

Request for Proposals: EGAP Regranting Initiative

Cumulating Experimental Evidence on Political Accountability

The Experiments in Governance and Politics (EGAP) network is soliciting proposals that seek to assess the role of information in the selection of effective politicians in developing countries. A critical feature of this regranting initiative is that we seek to fund experimental research that may lead to greater cumulation of knowledge in this policy area. Doing this successfully will require a high degree of coordination across funded research teams. We invite studies that address the central question using two or more experimental treatment conditions. A first arm, to be implemented in a consistent manner by all supported projects, should seek to assess the effects of the provision of credible information regarding politician performance on voter choice. Second arms are to be selected by individual research teams to be studied alongside the common treatment. The purpose of this second arm is to allow for a comparative assessment of interventions: if the common information intervention is not effective, what is? Winning proposals will be required to participate in a conference before the start of fieldwork to ensure coherence across projects, and will be asked to work towards comparability in outcome measurement.

Contents

1	The EGAP Regranting Initiative	3
1.1	Thematic Focus	3
1.2	Awards	3
1.3	Complementarities	4
1.4	Eligibility	4
2	Thematic focus	5
2.1	Theoretical framework	5
2.2	Mixed Evidence	5
2.3	Accounting for variation	6
3	Strategy	7
3.1	Treatment Arms	7
3.2	Outcomes	8
3.3	Cumulation	8
4	Submission Guidelines and Review Process	10
4.1	What are the stages of the application process?	10
4.2	Who is eligible to apply?	11
4.3	Should researchers and research teams apply individually or as groups?	11
4.4	What is the size of awards?	11
4.5	Are there any conditions on the grant?	12
4.6	What is the selection criteria and application format?	12
4.7	What is the proposal deadline and timeline for funding?	15

1 The EGAP Regranting Initiative

The “credibility revolution” in development research has increased the reliability of causal claims about the effects of interventions to promote citizens’ engagement in political processes, improve the quality of public services, or achieve other valued ends. However, while the increased use of experimental designs bolsters the credibility of individual studies, several important challenges remain. Three of the most important challenges relate to (i) achieving cumulative knowledge; (ii) ensuring that standards of analysis and reporting equal those of design; and (iii) creating usable evidence for social science and for policy. Put differently, a lot is known about the effects of different interventions in distinct contexts, but extracting generalizable knowledge that researchers and policy makers can put to use in varied settings remains difficult.

The EGAP Regranting Initiative is piloting a model for experimental research that seeks to address these challenges. We build off the premise that some of the difficulty in cumulating learning in the political economy of development stems from failures to coordinate research across disparate teams; from weak professional incentives to engage in replication; and from failures to theorize the relationship between distinct interventions and the disparate social and political contexts into which they are introduced. In the modal practice of experimental research in the social sciences, researchers or teams of researchers work independently, developing and addressing research questions that interest them. While there is broad recognition of the need to replicate in order to cumulate reliable knowledge, professional incentives militate against replication. The result is a field where broad conclusions are sometimes drawn on the basis of a single pioneering study. Thus, a key challenge we face is strengthening the scope for cumulation, while simultaneously getting the incentives right for researchers to engage in collaborative and coordinated research.

This regranting initiative seeks to fund experimental research that may lead to greater cumulation of knowledge in this important policy area. An unusual feature of this initiative is that we expect a high degree of coordination across funded research teams.

1.1 Thematic Focus

Following a call for expressions of interest for research in the broad area of participation and accountability, the awarding committee identified the role of information regarding candidate quality on voter participation and voter choice as the focus for the current round. This was a theme in which there was a plurality of expressions of interest, a simple testable theoretical model underlying interventions, and considerable policy interest. There also exists an important body of research in this area, although this research is marked by large variation in findings, design, and measurement strategies. We describe the thematic focus in greater detail in Section 2.

