J-PAL PROSA (SONDEO Y ARRANQUE) PROGRAM

RFP APPLICATION: PILOT

Second Semester, 2025 Request for Proposals (RFP)

J-PAL´s PROSA (SONDEO Y ARRANQUE PROGRAM) calls for proposals from J-PAL affiliates, J-PAL postdocs, and J-PAL invited researchers[1] for full research projects and pilot studies. ***Letters of interest are due by Thursday, October 09, 2025 at 7:00 PM UTC-3. Proposals are due by Thursday, November, 06, 2025 at 7:00 PM UTC-3.*** Please submit your application via PROSA's e-mail prosa@povertyactionlab.org

The full PROSA RFP Overview and Instructions can be found here.

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APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

To best fill out this application, please adhere to each question's character counts (if applicable) and answer each question under the provided instructions. Please include a short response (single-spaced) to each of the following subsections. Questions with asterisks (*) are required. If you have any questions, please email us, through prosa@povertyactionlab.orb.

Please submit the proposal application and all supplemental materials via email to prosa@povertyactionlab.org. Submit the proposal application file as a Word document.

[1]If you have questions regarding your eligibility to participate, we welcome you to inquire by emailing us at prosa@povertyactionlab.org. **Among those eligible to apply, note that all applicants are limited to being named (as PI or Co-PI) on a maximum of three proposals to PROSA per 12-month period.**

NARRATIVE

Timeline *

Please write out a timeline with key project activities. (up to 250 words)

Policy Motivation & Potential Policy Impact *

Provide a summary of the policy problem that motivates this research and how it fits with the topics outlined in the RFP materials. Please briefly describe the potential policy impact of this intervention (policies, programs, processes, or delivery mechanisms), including whether and how the project could inform policy or program design in this context or more broadly. How will it meet the needs of your partner? Demonstrate meaningful ex ante uncertainty about the results of the study, i.e., that given existing evidence there are both reasons to believe the intervention(s) studied are promising and also reasons to doubt whether they will achieve their goals (up to 250 words).

Target Population and Context *

What population(s) does the intervention attempt to impact? What characteristics do they have? Do you have any comments on this population's alignment with the program's priorities? (up to 70 words).

Unique Contribution to the Field *

What knowledge gap are you addressing, and how will your research advance the field? Explain the project's potential to provide a unique scientific contribution. Provide a brief literature review to demonstrate the uniqueness of your project. Note that a full reference list can be sent to PROSA's e-mail (up to 2400 words).

Innovative Intervention Details & Pilot Evaluation Design *

Please describe the intervention or treatment to be piloted or evaluated. State how the intervention could potentially improve one or more of the program's priority outcomes and benefit people living

in poverty. The intervention can be introducing new or making changes to existing programs, processes, technologies, or delivery systems. Provide a brief description of the pilot evaluation design, and how it fits with the topics outlined in the RFP materials. Please include the randomization method, treatment groups, and describe any combinations of the interventions. Please include information about data collection and key outcomes: succinctly describe your data collection plan and key outcome measures of the study. Please include the data collection partner and your relationship with them. What are your intermediate and final outcomes? How will these be measured? When will you take measurements, and how frequently? If there are more than two treatment groups, please list them using numerals (up to 1000 words).

Value of Research *

Does the proposal make a compelling case for the value of the research based on at least one of the following? (up to 250 words).

- 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

Outcomes and Measurement *

Please describe the outcome variables, how they relate to the program, and how you plan to measure the outcome variables (up to 200 words).

Mechanisms *

Through what mechanisms do you expect the pilot treatment to affect outcomes of interest? How will you test these mechanisms? What is the theorized causal relationship between the pilot intervention and the outcomes to be tested? (up to 250 words).

