results in a specific scaling decision. Please follow the application instructions carefully. (for *Adapt and Policy Pilot proposals*)

IGI funding cannot be used to:

- Support any political activities or lobbying. Please refer to MIT's lobbying policy [here](#).
- Support staff working to build relationships with several government partners who have not yet agreed to collaborate with the applicant team.
- Fund evidence reviews for governments that have not demonstrated interest in a longer engagement to adapt, pilot, and scale innovations informed by evidence.

9. GRANT CONDITIONS

All applicants selected for awards will be asked to:

1. **Peer-review proposals:** Grantees may be requested to peer-review proposals in future IGI RFP rounds.
2. **Start-up, ongoing, and final report:** Provide a brief start up report within 3 months of the project's proposed start date as indicated on the application cover sheet and subrecipient agreement, annual progress and financial reports, and a final project and financial report within 60 days of completion of the award period. To contribute to J-PAL's learning agenda about how to work with governments most effectively, grantees will also be requested to provide a brief narrative, timeline, and any relevant government testimony or documents showing whether evidence from randomized evaluations or IGI-funded technical assistance contributed to any government decisions.
3. **J-PAL office engagement:** If the award recipient is not a J-PAL office, grantees may be asked to periodically (no more than once a year) participate in a call with IGI staff and the Executive Director or their designee(s) from the relevant J-PAL regional office to share updates on the project. This will enable the regional office to have an understanding of, and to learn from, the J-PAL-funded scale projects in their region.
4. **Participate in IGI activities:** Participate in at least one of IGI's activities at a mutually agreed time and place. This activity could be an evidence workshop, a conference, a training event, or a presentation to donors.
5. **Credit IGI:** Any presentations and publications, including academic papers, policy briefs, press releases, blogs, and organizational newsletters that emerge from this project should credit the J-PAL IGI by either including the J-PAL logo and "Innovation in Government Initiative (IGI)" in a list of project funders or including the following text and hyperlinking to the IGI website (<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/initiative/innovation-governmentinitiative>): "This work is funded by the J-PAL Innovation in Government Initiative (IGI)" or an alternative approach proposed by the grantee that is consistent with the grantee's communications preferences and approved by the IGI team.
6. **Collecting and reporting program cost data** (*primarily Policy Pilot and Scale awards and projects involving randomized evaluations*): J-PAL has found that, in addition to impact, policymakers are very interested in how much a program costs, as it is one of the key factors in their decision to adopt or fund a policy or program. Furthermore, detailed cost data allows for cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA), which J-PAL may conduct (with your permission) even if such analysis is not part of a final academic paper. IGI-funded projects are therefore typically required to collect and report (i) policy or program cost data sufficient to conduct a cost-effectiveness analysis, and (ii) implementation and scale processes sufficient to inform how a policy or program is implemented so it could be adopted at scale in a new context. Exemptions may be sought for early-stage projects without meaningful implementation of a program or policy

(such as some Adapt projects). IGI awards include US\$1,000 for non-exempt projects to defray expenses associated with collecting cost data and, applicants are requested to budget for these activities at the outset. IGI will provide a costing worksheet for grantees to update annually. If grantees are unable to collect detailed cost data, grantees are still required to provide estimates of total program cost, average cost per beneficiary, and marginal cost to add another beneficiary.

7. **Collecting and reporting implementation processes:** Grantees must document and share implementation and scale-up processes sufficient to inform how a program is implemented so it could be scaled-up in a new context. This can involve sharing an existing program manual or other program documentation in addition to grant reports that are formal deliverables.
8. **Project registration** (*projects associated with randomized evaluations*): Grantees conducting full RCTs with partial funding from IGI are required to register their trial in the AEA RCT registry. Grantees should register their trial with the [AEA RCT Registry](#) before starting fieldwork and within three months of the start date indicated on the proposal. J-PAL will contact grantees at the start of fieldwork to request the assigned registration number.
9. **Data publication** (*projects associated with planned or ongoing randomized evaluations only*): IGI strongly recommends data publication for all projects. Projects that receive IGI funding towards any aspect of a randomized evaluation **must** publish data in an open access, online database at the end of the research period, consistent with requirements for all J-PAL initiatives. Even if the randomized evaluation is not funded by J-PAL, this requirement may also apply if the results of a planned or ongoing randomized evaluation are likely to play an important role in a government's decision to scale a program, policy, or innovation. In such cases, if your project is awarded IGI funding, then IGI will, during the grant finalization process, review the specific details of your proposal and determine on a case-by-case basis whether this requirement applies to your project.
10. **IRB certification** (*projects involving human subjects*): Projects that involve human subjects must obtain and share with IGI staff approval/exemption from a competent Institutional Review Board (IRB).

10. REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals will be reviewed and scored by a sub-committee of at least two members of the IGI Review Board. Efforts will be made to ensure that each review sub-committee will consist of at least one of the two IGI co-chairs and one board member representing either the region nominating the project or with sector/domain knowledge on the proposal. Details of the current IGI co-chairs and Review Board members are [here](#).

All board members submitting a proposal in the current round of funding are required to recuse themselves from this review. No spouse, partner, or immediate family member (parent, child, sibling) of any individual named on a proposal application may serve as a peer or Board referee in the round in which the applicant's proposal is being reviewed.

The review sub-committee will score proposals using the review criteria described in [Annex I: Review Criteria](#). The sub-committee will then vote on the status of the application based on their scores and comments. The status of an application can fall into four categories: (1) approved (unconditionally), (2) conditional approval (i.e. subject to project agreeing to make minor revisions or clarifications requested by the sub-committee), (3) revise and resubmit on this or a subsequent round, or (4) not approved. Only applicants who receive a "revise and resubmit" are welcome to resubmit their proposal in a future round.

If you would like to appeal a decision of the IGI Review Board, you may contact IGI staff at IGI@povertyactionlab.org within one week of receiving the funding decision detailing the reasons for the request for reconsideration (maximum two pages in length and clearly addressing all reasons given by the review sub-committee for rejecting the proposal). IGI staff will then communicate the reconsideration request to the sub-committee, upon whose review the decision will be final.

ANNEX I: REVIEW CRITERIA

Criterion	Scale	Guiding questions
	Outstanding = 4 Good = 3 Pass = 2 Fail = 1	
The Innovation		
Policy Relevance	1-4	Does the project address problems or opportunities that are important to the government partner, and, if addressed, could generate meaningful benefits to beneficiaries of the program, policy, process change, or innovation?
Locally Grounded Innovation	1-4	Did the proposal make a clear case for why the innovation may be relevant or appropriate for the proposed context based on descriptive data, knowledge of local systems and institutions, and existing evidence?
Scaling Potential	1-4	<p>Is there potential for the partner to widely scale up the innovation in the future and does it have the potential to meaningfully improve the lives of people living in poverty?</p> <p>Has the government expressed strong commitment to move forward with implementing the policy or program at scale if the pilot is successful?</p> <p>How many people will the innovation reach at scale and over what timeframe?</p>

Potential to Benefit People in Poverty	1-4	<p>Did the proposed solution improve to an economically meaningful level the lives of people living in poverty in previous randomized evaluations? (Note that this criterion refers specifically to segments of the population living in poverty regardless of the project country's status as an LMIC)</p> <p>Does the proposal make a good case for why the scalable version has the potential to meaningfully benefit segments of the population living in poverty?</p> <p>What is the average income level of the target population and will the innovation contribute to meaningful improvements in their well-being?</p>
Strength of Evidence	1-4	What is the strength of the existing evidence on the effectiveness of this type of innovation?
Cost Effectiveness	1-4	<p>Does the proposal include convincing analysis that the innovation can be cost-effective at the proposed scale and at the intended future policy scale, drawing from any available cost-effectiveness estimates?</p> <p>Alternatively, does the proposal incorporate cost collection and analysis to inform a scaling decision in its activities?</p>
Cross-Cutting Themes	1-4	<p>Will the project address and generate useful insights about one or more of IGI's cross-cutting themes - technology- and data-enabled program delivery, implementation science, and cost analysis?</p> <p>What steps will the project take to gather program costs, document implementation and scale-up processes, and disseminate them so others may also benefit?</p>
Ethical Concerns	1-4	Are the risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants minimal?

		<p>Are there risks to non-participants? Are these risks minimal?</p> <p>Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?</p>
The Partnership		
Commitment to Use Evidence in Decision-making	1-4	<p>Is there demonstrated demand from the government partner to use evidence from the proposed technical assistance and/or past research to make a key decision about expanding the innovation?</p> <p>Is the government committing its own resources, especially finances, to this project?</p> <p>Does this government partner have a known track record of acting on evidence?</p>
Viability of the Partnership	1-4	<p>Is there a strong likelihood that the partnership will result in government adoption of the innovation at scale?</p> <p>Is the relationship with the partner(s) strong and likely to endure through the entire life of the project? Are there any logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the proposed activities, for example, government authorization or potential transfer of key decision-makers?</p> <p>Consider the following:</p> <p>Does the partnership have support from senior government officials and/or a formal partnership agreement/MoU?</p>

