



## Partnerships through J-PAL North America's State and Local Innovation Initiative

### OVERVIEW

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 goal of the J-PAL State and Local Innovation Initiative is to support US state and local governments in using randomized evaluations to generate new and applicable lessons about which policies and programs work, which work best, and why.

### PARTNER QUALITIES

The state and local governments selected to participate in this initiative serve as models for others across the United States, demonstrating that state and local governments can create and use rigorous evidence to address challenging social problems. To this end, the initiative looks for partners that:

- **Are willing to look for ways to include random assignment** in the implementation of the program or policy they are interested in testing. Further, there should be a feasible opportunity for randomization.
  - For example, an oversubscribed program's slots might be allocated by a lottery
  - Eligible beneficiaries of an undersubscribed program might be randomly encouraged to sign up
  - Pilot programs or programs being expanded to new locations could provide opportunities to randomly select who receives the program first
- **Have identified one or more policy questions** or challenges that they are interested in answering, as well as promising programs to address the challenges. For all identified programs, potential partners should:
  - Provide an estimate of how many people are currently reached by the program or policy, and over what time frame. If the program is not yet implemented, then estimations of these figures.
  - Have an understanding of the primary outcomes the partner expects to change as a result of the program or policy, and ideas for sources of data that could be used to measure the identified outcomes
  - Understand how individuals are selected to receive the program or policy, and how random assignment may be used to in this process.
- **Are committed to using evidence to inform decision-making.** Potential partners should be able to describe their agency's commitment to pursuing new opportunities to use evidence to inform decision-making, and how a partnership with J-PAL North America would advance these efforts.
- **Are capable of contributing to the evidence base.** J-PAL North America is interested in evaluations with the potential to make a significant contribution toward advancing the state of knowledge in a given policy area.