

## J-PAL NORTH AMERICA PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

A strong proposal will clearly address the following criteria, which are provided to all proposal reviewers. For information on eligibility criteria and the application process, please see J-PAL Application Instructions.

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### RELEVANCE TO PUBLIC POLICY AND ISSUES OF POVERTY

- Does the proposal make the case for how answering the proposed research question and/or evaluating the proposed intervention has the potential to generate benefits for the following populations?
  - People who are low-income or living in poverty
  - People who have risk factors associated with falling into poverty
  - People who identify as members of racial/ethnic groups who are at greater risk of living in or falling into poverty due to economic marginalization produced through structural racism in North America, such as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Is the proposal addressing a pressing public policy issue in North America? How is this policy issue relevant to one or more of the populations described above?
  - Policy issue has a significant or disproportionate impact on low-income and/or economically marginalized populations

- The intervention being studied is designed to improve or increase access to resources and choices for low-income and/or economically marginalized populations
- Policy issue is one that, if unaddressed, could lead people to fall into poverty
- Policy issue relates to issues of structural racism that economically marginalized specific racial/ethnic groups in the North America context. What information will the study provide to guide policymaking in this area?
- Will lessons learned from this study have broader relevance or applications for policy or decision-making beyond this test case?

You may find examples of evaluations previously funded by J-PAL North America by visiting the [landing pages of our initiatives](#).

### ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION

- Does the study contribute to advancing knowledge in the field? For example, does it answer new questions, or introduce novel methods, measures, or interventions?
- Does the study have academic relevance? How does the proposed study compare with the existing body of research?
- Is the experiment clearly linked to underlying social science theories?

### TECHNICAL DESIGN

- Does the proposal effectively explain how its study design will enable it to answer its research question[s]?
- Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? How do you plan to address these?
- Does the proposal provide a clear rationale for the study's sample size and power to detect relevant impacts? This explanation should be appropriate to the design stage of the study (please see the document *J-PAL Proposal Instructions* for more details on how J-PAL defines full vs. pilot stage studies), and include descriptions of the following:
  - For full studies:
    - Parameters of chosen average effect size (e.g. ITT, LATE, etc.)
    - Outcome(s) on which power calculations are based
    - Units used in power calculations

- A realistic and decision-relevant minimum detectable effect (MDE) size
- Underlying assumptions about sample size and take up rates
- For pilot studies:
  - A “back-of-the-envelope” sense of the potential sample size and power to detect relevant impacts if a full randomized evaluation were launched.

### POTENTIAL ETHICAL RISKS [OPTIONAL]

Please discuss, if applicable, any ethical considerations that you feel warrant discussion but are not covered by your existing or planned IRB review. It is fine to leave this section partly or entirely blank; please detail only issues that are not or will not be covered by your IRB that you feel are potentially important enough for the review committee to be aware. For more details, see [here](#).

### VIABILITY & VALUE OF THE PROJECT

- If applicable, is the role of the implementing partner(s) clear and is the relationship strong and likely to endure through the entire study?
- Is a realistic timeline for completing the study and analysis provided?
- Are there any logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the study, for example, government authorization or completion of multiple data use agreements?
- Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected lessons learned?

### RESEARCH TRANSPARENCY

- Does the project advance best practices in research transparency?
- Does the researcher demonstrate commitment to registering the research project and publishing data and replication code online when not precluded by privacy restrictions?

### PREVIOUS J-PAL AWARD COMPLIANCE

- J-PAL will consider compliance on past J-PAL North America funded projects in making future funding decisions. This includes completion of project reports and other grant deliverables.

- *Note:* J-PAL will only consider administrative aspects of the award and **will not** evaluate the success of the project itself.
- J-PAL staff will notify the PI(s) if there are outstanding deliverables upon proposal submission and provide an opportunity to submit pending items prior to the Review Board meeting.