1.2 Awards

In the current round we anticipate making grants to 4 to 6 individual researchers or research teams to conduct research projects, in total amounts of approximately \$200,000-\$300,000 each. For individual proposals that are conceptualized as part of a “group” of related projects, applicants are encouraged to indicate the link between their projects and other projects with which they may choose to link. However, awards will be made to individual projects, on the basis of the quality and merit of projects, their consis-

tency with the objectives of this proposal, and the willingness of researchers to participate in the process of post-award harmonization and integration that this initiative requires.

The deadline for submission of proposals is 16 June 2014.

1.3 Complementarities

The collection of studies will be implemented in different areas with a theorized account for why outcomes might differ across areas, in light of the discussion of heterogeneity described below (section 2.3) or other considerations. In addition, we hope that the collection of studies will involve:

- i *coordinated, integrated research* in which questions, interventions, and outcomes are at least partially harmonized across studies;
- ii *systematic thinking about theory and case selection* in the planning of multiple experiments;
- iii *cohesive, joint registration* of studies and *integrated publication*, as a way to ameliorate reporting biases; and
- iv *innovation within replication*, so that the effects of pure informational treatments can be compared to alternative interventions.

In sum, we hope that our prototype for coordinated research will allow for greater comparability of findings across disparate experimental studies; boost the credibility and cumulation of research results *as a whole*; and also generate hypotheses about what may need to be added to (or substituted for) informational interventions, in the service of promoting greater political accountability.

1.4 Eligibility

This call for proposals is open to both EGAP and non-EGAP members; and it is open both to those who submitted Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in a previous phase of the initiative and those who did not.¹ For further questions about the proposal process and eligibility, see our FAQ sheet, available at http://e-gap.org/research/pool_1/.

¹However, the EOIs played a crucial role in refining the focus of this RFP, and submission of an EOI increased the chance that particular projects would be consistent with it.

2 Thematic focus

The projects funded under this grant round will collectively seek to assess the role of **political information** in the selection of **effective politicians**.

2.1 Theoretical framework

Many theoretical accounts that focus on instrumental voting attribute weaknesses in democratic performance to weak informational environments. Voters, under this account, vote as-if for instrumental reasons: they seek to select effective candidates who will produce benefits for them once in office (whether benefits are defined in material terms or not). With limited information, however, voters cannot tell effective politicians from ineffective ones and rely instead on cues such as the ethnicity of politicians or the patronage and small favors politicians provide at election time. Under this account, richer information can alter the calculus of voters in a direct way, increase turnout, ensure better choice of politicians, and, in the longer run, ensure better behavior by those politicians.

This simple account motivates many democratic and governance interventions which focus on strengthening the information environment around elections. It has shaped the programming of international development organizations such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) or the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), as in interventions to increase political knowledge.² It has also influenced domestic governments and electoral authorities.³

Alternative theoretical accounts produce less sanguine expectations about the effects of information. Under these accounts, voters often do not vote for instrumental reasons but out of loyalty to ingroup members, because of bargains struck with local leaders, or out of fear of punishment by politicians and their machines. These alternative accounts differ both in their treatment of the decision making and in their predictions about the importance of information in the decision making.

Although different in their predictions, we note that there is no fundamental theoretical incompatibility between these accounts and it is possible that in a given polity, both types of logics are in operation. Nevertheless the mix of as-if instrumental voters and non instrumental voters may vary substantially across settings.

2.2 Mixed Evidence

A growing body of research has sought to assess the consequences of informational interventions—e.g., of providing voters with information about attributes or performance of candidates, motivated by the instrumental voter account.

The results of such studies have been mixed, however, and it is often difficult to infer the reasons that particular informational interventions may or may not be effective.⁴ For example, information

²For a review, see T. Dunning and D. Posner, "Political Knowledge and Political Participation: Improving USAID Program Design and Evaluation,"

³As one example, since 2003, the Election Commission of India has required candidates to file disclosures of their personal assets and report any criminal actions or convictions against them. Elsewhere, e.g. in Uganda and Zambia, domestic and international NGOs have been developing scorecards of politician performance.

