

# J-PAL STATE AND LOCAL INNOVATION INITIATIVE FACT SHEET



The J-PAL State and Local Innovation Initiative supports U.S. state and local governments in using randomized evaluations to generate new and widely applicable lessons about which social programs work, which work best, and why.

The J-PAL State and Local Innovation Initiative aims to:

- Build the capacity of state and local governments to create and use rigorous evidence;
- Share this evidence with other jurisdictions that may be facing similar challenges; and
- Document and disseminate best practices for feasibly implementing randomized evaluations at the state and local level.

The J-PAL State and Local Innovation Initiative is led by J-PAL North America, a research center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

## THE COMPETITION

The initiative features a two-phase competition for state and local leaders who are interested in designing and implementing randomized evaluations and using the evidence generated to inform their decision-making.

In Phase I of the competition, state and local leaders identify the policy questions they would like to answer using randomized evaluations. Selected state and local leaders will receive ongoing technical support from J-PAL staff for a period of up to one year, flexible pilot funding of up to \$100,000, and connections with J-PAL's network of researchers.

In Phase II of the competition, state and local governments that have partnered with a researcher from J-PAL's network to design a high-quality randomized evaluation can apply for funding, typically in the range of \$250,000-500,000, to carry out the evaluation.

Five state and local governments—Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Puerto Rico, Philadelphia, and Rochester—were selected in the first round of the competition. Together with J-PAL North America staff and affiliated researchers, these governments will develop and test innovative approaches to increasing employment, helping people move out of poverty, expanding opportunity for young people, and finding more effective treatments for substance use disorders. There will be multiple rounds of both Phase I and Phase II of the competition over five years.

The state and local leaders selected to participate in this initiative will serve as a model for others across the country, demonstrating that state and local governments can create and use rigorous evidence to address challenging social problems. Over the course of the five-year initiative, J-PAL North America will organize meetings of state and local leaders to share best practices and lessons learned across sites and to disseminate the evidence generated by this initiative to reach a wide audience of policymakers across the United States.

## ABOUT J-PAL NORTH AMERICA

J-PAL North America is a regional office of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL). J-PAL was established in 2003 as a research center at MIT's Department of Economics. Since then, it has built a global network of affiliated professors based at over 40 universities and regional offices in Africa, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. J-PAL North America was established with support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Laura and John Arnold Foundation and works to improve the effectiveness of social programs in the region through three core activities: research, policy outreach, and capacity building.

For more information visit [povertyactionlab.org/stateandlocal](https://povertyactionlab.org/stateandlocal).