

# INNOVATIONS FOR POVERTY ACTION PEACE AND RECOVERY PROGRAM

## Homicide in Latin America and the Caribbean



IPA's [Peace & Recovery Program](#) (P&R) is pleased to announce that it is now accepting proposals for research on violence and homicide in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), supported by a pending grant from the Open Society Foundations (OSF). This document details P&R's new research focus, outlining the types of projects we support, our funding criteria, and the focus countries for the competitive fund supported by OSF.

Funding for this theme is subject to and conditioned upon IPA receiving funding from OSF. This funding is shared with J-PAL's [Crime and Violence Initiative](#) (CVI).

Please direct all questions to [peace@poverty-action.org](mailto:peace@poverty-action.org).

## I. Homicide in Latin America and the Caribbean

With just eight percent of the world's population, LAC accounts for over a third of all homicides. Seventeen of the 20 countries with the highest homicide rates in the world are in LAC, as are 43 of the top 50 cities. To date, little evidence exists on what kinds of programs and policies can contribute to a reduction in this rate.

To that end, P&R has expanded its core research themes to include homicide in LAC. We seek to support some of the first rigorous studies, and policy and program pilots, on the impact of homicide and violence reduction interventions.

We will consider projects on the following topics:

- Prevention strategies, such as efforts to enhance conflict resolution capacity in violent areas, strategies to displace or quell criminal groups, efforts to protect vulnerable groups (such as youth and women), and gun, drug, and alcohol control initiatives
- Interventions at the individual level, such as CBT for high-risk youth
- Enforcement, security provision and justice sector strategies, including focused deterrence, hotspot policing, investigations, prosecutions, and trials
- Reentry, including strategies to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders and perpetrators
- Studies that augment our understanding of homicide, such as work on individual motivations for participation in violence and homicide, or the role of criminal groups and networks in homicide

## II. Competitive Fund Overview

IPA's Peace & Recovery Program (P&R), launched in 2017, supports field experiments and related research. We will consider the following types of projects for funding:

**Exploratory grants.** These grants are to develop preliminary research ideas. The expectation is that these grants help researchers develop subsequent proposals for pilots or full randomized controlled trials (RCTs). Activities may include travel, relationship development, descriptive analysis, observational analysis, and data development or collection. These grants are earmarked for junior faculty, PhD students, and other researchers who do not have other sources of funding for travel and exploratory work. Exploratory proposals from tenured professors from major research universities will not be considered. Awards are between \$1,000 and \$10,000.

**Pilot studies.** These grants are for studies with a clear research question, but for which the design and implementation requires substantial upfront investments. The expectation is that this work helps researchers develop subsequent proposals for full RCTs. Activities could include further trial-and-error piloting; partner development; developing new measurement strategies or instruments; analysis of existing data; or new data development or collection. Awards are between \$10,000 and \$50,000. Projects should apply for the funds needed to yield the best research but (all other things equal) lower budgets have a higher probability of being funded.

**Full studies.** These grants are for research projects with a clear research question, committed implementing partner(s), well-defined research designs, and statistical power estimates. While most of the impact evaluations funded will be RCTs, studies that use high-quality natural experiments will be considered in exceptional cases when a randomized experiment is not possible. Grants can also fund the continuation or completion of RCTs that have already started without P&R funding (including those for which data collection is complete). This includes long-run follow-ups from previously published evaluations, as well as "downstream studies" that use an already-completed randomized trial to answer a P&R-relevant question. The expectation is that this work will result in a paper publishable in a top economic, political science, or science journal. Awards are between \$50,000 and \$450,000. Projects should apply for the funds needed to yield the best research but (all other things equal) lower budgets have a higher probability of being funded.

**"Infrastructure" and "public goods" creation.** This includes the creation of administrative datasets, panel datasets, other new data, software, measurement strategies, and so forth. Awards are between \$10,000 and \$150,000.

**Reviews and meta-analysis of relevant literatures.** This includes but is not necessarily limited to the experimental program evaluation evidence. Awards are between \$5,000 and \$20,000.

**Evidence use and policy outreach support.** These grants support development of relationships with policymakers, take-up and dissemination of evidence, sharing and analysis of administrative data, and exploration potential experimental evaluations. The funding could be used to embed a research staff member in an organization, produce preliminary scoping exercises to ensure interventions are context-appropriate, host matchmaking events or conferences, or other activities that achieve similar aims. Awards are capped at \$25,000.

Further information about the P&R Program's goals and other core themes can be found in our [Guiding Principles and Funding Priorities](#).

### III. Evaluation Criteria

Projects are assessed against five, equally weighted evaluation criteria:

<b>Academic contribution</b>	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?
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**Policy relevance** Does the study address the priority questions outlined in the P&R Guiding Principles and Funding Priorities document? Will results from the intervention 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? Is there potential for the implementing partner to scale up this intervention?

**Technical design** Does the research design appropriately answer the questions outlined in the proposal? Are there threats that could compromise the validity of results? If so, does the proposal sufficiently address those threats? What changes could the researchers make to improve the design? For full study proposals, are there sufficiently detailed power calculations?

**Project viability** Is the relationship with the implementing partner strong and likely to endure through the entire study? What is the credibility and policy influence of the implementing partner? Are there any other logistical or political obstacles that might threaten the completion of the study, for example, government authorization or Human Subjects review? For pilots, do researchers describe how piloting activities would inform a full-scale randomized evaluation? Does the research team have a track record of implementing successful projects similar to the one being proposed?

**Value of research** Is the cost of the study commensurate with the value of expected contributions to science and policy? Does the study leverage funding from other sources?