⁴For a review, see Rohini Pande. 2011. "Can Informed Voters Enforce Better Governance? Experiments in Low-Income Democracies." *Annual Review of Economics* 3.

about incumbent performance is sometimes but not always related to vote choice—and the effect on political participation can be positive or negative. Ferraz and Finan (2008) studied a natural experiment in Brazil, in which the federal government randomly audited municipal expenditures; they found that release of audits before elections reduced the re-election probability of incumbents who had committed at least two corruption violations by 7 percentage points.⁵ However, in the studies of Chong et al. (2011) and De Figueiredo et al. (2011), in Mexico and Brazil respectively, providing information about politicians corruption decreased turnout, without universally affecting electoral outcomes.⁶ Banerjee et al. (2010) provided slum dwellers in Delhi with pre-election report cards (via newspapers) on incumbent performance (e.g., legislator spending, committee attendance, and participation in the legislature) and candidate qualifications and found that the intervention led to a 3.5 percentage point *increase* in turnout in treatment polling stations, relative to a control group, but had no impact on the vote share for the median performing candidate.⁷ Humphreys and Weinstein (2012), examining the effects of scorecards on politicians' behavior, found evidence of strong effects when information is provided directly to citizens in controlled settings but no impacts when information is disseminated through more politicized citizen workshops.⁸ Bidwell, Casey, and Glennerster (2014) focus on an intervention that provides voters with information on campaign platforms through videos of candidate debates and find evidence for shifts in voters' political knowledge and better electoral performance for candidates that perform well in debates.⁹

2.3 Accounting for variation

What explains such contrasting findings? The variation in results may be due to underlying variation in the conditions in which we expect a given mechanism to operate, but it may also be due more simply to heterogeneity in the interventions studied and the ways outcomes are measured.

1. **Undertheorized differences of context.** Although the theoretical positions described above are crudely sketched, they suggest reasons for why we might expect different effects in different contexts. Most obviously the effects of provision of information may depend on what voters already know and believe and thus relate to the existing knowledge environment.¹⁰ Propensity to vote along more instrumental or more partisan lines likely also reflects features such as (i) the depth of

⁵The effects were most pronounced in municipalities where local radio was present to broadcast audit results. See C. Ferraz and F. Finan. 2008. "Exposing Corrupt Politicians: The Effect of Brazil's Publicly Released Audits on Electoral Outcomes." *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 123 (2): 703-745.

⁶For example, De Figueiredo et al. (2011) distributed flyers that detailed allegations of corruption against mayoral candidates in Sao Paulo; the flyers depressed electoral turnout as well as the vote shares of one of the candidates (though not the other), relative to a control group. See A. Chong, A. De La O, D. Karlan, and L. Wantchekon. 2011. "Looking Beyond the Incumbent: The Effects of Exposing Corruption on Electoral Outcomes." NBER Working Paper 17679; M De Figueiredo, F. D Hidalgo, and Y Kasahara. 2009. "When Do Voters Punish Corrupt Politicians? Experimental Evidence from Brazil."

⁷A. Banerjee, S. Kumar, R. Pande and F. Su. 2010. "Do Informed Voters Make Better Choices? Experimental Evidence from Urban India." Manuscript.

⁸Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy Weinstein. 2012. "Policing Politicians" Paper presented at the 2012 ABCDE meetings. Washington, DC.

⁹K Bidwell, K Casey, and R Glennerster. 2014. "The Impact of Voter Knowledge Initiatives in Sierra Leone." IGC Policy Brief.

¹⁰If voters start with pessimistic beliefs, information about legislator activity may result in higher turnout, as it did in Indian slums. If voters instead have relatively optimistic priors, receiving information about incumbents' corruption may provoke disenchantment with politics and lower turnout, as Chong et al. found in Mexico.

ethnic or other divisions within societies, (ii) the closeness of electoral contests, (iii) the integrity of the electoral process, and (iv) the importance of the office.

