

ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB

Despite massive investments in development programs over the last 70 years, more than 700 million people across the globe still live in extreme poverty. Improving their lives through better programs and policies is the mission of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) (<https://www.povertyactionlab.org>) at MIT.

J-PAL's affiliated professors and staff believe that essential questions of social policy—e.g., effectively reducing the dropout rates of girls in Peru, increasing the yields of small farmers in Kenya, boosting immunization rates in India, or preventing crime in US cities—can be answered through rigorous empirical evaluation and innovation. J-PAL works closely with governments and non-profits to design new programs and improve existing ones, scientifically test whether these programs work in practice, help scale up effective programs, and institutionalize a culture of evidence-informed policymaking.

Founded at MIT's Economics Department in 2003, J-PAL is directed by faculty members Abhijit Banerjee, Esther Duflo, and Benjamin Olken, among the world's foremost development economists. The J-PAL network now includes more than 900 researchers at universities around the world. J-PAL researchers have conducted more than 2,200 evaluations in 96 countries. More than 600 million people have been reached by programs shown to be successful through J-PAL evaluations.

J-PAL North America, one of seven regional office of J-PAL, is also based at MIT's Economics Department. Its work is focused on countries in North America and includes conducting randomized evaluations, building partnerships for evidence-informed policymaking, and helping partners scale up effective programs.

MIT students can be involved with J-PAL's work in various ways:

- **Undergraduates:** J-PAL hosts 5 to 10 UROPs annually. UROPs provide valuable assistance to J-PAL projects while allowing students to gain practical experience in data analysis. UROP positions are available through the academic year, IAP, and the summer period.
- **New graduates:** J-PAL hires highly qualified graduates with strong backgrounds in economics for entry-level positions in research, policy, and training. Though not reserved for MIT students, MIT graduates are strong candidates for positions at J-PAL in Cambridge or with our international partners.
- **Graduate students:** J-PAL staff and economics faculty support graduate student research by advising on project design and analysis, particularly during weekly Development Lunches and Development Teas. J-PAL partner offices around the world work with MIT graduate students to implement projects, find partners, and hire local staff.
- **Postdoctoral fellows:** J-PAL hosts several postdoctoral students in cooperation with the Prize Fellowship in Economics, History,

and Politics at Harvard, and also provides grant-funded fellowships directly.

Contact J-PAL (info@povertyactionlab.org) for further information.