Governance Initiative Travel/Proposal Development Application Form and Instructions

Round 23 - Spring 2024

# Instructions

Applications for travel/proposal development grants consist of (i) an application form, which includes a cover sheet (found at the bottom of this document) and narrative; (ii) a budget form; and (iii) for graduate students, a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher (from *any* J-PAL initiative or regional office) who serves as an adviser on the applicant’s dissertation committee at their host university.[[1]](#footnote-0) These materials must be submitted to **GI@povertyactionlab.org by 11:59 p.m. ET on Wednesday, May 29, 2024.**

## Narrative

The narrative should not exceed two pages in length, including appendices, and use 12 point font. It should include:

1. A **100 word abstract/summary** of proposed activities, which may be used in reports to GI’s core donors if funded.
2. A concise **statement of topic**. These grants are intended to facilitate PI travel for very preliminary, exploratory research, so proposals need only address the general topic of interest and current ideas on how the question might be explored through a randomized evaluation. They do not need to include a detailed program or evaluation design.
3. **Proposed partners**, if available, including J-PAL regional offices, IPA country offices, or other organizations you plan to work with for both program implementation and evaluation.
4. A discussion of the project’s **relevance/connection** to key questions in the [Governance Review Paper](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/review-paper/governance-initiative-review-paper) (executive summary [here](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/review-paper/governance-initiative-review-paper-executive-summary)). As long as proposals fall within at least one of these or other closely related themes, GI does not prioritize proposals from one of these research areas over another historically. However, **for the Spring 2024 RFP**, **all proposals must relate to political participation.** GI also welcomes proposals from multidisciplinary research teams.
5. A comment on whether you anticipate **any risks**, Covid-related and otherwise, during the course of the research, and how you will mitigate them. Are there any technical, logistical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the study (for example, implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding) and how does your team plan to address/overcome them? Are there any risks of unintended negative consequences for program participants and/or staff and if so, what are they? Has the team taken proactive measures to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?

## Budget

Please submit a detailed project budget using the Excel template [available online.](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/initiative/governance-initiative-request-proposals) Travel/proposal development grants are intended to support costs related to PI travel and are provided as travel reimbursements in accordance with MIT travel policies. Please keep the following in mind when developing your budget:

1. Travel/proposal development grants are for a **maximum of $10,000**.
2. Travel grants are normally **paid as travel reimbursements directly to you** through MIT, after travel is complete. **If you would like a grant to be awarded to your host institution** for them to manage, please keep in mind:
   1. Universities in high-income countries (generally defined as the US, Canada, Western Europe, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand, Israel, and wealthy Middle Eastern countries) can charge up to 10% in indirect costs, applied to total direct costs.
   2. 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.
3. If a grantee plans to work with a **J-PAL regional office or IPA country office**, they should notify the organization prior to submitting a travel/proposal development grant application, as these organizations may require applicants to budget for overhead or other expenses incurred.
4. Please include detailed **budget notes** in the column provided in the template.
5. **International travel:** J-PAL will put you in touch with an MIT travel agent who can book international travel and charge J-PAL directly. If you choose to buy your own ticket, we will not be able to reimburse you until your flights have been completed.
6. **Per diem:** A per diem stipend of $25/day-in-country can be claimed based on days-in-country to cover food and miscellaneous expenses.
7. **Survey and other in-country expenses:** Travel grants are paid as travel reimbursements through MIT after travel is complete. If the budget includes expenses for in-country costs such as hiring enumerators, procuring translation or transcription services, etc., you will need to cover these costs out of pocket and submit receipts for reimbursement once travel is complete. J-PAL is not able to directly reimburse survey firms or local organizations for these costs.
8. **Other expenses:** Other expenses will be reimbursed upon submission of an expense report. Expenses should be supported by receipts whenever possible, and all expenses over $50 must be supported by receipts. All expenses must be claimed within 30 days of your return.
9. **Medical insurance:** All grantees are required to provide proof of emergency medical insurance coverage before travel. As many universities provide this to their students, faculty, and staff at no cost, this is not a reimbursable cost under this award. J-PAL can provide information on affordable coverage if needed.
10. **Expenses not allowed**: J-PAL is not able to cover travel or trip protection insurance, lost luggage insurance, incidental expenses, or grantees’ time. In most cases, J-PAL is not able to directly reimburse any individuals or organizations other than the grantees awarded the travel/proposal development grant.
11. For proposals that include survey work, applicants should review J-PAL best practices in the [J-PAL Research Protocol Checklist](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B1iahelPZHoVQkhlTUsxWkJDaG8) to ensure that they have budgeted for expenses associated with high-quality data collection such as translation services, surveyor training, or back checking (to the extent they apply to this work).
12. Grantees are required to submit a progress report due within 30 days of completion of the award period specified in your proposal. Should you need a modification to the award period, request and submit a no cost extension form.

## Letters of Support

**Graduate student applicants** are required to submit a letter of support from a J-PAL affiliate or invited researcher (from any J-PAL initiative) who serves as an adviser on the applicant’s dissertation committee at their host university. This letter should indicate the adviser’s willingness to advise the student throughout the project’s lifetime. Letters can be included in the applicant’s submission packet or sent directly to [GI@povertyactionlab.org](mailto:GI@povertyactionlab.org).

