



**Researcher Diversification Strategy: Information Session Presentation**  
**Exploratory Grant Proposal Template**  
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**Budget Template**  
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## Researcher Diversification Initiative | Exploratory Small Grant Funds for Researchers Based in Africa

### Budget Instructions

1. Please submit your budget using the exact template provided and include detailed budget notes in the description column.
2. The exploratory grant is capped at a maximum of \$10,000.
3. Break Down Personnel Costs: Clearly list all personnel involved in the project, including their roles and responsibilities and time spent on the project. Specify salaries, and any other personnel-related expenses (salaries or stipends must be realistic and the unit should be stipulated). Ensure to include justification for each cost, showing how they directly contribute to the research objectives.
4. In country expenses: these can include questionnaire design, programming, piloting, enumeration, training, translations, transcription services etc.
5. Detail Travel and Communication: Include detailed estimates for travel and communication expenses. This should cover costs for field visits, transportation, accommodation, and any communication expenses like internet and phone charges incurred during the research. Provide a rationale for each trip and its necessity to the project's success.
6. Other Project Management Costs: Specify other miscellaneous expenses under the Project Management: Other category. This might include printing, materials and supplies, and any fees if applicable. Justifications should demonstrate the direct relevance of these costs to the research activities.
7. Funding and Total Costs Alignment: Ensure the total budget aligns with the funding request from the grant. List all expenses in a detailed and organized manner.

### Budget Template Guidelines

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### FAQ'S

#### Researchers Diversification Initiative FAQ Guide

**1. What is the Researchers Diversification Initiative (RDS)?**

RDS is a funding opportunity supporting research projects in various thematic areas.

**2. When will the grant begin if the duration is 6 months?**

Specific grant start dates need to be determined between the researcher and the funding organization. That said we anticipate a start date in June, with an end date 6 months later in November.

**3. Who manages the budget for RDS projects?**

Budgets are managed through sub-awards with deliverables, typically overseen by the researcher.

**4. Is it necessary to fill every section of the grant application, including the problem statement and budget sheet?**

Each section serves a specific purpose in conveying the significance, feasibility, and impact of the proposed project. The problem statement provides essential context for the proposed project by outlining the current issues or gaps in knowledge that the project aims to address. It demonstrates the project's relevance and potential impact, helping reviewers understand why the research is needed and

# Call for Proposals | Researcher Diversification Initiative | Exploratory Small Grant Funds for Researchers Based in Africa

In early 2021, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) began implementing a strategy to diversify its research network. While we have conducted more than 900 impact evaluations—alongside an extensive network of researchers and institutions from all across the world—only twenty-seven percent of our research network comes from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).<sup>1</sup> This mirrors development industry trends, where most research continues to be produced by researchers in the Global North.

At IPA, we believe that greater diversity and insight into the local context can lead to higher-quality research and more impactful policy and practice. Moreover, supporting global

researchers in the South is normatively correct in addressing inequalities within the international development research community.

Therefore, we are soliciting proposals for a small grant fund that is part of our researcher diversification initiative. The fund targets African researchers in **Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya** to facilitate the development of researchers starting their careers as independent investigators in Africa. This call for proposals will result in the selection of one to two projects for each of the countries indicated, to be implemented by the successful PIs in collaboration with IPA **Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya**. Funding of 10,000 USD will be awarded to each project.

## Submissions

We are pleased to invite submissions from researchers based in **Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, and Kenya**. Successful proposals should align with both IPA's overarching research agenda and the specific sector priorities identified by IPA country offices in these respective regions.

In **Ghana**, the focus areas include Education, Health, Social Protection and Agriculture. In **Nigeria**, priority themes encompass Social Protection, Climate, Agriculture, Education and Health. In **Uganda**, the emphasis is on Mental Health, Education, Climate Change, and Early Childhood Development. Lastly, in **Kenya**, the focus will broadly be on Agriculture with an emphasis on food security, and social protection with an outlook on human protection & displaced livelihoods.

Proposals should incorporate a quantitative, empirical component, mixed-methods research, or exploratory work to establish the viability of such research approaches. We look forward to receiving innovative proposals that address critical issues and contribute to evidence-based policy and practice.

## Objectives

- Enable evidence-based high-quality research that addresses the global poverty problem
- Support research from African scholars, which can then inform future impact evaluation research
- To provide an opportunity for African researchers to gain experience in the preparation of grant applications and management
- To improve South-South communication and collaboration among researchers, policymakers, and implementers, and for community participation in research and agenda-setting

## Requirements

These grants will fund **exploratory work** meant to develop preliminary research ideas. We expect these grants to help researchers develop subsequent impact evaluations. Activities may include travel, relationship development, descriptive or observational analysis, data development or collection, research assistance, and in some cases principal investigator

time. These grants are earmarked for researchers, PhD students, and other researchers who do not have other sources of funding for exploratory work. **Awards are capped at USD\$10,000.**

***The Researcher Diversification Strategy Initiative expects projects to be completed within six months of disbursement of funds.***

## Eligibility

Eligibility is restricted to Africa-based researchers. This refers to individuals who are (a) currently studying at a university or research institute in Africa, and/or b) currently teaching at an African university or research institute.

Note: African researchers can also include scholars based outside of Africa as part of the team.

## Funding Criteria

- **Evaluation criteria:** Proposals will be reviewed by a group of internal staff and researchers. Projects will be assessed against five, equally weighted evaluation criteria:
  - **Academic contribution:** Does the study make a significant contribution toward advancing knowledge in the field? Does it answer new questions or introduce novel methods, measures, or interventions? Is there academic relevance? 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?
  - **Policy relevance:** Will results from the research have generalizable implications? How, if at all, will the “lessons learned” have relevance beyond this test case? Is there demand from policymakers for more/better information to influence their decisions in this area? If an intervention has been identified, is there potential for the implementing partner to scale up this intervention?
  - **Technical design:** Does the exploratory work plan identify a path toward developing a research design that will appropriately answer the questions outlined in the proposal?
  - **Project viability:** Are there any other logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the study, for example, government authorization or Human Subjects review? Do researchers describe how exploratory or piloting activities would inform a full-scale impact evaluation?
  - **Value of research:** Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected contributions to science and policy?

## Additional Considerations

When reviewing proposals, the reviewers will also consider:

- **Ethics:** Reviewers will consider whether there are any risks of harm to research

participants, what the proposed risk mitigation strategies are, and how the possible benefits of the research compare to the possible harms.

- **Team diversity:** The Researcher Diversification Strategy team welcomes proposals from diverse research teams. We would encourage Country Office teams to consider working across disciplines and require them to work with researchers from the countries where the project will take place.

## Application Process

Please send all submissions to [researcher\\_diversification@poverty-action.org](mailto:researcher_diversification@poverty-action.org). When applying, indicate the country you are seeking to work with and use the following templates for submitting your applications.

Note you cannot fill the templates below directly, you have to download them, then fill them out and send them to the email address provided.

- [Template for Exploratory Grant Proposals](#)
- [Budget Template](#)

**The deadline for submission is Friday, April 19th, 2024 by 5 PM EAT.**

**To help clarify proposal requirements, a Q&A session will be held on Thursday, April 4th from 3-3:45 PM EAT. Register [here](#).**