2. **Heterogeneity of interventions and outcome measures.** Though it is possible to compare the nascent set of experimental studies examining this topic, the interventions and outcome measures are often quite different across studies. There is considerable variation in the type of information examined. Some studies provide information concerning basic facts—what legislators are doing at the national level, how much they are spending at local levels, what personal or professional malfeasance they are engaged in—while others emphasize what officials should be doing, or highlight the gap between what officials say and what they do. Some examine information from authoritative sources, such as official rulings on corruption, while others are provided by researchers or unknown activist organizations. In some cases outcomes are measured using official voting records, in others self-reporting is used. In some cases information is delivered in very controlled environments whereas in others it is delivered as part of more natural political processes.

3 Strategy

In this EGAP initiative, we seek to fund a set of studies that can effectively assess the core theory outlined in 2.1, provide evidence on the conditions under which the logic is effective, and assess the logic in contrast to alternative accounts.

To gain confidence that variation in findings across studies can shed light on underlying mechanisms — and not simply idiosyncratic variations in design and measurement — studies should contain a strongly comparable core component. However, this does not preclude the possibility that individual proposals will vary on other dimensions in ways that may also shed light on the underlying logic of vote choice.

These considerations have implications for treatment arms, for outcomes, and for measurement, as outlined in the next sections.

3.1 Treatment Arms

We invite studies that address this question using two or more experimental arms.

1. A first arm, to be implemented in a consistent manner by all supported projects, seeks to assess the effects of the provision of credible information on politician performance on voter choice. While details of the content of the information treatment and its mode of delivery will need to be developed jointly by successful teams, the overall purpose of this arm is to generate a set of comparable measures on comparable interventions to test directly the instrumental voter account and the role that information plays in it.
2. Second arms are to be selected by individual research teams to be studied alongside the common treatment. The purpose of this second arm is threefold. First, from a policy perspective it allows for a comparative assessment of interventions: if the common information intervention is not effective, what is? If it is effective, is it more effective than other similar cost interventions? Next, the second arm can provide insight into the theoretical mechanisms at play. Systematic variation in

treatment, including variation in the type of information intervention or variation of other forms, can allow for an indirect assessment of mechanism, (sometimes called implicit mediation analysis) as well as for testing of assumptions underlying the common intervention, such as responsiveness to non-instrumental appeals. Third and finally, this variation opens up space for considerable differentiation across researchers, but in a way that addresses a common agenda.

In all cases the research should allow comparison to a pure control or placebo condition, for example through a factorial design.

3.2 Outcomes

For all arms the primary outcomes of interest are voter participation and voter propensity to support high performing politicians, or punish poorly performing politicians.

Measurement strategies and assurances of their quality should be clearly defined in the proposal. However, details of measurement strategies, as well as operationalization of key concepts (such as high performing politicians) are likely to change following workshop sessions with all grantees. Note that coordination across common core outcomes does not preclude a focus by individual research teams on alternative outcomes; these are particularly important to the extent that they shed light on mechanisms related to the logic of instrumental voting.

3.3 Cumulation

This EGAP regranting initiative builds on the premise that poor ex-ante coordination hinders cumulation of knowledge from experimental research. Uncoordinated efforts can lead to high levels of innovation, which is critical for advancing research agendas, but it can militate against consolidation of knowledge in any given area. This round is focused specifically on knowledge cumulation and successful grantees will be asked to engage in a relatively high degree of coordination. In practice this coordination means individual research teams will engage with eight pillars of the initiative.