## Submission Instructions

Please submit an email with the following attachments to **GI@povertyactionlab.org**:

1. A cover sheet (see template below) and two-page narrative (12pt font) saved as a single Word or PDF file titled [PI Name]\_[Topic Name]\_Narrative.docx (.pdf)
2. A completed budget form (use template on our [RFP webpage](https://www.povertyactionlab.org/initiative/governance-initiative-request-proposals)), saved as a single Excel file titled[PI Name]\_Budget.xlsx
3. A letter of support from an adviser who is a J-PAL or invited researcher (from any J-PAL initiative or regional office) saved as a PDF file, or the adviser may send the letter of support directly to GI@povertyactionlab.org (PhD students only).
4. A combined PDF file with all of the above merged into one document. [PI Name]\_[Topic Name]\_Combined.pdf

The deadline for submissions is **11:59 p.m. ET on Wednesday, May 29, 2024.**

### Additional requirements to note if funded:

1. **Applicants requesting proposal development funds for costs at their institution** (*versus direct reimbursement to the PI after travel*, where this is not required) must provide a letter from the receiving institution of the award to show that they have reviewed your proposal and accept your budget.
   1. **The Principal Investigator (PI) of a subaward issued by MIT’s Research Services Administration must have an official affiliation with the organization receiving the subaward and funds** ([see here for further details](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OW8ngfgA1McsXxUCl7-N_XQDu6nhTvWa/view)).
   2. Please follow the MIT approved language for the Letter of Transmission as follows:

**Example language for Letter of Transmission when there is a PI at the ITRA:** *(On ITRA letterhead)*

<ITRA> is pleased to support the <Name of research> proposal and will plan on carrying out the work in accordance with the submitted budget. <NAME OF PI at ITRA> will serve as <ITRA's> Principal Investigator for this work. In this role, he/she is responsible for the implementation of this project in accordance with this proposal and with appropriate research and data protection practices. Please contact him/her with any concerns which may arise related to project implementation.

1. **Researchers conducting human subjects research** under their grant must note the following:
   1. If this proposal receives initiative funding and its activities include human subject research, we will ask that you submit the following to access your award:
      1. All IRB approval(s) or exemption(s)
      2. All IRB-approved protocols
      3. Any IRB-approved consent forms
   2. **The IRB approval must be held by the institution that enters into the subaward agreement with MIT** (the ITRA, [see here for further details](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OW8ngfgA1McsXxUCl7-N_XQDu6nhTvWa/view)). If the institution does not have their own IRB, they must engage the services of a commercial IRB to review and provide oversight for their research activities. J-PAL recommends third party IRBs Brany and Heartland. Consider adding commercial IRB costs to the budget, if needed. If the project is exempt from IRB approval, we will need the exemption status but no other action is required.
   3. Please be mindful that 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](https://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search/search.aspx?styp=bsc).
   4. Researchers must adhere to all local legal requirements, including obtaining local IRB approval and government research permits, where applicable.

GI Cover Sheet - Travel/Proposal Development

Round 23 – Spring 2024

Please note that all fields are required

| **Principal Investigator(s) and Institutional Affiliation** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Co-investigator(s) and Institutional Affiliation** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Adviser** (If PI is a graduate student – adviser must be a J-PAL affiliate/invited researcher) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Title of Proposal** | | | | | | | | **Country** | | | | | |
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| **PROPOSED TRAVEL DATES** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Start Date:**  (yyyy-mm-dd) | |  | | | | **End Date:**  (yyyy-mm-dd) | | | |  | | | |
| **Proposed Partner(s)** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any previous Governance Initiative round of funding?** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| * Yes * No | | | | | | | **If yes**, when and what was the proposal name? | | | | | | |
| **Have you submitted this or a related proposal to any other J-PAL research initiative?** | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| * Yes * No | | | | | | | **If yes,** which initiative and when?: | | | | | | |
| **Amount Requested** | | $ | | **Total Co-funded**  Please indicate the amount received in additional grants or funding for this research. | | | | | | | | $ | |
| **Do you expect to purchase any item with a value of 500 GBP or more?** Check one: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| * Yes | | | | | | | | | * No | | | | |
| **Do you plan to conduct human subjects research (HSR) during this grant?** According to US federal regulations, a human subject is a living individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains 1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual (e.g., through an interview, focus group, or survey), or 2) identifiable private information (e.g., individual-level health or education data). | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| * Yes | | | | | | | | | * No | | | | |
| **If you answered yes to conducting HSR**, you must provide the following details:   * Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Is this IRB of Record [IORG certified](https://ohrp.cit.nih.gov/search/search.aspx?styp=bsc)? (Yes/No): \_\_\_ * If the project has not received an IRB exemption and IRB review is required, please indicate the current or expected IRB of record: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

1. PhD students may apply for a maximum of two travel/proposal development grants during their time as graduate students. All else equal, priority will be given to graduate students who have not applied before. [↑](#footnote-ref-0)