Preliminary Power Calculations *

If the pilot is a "mini-RCT," please provide power calculations for the pilot itself. Additionally, provide preliminary power calculations for the expected design of the eventual full-scale RCT. The power calculations should be detailed, convincing, and well-justified, e.g., based on assumptions from existing literature and/or what you learned from your travel/proposal development activities, for any impacts that the research team plans to measure. Power calculations should quantitatively demonstrate that the study is well-powered enough to detect effects on the outcome(s) of interest that would be practically or conceptually meaningful. Proposals should articulate which null hypotheses are relevant for this exercise and why (in particular, not assuming that the null of zero impact is necessarily the relevant one). For more detailed information about power calculations, see this resource: https://www.povertyactionlab.org/resource/power-calculations (up to 500 words).

Implications on Equity and Social Inclusion *

Please provide a comment on whether the research proposal addresses equity or social inclusion, in any way. Topics of social inclusion include, but are not limited to, gender, income level, location, ethnicity, race, language, citizenship status, disability, and at the intersection of those factors. Explain whether and how the project design allows us to learn about baseline differences between and differential impacts on groups mentioned above. Explain what reasons (if any) there are to expect that the intervention(s) studied may have disproportionate benefits for disadvantaged groups (up to 300 words).

Gender Implications, Analysis, and Reporting *

A comment on whether the research proposal addresses gender issues in any way, including analysis disaggregated by gender. Please note that funded projects will be required to collect and report on gender-disaggregated data, as outlined in the Program documents (up to 300 words).

Pathway to an RCT and Impact *

How would results from this pilot inform a future RCT? Describe, specifically, what researchers and practitioners can expect to learn from this pilot study. Will it pilot an intervention? Will it provide qualitative data to inform intervention design? How could the findings meet the needs of policymakers or development practitioners? Outline a specific plan for how you will share your findings and outputs (e.g., data). How will the implementing partners and other stakeholders become

aware of the findings and benefit from the data and other such outputs (e.g., descriptive statistics) generated from this pilot study? In what specific ways will the pilot prepare researchers for a full RCT project? Outline the hypothesized pathway and scope for impact. Clearly establish a plausible and promising link between the proposed approach to be tested and the hypothesized channel for impact. Indicate the reliability of existing evidence from pilot studies or relevant expert opinion in your research context. Do you expect these impacts to vary across geographic region, population, or context? Include preliminary or pilot data available in support of your hypotheses, models and/or theories of change (up to 500 words).

Scalability and Translatability *

Please comment on the ability of this pilot to scale and to be translated in different contexts (up to 500 words).

Potential Risks *

Please answer the following questions below in detail (up to 500 words):

1. Are there any technical, logistical, ethical, or political obstacles and risks that might threaten the completion of the project (for example, implementation capacity, government authorization, or other funding)? How do you plan to monitor and prevent/address these types of risks throughout the project?
2. Please discuss any information about the implementing partner(s) that could pose ethical, reputational, or legal risks (e.g., corruption or misuse of funds). If applicable, what proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?
3. Please describe any potential unintended consequences or risks of this project for program **participants**. What proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?
4. Please describe any potential risks of this project for **staff** (e.g., implementing partners, research assistants, enumerators). What proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?
5. Please describe any potential unintended consequences or risks of this project for **community members** beyond program participants (e.g., untreated members of a household, untreated neighbors, or broader communities if treatment might have spillover or downstream effects beyond the study sample). What proactive measures have you taken or will you take to assess, monitor, and mitigate/prevent any such potential risks?

Relevant research aspects *

For the development of a research project, it is essential to consider several aspects, such as (1) a comprehension of the local context, (2) the complexity of the topic under investigation, and (3) the profile of the target population. In your project, what are the most relevant issues that you observe, and how do you intend to overcome any potential challenges/risks? How do you perceive that the academic and personal backgrounds of the research team (including yours) could contribute to the project's development in a way that is sensitive to the local context? (up to 500 words).