1. **Coordination Across Research Teams.** We seek to generate coordination as well as some healthy competition between funded research teams—as the next seven pillars depend vitally on integration and collaboration among funded researchers. We will achieve this harmonization through a series of workshops, hosted by EGAP, bringing together successful applicants (see Section 4.5).
2. **Predefined Themes and Comparable Interventions.** Researchers funded under the regranting pool will address related questions and study the effects of comparable interventions. Interventions are *pre-defined* in two ways: (1) through this RFP’s thematic focus on informational vs. alternate routes to political accountability; and (2) through the selection of winning proposals, in which we will also prioritize comparability of interventions across research teams.
3. **Comparable Measures.** We expect successful applicants to develop consistent outcome measures, both in their proposals and through the post-funding workshops. Outcomes such as electoral participation (turnout) and voting behavior/choice may be measured at either the individual or aggregate levels. We also seek to harmonize measures of broader attitudes towards politics, government, and

the political process.¹¹ Finally, for interventions focused on elected officials, we will seek to develop consistent and high-quality measures of campaign strategy or service delivery that can be compared across studies. How the measures were determined and the quality and reliability of the measures will be required in the application.

4. **Integrated Case Selection.** Proposals should theorize the channels through which an intervention may affect a given outcome—and in doing so provide hypotheses about which of these channels may be operative in the chosen research context(s). This provides a justification of case selection and may allow greater ex-ante specification of hypotheses about heterogeneous effects across contexts. Thus, case selection (i.e. selection of research sites or contexts) can be integrated and justified in a way that is rarely possible in uncoordinated research.
5. **Preregistration.** Funded research will be required to hew to EGAP’s standards for analytic transparency (see <http://e-gap.org/resources/egap-statement-of-principles> and Table 1 in this document). In particular, after revision of research designs at an initial meeting of funded researchers and before initiation of outcome data collection, grantees must post a study protocol that describes a) the study’s purpose; b) the hypotheses it aims to test; c) the main outcome variables; and d) the set of tests and the data analysis that will be performed.¹² In addition, the *group* of funded studies will itself be pre-registered, with the comparisons and pooled analyses to be conducted from the group of studies made explicit; funded research teams and co-PIs will collaborate on the development of this group pre-registration document.
6. **Formal Synthesis.** Group preregistration (item 5) will allow funded researchers and Co-PIs to pre-specify a plan for meta-analysis and formal synthesis of experimental results. In addition, research teams may collaborate on developing a causal model that can integrate results and account for ways in which contexts may condition causal effects. Here, integrated case selection (item 4) that builds on theory about channels through which interventions affect outcomes assists in stipulating ex-ante expectations of results across experiments.
7. **Third-Party Analysis.** Grantees will be expected to make their data publicly available for independent, third-party replication and analysis, with a view to early identification of errors and discrepancies.
8. **Integrated publication.** We anticipate four types of publications will arise for individual researchers who participate in this initiative.
 - (a) **Synthetic articles.** We expect all funded researchers and Co-PIs to coauthor one or more articles that present results from the distinct studies in an integrated fashion. A benefit of this format is that it may highlight the intellectual benefits of collaboration and integration across research teams.

¹¹For example, in contexts characterized by substantial clientelism and vote-buying, natural questions include those about the effects of deliberation or information on the power of local vote brokers; outcome measures that allow assessment of such effects are also encouraged.

¹²For examples, see the EGAP design registry (<http://e-gap.org/design-registration/>). Grantees may register at the AER registry, the 2ie RIDIE registry or elsewhere.

- (b) **Standard individual peer-reviewed journal articles or chapters.** We expect individual grantees to publish standalone papers in academic outlets, which may present extended analyses or focus on particular outcomes of interest to individual researcher(s). This offers the usual benefits to researchers and readers in terms of dissemination of individual findings. Early stage working paper versions of these papers are to be published on or linked from the EGAP website.
- (c) **Joint Publication of Individual Articles.** We are currently discussing with journal editors a publication model in which (1) the journal would agree to *results-blind* review of the pre-analysis plans produced under this regranting initiative; and (2) conditional on successful review of the pre-analysis plans, research papers from the initiative could be published as a group, for example, as a journal special issue. Ultimately the decision to undertake such a joint publication will rest with the grantees.
- (d) **Policy Briefs.** We expect to engage research staff to draft policy briefs reflecting core lessons from the individual research projects.

