

J-PAL NORTH AMERICA STATE AND LOCAL INNOVATION INITIATIVE

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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I. RELEVANCE TO PUBLIC POLICY AND ISSUES OF POVERTY

- Does the study address questions crucial to understanding pressing policy issues in the United States, as identified in J-PAL’s Mobility from Poverty learning agenda or as evinced by a government partner?
 - Will this study generate new and actionable knowledge on how to improve the lives of people experiencing poverty?
 - Will this study measure clearly-defined outcomes of recognized policy importance?
- Does the intervention target an issue with disproportionate impact on low-income populations and/or members of a group that has faced systemic economic marginalization on the basis of race/ethnicity in the North America context?
 - Does the intervention address a system-wide issue that affects many people, including people in poverty?
 - Does the intervention target an issue which, if unaddressed, could lead people to fall into poverty?
- Will results from the intervention have broader implications?
- How will the lessons learned from this study have relevance beyond this test case?
- Is there demonstrated demand from policy makers for more/better information to influence their decisions in this area?

II. VALUE OF RESEARCH

- 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
- Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected lessons learned?

Based on the criteria stated for I and II above, the Review Board will determine whether the proposal demonstrates sufficient relevance to policy and issues of poverty? Based on this determination, the Review Board will consider the questions under categories III-VI below.

III. CONTRIBUTION

- Does the study contribute to 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?
- Does the research strategy provide a bridge between a practical experiment and underlying economic theories?

IV. TECHNICAL DESIGN

- Does the research design appropriately answer the questions outlined in the proposal?
- Does the proposal have adequate statistical power to detect a policy-relevant minimum detectable effect on well-defined outcomes?
- Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results?
- If so, does the proposal sufficiently address those threats?

V. VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT

- Is the relationship with the implementing partner strong and likely to endure through the entire study?
- Are there any other logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the study, for example, government authorization or Human Subjects review?

VI. RESEARCH TRANSPARENCY

- Does the proposal have a limited, clearly defined set of primary outcomes?
- Does the project advance best practices in transparency?

- Is the researcher committed to registering the research project and publishing data and replication code online when not precluded by privacy restrictions?

POTENTIAL ETHICAL RISKS [OPTIONAL]

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