Racial Equity *

Does the study center on advancing racial and ethnic equity? Does the proposal address how findings would advance racial and ethnic equity? We define racial and ethnic equity as the process of ensuring that race is no longer used to reinforce social hierarchies. Racial equity does not imply the absence of racial group identities, communities, or cultural traditions, but that such aspects are not used against individuals or groups in social, political, and legal domains. This process involves acknowledging and addressing historic harms and racial injustices, making amends, working to create racially just systems, policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages, and eliminating structures that reinforce differential outcomes by race (AISP Toolkit). J-PAL prioritizes studies whose primary aim is advancing racial and ethnic equity and goes beyond disaggregating outcomes by race.

( ) Yes
( ) No

Partnership Status *

Please provide a brief description of the implementing partner (or partners), the history of the partnership, the partner‘s involvement in project activities, and any in-kind or financial support they have committed or provided to the project. Please include any potential risks to the partnership (up to 250 words characters).

Role of Partner Organization *

List each Partner Organizations that you will be working with. This includes but is not limited to Implementing Partners and Co-funders. Please include the Organization's name, mailing address, and website, as well as a point of contact, an email address, and phone number. Add new columns to include more partners if necessary. If you are adding co-funders, you will not be able to submit until you (a) indicate the amount of received or committed funding (b) add the funded proposal or project title (c) add the name of the primary PI for the co-funded proposal or project.

	Partner #1	Partner #2 (if applicable)
Name of Partner Organization		
Partner Mailing Address		
Partner Website		
Role What role does this partner play in your proposal? (co-funder or implementing partner or others)		
If this is a co-funder, what is the amount they provided or are providing?		
If this is a co-funder, add the funded proposal or project title		
If this is a co-funder, add the name of the primary PI for the co-funded proposal or project		
Partner Contact First Name		
Partner Contact Last Name		
Partner Contact Title		
Partner Contact Email		

Local Legal Requirements Certification *

All PIs and Co-PIs certify that they understand they must adhere to all local legal requirements, including obtaining local IRB approval and government research permits, where applicable. Do you agree?

( ) Yes
( ) No

Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Record *

If the project has not received an IRB exemption and IRB review is required, please look up the current or expected IRB of record. IRB Requirements - If this proposal receives program funding, we will ask that you submit:

- All IRB approval(s) or exemption(s)
- All IRB-approved protocols
- Any IRB-approved consent forms [Instructions]

Do you agree?

( ) Yes
( ) No

IRB Organization (IORG) Information *

In compliance with Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, projects funded by PROSA and administered at UVG must obtain approval from a local IRB. J-PAL also 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.

Do you agree?

( ) Yes
( ) No

Data Publication *

Please confirm you plan to publish data collected in an open-access, online database at the end of the evaluation. Data publication is required for projects funded by a J-PAL program, unless researchers request an exemption (which J-PAL has the discretion to deny) for legal, ethical, or proprietary reasons.

Do you agree?

( ) Yes
( ) No

Schedule and Description of Activities *

For J-PAL it is important to understand the sequence of steps in your project. Please submit to PROSA's e-mail prosa@povertyactionlab.org a concise and structured one-sheet Excel document with a timeline and a description of the activities corresponding to each defined time period. Since each type of project has a different time division, we are not providing a template from which to fill in your project information. However, we do ask that you highlight in the document when and what the funds from this RFP will be used for, should your research proposal be approved.

Statement of Adherence to Policies and Standards *

There are policies and standards that must be followed within the scope of a J-PAL research. The hyperlink to the Statement of Adherence to Policies and Standards is available in the PROSA RFP website, under Application documents. We ask that you read them carefully and, at the end of the document, express your agreement. Please submit to PROSA's e-mail prosa@povertyactionlab.org the signed version.

Additional Information

A discussion of the other evaluation criteria if not already addressed in the fields above.

Share any additional materials you would like considered with your proposal

If there are any documents we have not requested elsewhere in this application, that you feel strengthen your proposal, please submit them.