In sum, this regranting initiative seeks to strengthen the cumulation of knowledge from experimental research, while simultaneously getting the incentives right for researchers to contribute to a shared learning agenda.

4 Submission Guidelines and Review Process

The EGAP Regranting Pool is administered through the Institute of International Studies (IIS) and its Center on the Politics of Development (CPD) at the University of California, Berkeley. The Co-Principal Investigators on this regranting initiative will lead the process of selecting proposals for regranting, in consultation with members of the broader EGAP network as well as other academics and development practitioners. The Co-PIs on the selection committee are

- Thad Dunning (Professor of Political Science at UC Berkeley and Director of the CPD);
- Guy Grossman (Assistant Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania);
- Macartan Humphreys (Professor of Political Science at Columbia University);
- Susan Hyde (Associate Professor of Political Science, Yale University);
- Craig McIntosh (Professor of Economics, UC San Diego).

To avoid conflicts of interest, these Co-PIs will not be eligible to apply for funds under the Regranting Pool. However, they will be centrally involved in fostering collaboration between research projects as well as in coordinating integrated publication, in collaboration with funded researchers (see section 3.3).

4.1 What are the stages of the application process?

This Request for Proposals follows a previous phase, in which we solicited Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and used them to identify clusters of promising projects that fall into one or more of pre-defined areas. Submission of a short EOI provided a low-cost way for researchers to identify the fit of their

project with this initiative and to receive a signal of interest from the selection committee, and doing so boosted the chance that a project fit the focus of this RFP. The Statement of Interest phase was essential for identifying informational interventions, and alternatives thereto, as a thematic area that we believe will generate sufficient numbers of high-quality proposals. A summary of the EOI process is posted on the EGAP website (www.e-gap.org).

Note that prior submission of an Expression of Interest is *not* a requirement for submission of a full Proposal in response to this open call. Researchers whose EOI fit the thematic objectives of the initiative may have been invited to submit full proposals. However, invitation to submit a full proposal does not guarantee eventual funding. It is also possible that researchers whose EOI did not propose an informational intervention might propose their intervention(s) as a second arm for a study, with an informational intervention as a first arm.

The deadline for submission of full proposals is 16 June 2014.

4.2 Who is eligible to apply?

This call for proposals is open and not restricted to EGAP members or to researchers and professionals from any particular region or discipline. Nor is it restricted to researchers that submitted Expressions of Interest in the previous phase. However, positive weight will be accorded to experience in implementing research of this form. University faculty, graduate students, and development professionals are welcome to apply; teams of researchers that integrate researchers with different kinds and degrees of experience (for instance, professors and graduate students) are also welcome. Applicants from developing countries are particularly encouraged.

4.3 Should researchers and research teams apply individually or as groups?

At the Expression of Interest stage, researchers were encouraged to form “groups” of linked proposals and many did so. This was very helpful to co-PIs for identifying a promising thematic area for this RFP. In the proposal stage, individual researchers or research teams are also welcome to indicate links to other researchers or teams with which they might be grouped. However, proposals will be selected individually (i.e., not all proposals in a group may be selected, for example, if a given project is judged to have greater thematic consistency with other projects not in their self-selected “group”).

4.4 What is the size of awards?

As noted above, we expect to fund between four to six proposals. We expect individual grant proposals that average around \$200,000-\$300,000 over up to three years; however, given this average, the grants may range in size due to distinct research objectives and capacities across different teams.

Some research teams may already have funding for their intervention and/or research activities. However, they may seek to participate in the regranting initiative without receiving additional funding or only limited funding, because they are interested in the research model. Such proposals are welcome as well.