**Researcher Qualifications.** Researchers must be affiliated with a research institution or a university, and either hold a PhD or be currently pursuing a PhD in a relevant discipline. They must demonstrate experience in field research and randomized evaluations and have sector expertise. Successful applications will come from researchers with a track record of published field experiments in top outlets.

Practitioners and institutions that implement interventions should partner with academics with strong track records implementing similar research studies in order to apply for funding. IPA's P&R Program is available to support matchmaking with researchers.

**Research Management.** Field-based data collection must be supported by an established research management organization that will assist the research team with the management and implementation of the study. The organization must demonstrate experience implementing field experiments and have a presence in the country.

Projects taking place in countries where IPA has a [country program](#) are expected to be run through the local IPA Country Office, as these offices have the experience and long-term presence to ensure that projects meet excellent research quality standards and maintain strong partner relationships. Applicants should provide a clear motivation if they elect to work with another research management organization.

**Funding.** Funding will be for qualified research costs. The P&R Program generally cannot fund:

- Program or intervention implementation costs, except in rare circumstances
- Salary costs for researchers from institutions in developed countries (funding for the salaries and/or time of researchers from institutions in developing countries will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the review committee)
- Purely qualitative research that does not contribute to the development of impact evaluations

- Lab in the field or survey experiments, except in rare circumstances or within the context of a broader impact evaluation
- Research using historical datasets, except in the context of a broader impact evaluation
- Research in high-income countries

Further information about our funding criteria and application process can be found in our most recent [Application Instructions](#). If you have any further questions, please reach out to [peace@poverty-action.org](mailto:peace@poverty-action.org).

## IV. Timeline and Application Process

P&R will disburse funding for research on homicide in LAC over the next two years. The dates for our next round are:

February 2019	Competitive round announced
March 22, 2019	EOI deadline*
April 16, 2019	Responses to EOIs released, full application materials posted
April 30, 2019	Exploratory proposal submission deadline
June 14, 2019	Full proposal submission deadline
August 2019	Awards announced

*\*OSF funding is expected to be confirmed by the time EOI responses are released. Applicants who are encouraged to submit a full proposal will be notified whether this funding is indeed available.*

Our expression of interest form can be found [here](#). EOIs are not mandatory, but applicants are strongly encouraged to submit one for three reasons:

1. It will allow the P&R Program to let the applicant know whether the project may or may not be a good match for P&R before investing time in a full proposal.
2. The P&R Program may grant travel or pilot funding based on EOIs and discussion with applicants before the full proposals are due.
3. In rare cases, the P&R Program may be able to provide feedback to applicants.

**Off-cycle Proposals.** While most of the funding will be disbursed through scheduled funding rounds, we understand that some research projects face significant time constraints and need to receive funding before the end of a regular funding round to make use of an unanticipated opportunity (e.g., a newly-announced policy change that will go into effect soon, creating an opportunity for an evaluation). The maximum amount awarded to off-cycle proposals is \$50,000. We encourage researchers in such situations to reach out directly to [peace@poverty-action.org](mailto:peace@poverty-action.org).

## V. Focus Countries and IPA Offices

Only projects in LAC are eligible for competitive funding from OSF. While we would be particularly excited to receive proposals for projects in Brazil and the Northern Triangle (El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua), proposals for projects across the region will be considered.

Projects in countries where IPA has a country office in LAC, listed below, are expected to be run through the local IPA Country Office. In Latin America, researchers interested in implementing projects outside of the countries where IPA has an office are encouraged to reach out to Juan Manuel Hernández- Agramonte at IPA Peru, as there may be opportunities for IPA Peru to support projects with quality assurance and research management remotely.

Please make sure that you reach out to the local IPA Country Office as early as possible in the project development process so they can assist with research design, project planning, proposal development, and partner development.

<b>Country</b>	<b>IPA Contact Name</b>	<b>IPA Contact Email</b>
<b>Bolivia</b>	Juan Manuel Hernández-Agramonte	<a href="mailto:jmhernandez@poverty-action.org">jmhernandez@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Colombia</b>	Kyle Holloway	<a href="mailto:kholloway@poverty-action.org">kholloway@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Dominican Republic</b>	Kyle Holloway	<a href="mailto:kholloway@poverty-action.org">kholloway@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Mexico</b>	Odette Gonzalez Carrillo	<a href="mailto:ogcarrillo@poverty-action.org">ogcarrillo@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Paraguay</b>	Juan Manuel Hernández-Agramonte	<a href="mailto:jmhernandez@poverty-action.org">jmhernandez@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Peru</b>	Juan Manuel Hernández-Agramonte	<a href="mailto:jmhernandez@poverty-action.org">jmhernandez@poverty-action.org</a>
<b>Countries not listed above</b>	Juan Manuel Hernández-Agramonte	<a href="mailto:jmhernandez@poverty-action.org">jmhernandez@poverty-action.org</a>

## **VI. About Innovations for Poverty Action**

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) is a research and policy nonprofit that discovers and promotes effective solutions to global poverty problems. IPA brings together researchers and decision-makers to design, rigorously evaluate, and refine these solutions and their applications, ensuring that the evidence created is used to improve the lives of the world's poor. Since its founding in 2002, IPA has worked with over 575 leading academics to conduct over 650 evaluations in 51 countries. This research has informed hundreds of successful programs that now impact millions of individuals worldwide.

IPA operates in over 20 countries through 18 permanent offices. Applicants are expected to contact the relevant country office in order to coordinate on project development and application submission.

**Updated:** August 2019