		<p>Does the team have the necessary authorizations and/or approvals for the project activities from the government, or are they likely to get them within a reasonable timeframe? Is the work in this proposal part of a multifaceted partnership involving other forms of and/or longer-term collaboration?</p> <p>Are there strong relationships at multiple levels (e.g., affiliate, staff of the applying organization, multiple levels of government, etc)?</p> <p>Has the government partner designated members of their team to work on this project and/or committed in-kind or financial resources to the project?</p> <p>Are there any upcoming elections or changes of key officials in the next 1-2 years that could adversely affect the partnership?</p>
Locally Grounded Institutional Support	1-4	<p>What institutional support is available (e.g. J-PAL regional office, IPA country office, other NGO and/or research partner, researchers based in the country/region)?</p> <p>If the project is taking place in a country with a J-PAL office or presence, including Brazil, Chile, Egypt, countries in the European Union, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, and the United States, is the applicant team collaborating or coordinating with the relevant J-PAL office?</p>
Level of Affiliate Involvement	1-4	<p>What is the level of involvement of a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher, in terms of providing high-level leadership, guidance, and advice to project staff and policy partners?</p> <p>Does this level of involvement seem adequate to ensure careful application of evidence, especially where evidence is being adapted to a new context?</p>

Overall Recommendation for Funding	Scoring: Strongly Recommended =4 Recommended =3 Weakly Recommended =2 Do not fund =1	Do you recommend this proposal for funding given your overall review?
------------------------------------	---	---

For **randomized evaluation applications**, besides the above general criteria, the Review Board will consider the following additional criteria:

Need for additional research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the proposal have a clear and convincing justification for why they need to do more research on this question and why the research that has already been done is insufficient to inform a scale-up decision?
Contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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? How does the study compare with the existing body of research?
Value of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected lessons learned?
Technical design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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?
Publishing data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will the data collected during the evaluation be made publicly available and when?

Gender and marginalized populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the importance of examining the gender implications of policies, as well as the differences related to socioeconomic status and other types of social marginalization, does the proposal expand on whether and how the project will address questions of gender and marginalization?
-------------------------------------	--

ANNEX II: J-PAL REQUIREMENTS ON EVIDENCE BASE FOR CONSIDERING PROPOSALS FOR SCALING PROJECTS

Scaling proposals applying to IGI must be based on direct evidence from one or more randomized evaluations,² at least one of which should have been conducted by a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher and/or funded by a J-PAL initiative.

1. Details on the one or more randomized evaluations on which the project is based must be provided in writing to the IGI Review Board in one of the following formats, rank-ordered with most preferred format noted first:
 - a. Peer-reviewed published paper
 - b. Working paper that was released publicly at least six months prior³ to the date on which a project proposal is submitted to a J-PAL initiative for funding and/or the date on which a J-PAL office initiates a request to relevant decision-makers for approval to provide substantive scale support.
 - c. Working paper that is meaningfully publicly available⁴
 - d. Working paper not yet meaningfully publicly available
 - e. other document in any format⁵
2. Regardless of format, the written document should provide sufficient detail on the design and results of the one or more randomized evaluations on which the project is based to enable the relevant decision-makers to understand and assess the quality and strength of the evidence base underpinning the proposed scale project, including both internal and external validity. Contents that would be useful for the relevant decision makers to make their decisions include
 - a. Description of context, intervention, RCT design, and data sources
 - b. Balance tables

² Many scale projects are based on an evidence base that is broader than one randomized evaluation. See, for example, the [Evidence to Policy case studies](#) on J-PAL's website.

³ This timeframe ensures there is greater certainty that results do not change following initial public release.

⁴ Meaning the working paper can be found via a relatively straightforward online search, is on the researcher's website and/or online CV, and is not in an obscure or otherwise difficult-to-find, but literally public, site.

⁵ E.g., a policy memo, a detailed PowerPoint presentation, a donor report with a convincing explanation as to why a working paper has not yet been written, and a clear and reasonably short timeline for when it will be produced.

- c. First stage regression results (if design requires strong first stage)
- d. ITT regression results for at least one primary outcome, robust to different specifications, including standard errors for construction of confidence intervals
- e. Checks for and responses to any threats to randomization: differential attrition, spillovers, etc.
- f. Interpretation of results
- g. An assessment of and considerations relevant to the generalizability of the evidence to the context in which the proposed project is to take place⁶
- h. Policy implications/recommendations

⁶ “Context” is defined broadly here to include, e.g., geography, demographic group, capacity of implementation partner, etc.