BUDGET: PROSA'S PILOT PROPOSAL BUDGET INSTRUCTIONS

Please submit to PROSA e-mail prosa@povertyactionlab.org a detailed project budget using the spreadsheet template available on the PROSA RFP webpage. To reduce processing time, please keep the following in mind:

1. Your project will be implemented through J-PAL LAC (at UVG).
2. Every Pilot grant **MUST** have a Manager or Senior Research Associate overseeing the project. If funding for this role has already been secured through a co-funder's budget, you do not need to include this cost line in the current RFP budget.

3. We understand that the cap on overhead or indirect costs under PROSA is low and that grantees may have reasonable project support costs included in budgets as direct costs. Such costs should be reasonable and explained in the budget notes.

Applications must include a brief budget narrative document detailing the major costs within the budget in addition to the Excel template.

Furthermore, please take the following items into account when preparing your budget:

1. Budgets **MUST** be stated in **United States Dollar (USD)**. If you expect to use your award for expenses outside of Guatemala, we will work to send grant funds to you in the currency needed, but you will be responsible for any currency risks.
2. Please include detailed budget notes in the column provided in the templates.
3. For travel airfares, indicate the city of origin and destination.
4. For Field expenses, detail the main expenses (pollsters, licenses, transport, etc) and if you have a quote from a survey company (ideal), **link it to the budget.**
5. Grantees should notify the organization they wish to work with prior to submitting a grant application, as these organizations may require applicants to budget for overhead or other expenses incurred.
6. Unallowable costs include those labeled as "incidental" "miscellaneous," or "contingency". If you think some amount may change in the short term, be aware that rebalances of up to 10% between major lines are possible, as long as the total amount remains unchanged. Try your best to comment on each label in the budget notes.
7. PROSA research funds are unable to fund any program implementation costs.
8. Please note that PROSA does not cover the salaries of PIs based in high-income countries. For PIs based in low- and middle-income countries, the following apply:
    a. Pilot Studies: Up to USD 8,000 per LMIC researcher PI/co-PI, but the total budgeted amount for LMIC researcher PI time should not exceed 25% of the total budget.
9. Travel insurance: All traveling grantees are required to provide proof of emergency medical insurance coverage before travel. If you already have one, covered by your university, please add that information to the notes. If not, add the cost to the airfare line, as it is compulsory to travel with it.
10. For Pilot grants, if there is co-funding for the project, you must complete both the "Total Project Budget" and the "PROSA Budget" sheets in the budget template.
11. Any computer/equipment purchases should include a breakdown of what is being purchased, (e.g. how many laptops), as well as the project staff that will be assigned to the equipment.
12. Applicants should review J-PAL best practices on questionnaire design and data collection/management in the J-PAL Research Protocol Checklist, to ensure they have budgeted for expenses associated with piloting and surveyor training, survey translation, field spot checks, and back checking.

PROSA's Pilot Application Budget Template *

Use and complete a spreadsheet template available on the PROSA RFP webpage and attach it via email when submitting your application.

Budget Narrative *

Please justify the expenses outlined in your budget in a Word document with the title [PI Last Name, First Name][Budget Narrative].doc(x), and attach it via email when submitting your application. This document is required in addition to the Proposal Budget -- i.e., notes included in the Excel sheet do not suffice.

Allocation of External Funding

If you have other pending awards for this project, please tell how you plan to allocate the funds received in case you are successful and receive all of these requested awards? Is J-PAL funding sufficient to run the project, or is the project contingent on whether or not additional funding is secured? (up to 350 words).

LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Letter of Support from Implementing Partner

While only full projects are required to provide a letter of support from their implementing partner, all other applicants are encouraged to include a letter of support from an implementing partner when available. When applicable, this letter should indicate a willingness to work with the research team and agreement to share program cost data with J-PAL (through the PI) for the purpose of conducting cost effectiveness analysis. Please submit this letter to PROSA's e-mail prosa@povertyactionlab.org.

REVISE AND RESUBMIT

R&R Additional Information

Once your proposal has been submitted via email, the program team may follow up with additional questions before sending it for review. If you received an email requesting additional information on your proposal, please clearly provide your responses to each request below.