4.5 Are there any conditions on the grant?

To achieve the goals we lay out in the proposal and to pilot this model of research, integration across research teams is essential. Thus, in case of being selected for funding, applicants will be asked to fulfill the following conditions:

1. Attend a set of meetings of funded researchers to discuss and present their projects. We will convoke:
 - i One or more initial meetings, at which research designs for funded proposals are presented and discussed, in advance of interventions or data collection. After the holding of this meeting and any subsequent revisions to designs, funded researchers must draft and post study protocols/pre-analysis plans to the a study registry (first row of Table 1).
 - ii One or more mid-stream meetings (likely in the second year of the grant window) to discuss any preliminary results, discuss any challenges in the implementation of interventions, and further harmonize outcome measures. These mid-stream meetings will likely be folded into the general bi-annual meetings of EGAP members;
 - iii A final meeting or set of launch meetings to present results and working papers.
2. Allow for flexibility on experimental design and outcome measurement for purposes of harmonization across research teams, in the service of creating an integrated research product and shared publication across the projects.
3. Hew to the transparency standards described in Table 1 and the EGAP research principles described at <http://e-gap.org/resources/egap-statement-of-principles/>.
4. Participate in integrated publication initiatives, as outlined in section 3.3.

4.6 What is the selection criteria and application format?

Proposals should be submitted to grants@e-gap.org by midnight on **16 June 2014**.

The **selection criteria** for proposals are:

1. the individual merit of the projects and description of the design (60%)
2. the experience of researcher(s) and implementer(s) if applicable, and composition of research teams (40%)

In addition, all proposals should:

1. be consistent with our thematic focus and requirements for interventions (subsection 2.1);
2. be consistent with the pillars of the regranting initiative (subsection 3.3);
3. adhere to EGAP's transparency standards (Table 1); and
4. be implementable in the timeline of the grant

All applications should cover the following rubrics and should be submitted using the Application Form available at the EGAP website. **Please be sure to use these section headers in your application.** The main proposal (items 1 – 7) below should be covered in at most 15 pages.

1. **Description of study site and study units**

In describing study sites, successful proposals should consider explicitly the channels through which interventions may affect outcomes, and discuss why such channels may or may not be operative in particular contexts. We are especially interested in proposals that use variations in treatment (factorial designs) to help identify mechanisms that are operative in distinct contexts—indeed, this is built into the requirement for multiple treatment arms.¹³ In addition, proposals should explicitly consider what we might expect the effects of interventions to be in the chosen research setting(s), and how this might differ from effects in other settings. Given this theory, researchers should justify their selection of cases, e.g. the countries or contexts in which they will perform the study. Timing and type of any relevant elections should be highlighted.

2. **Motivation for alternative arms**

We are especially interested in designs that build on the results of prior research, or that replicate and modify interventions used in previous research (Section 3.3). Unusually, the window will not prioritize studies that seek to answer new questions for the first time, but instead focus on strong research designs that seek to answer questions of broad interest or that speak directly to the theme of the round. For instance, recent evidence from randomized experiments suggests that informational interventions have had at best modest success in shaping citizen behavior and/or the responsiveness of public officials. One question is then what must be added to informational interventions to shape citizen engagement, or what *kinds* of informational interventions may be most effective. Experimental designs with variations in treatment (i.e., factorial designs) are well suited to answering such questions. They are especially well suited if variations include interventions comparable to those studied previously. Innovations to address questions of particular substantive or methodological interest to individual research teams are welcome as second treatment arms.

3. **Description of common and alternative interventions**

This call for proposals requires projects to include a common treatment arm plus an alternative arm. For common interventions, applications should describe (a) the type of information provided to voters (e.g. past performance of incumbent politicians in a given area) (b) the method of delivery (e.g. newspaper dissemination). For second arms, strong designs should usually focus on the effects of interventions that are:

- (a) **tested** — there should be existing evidence that suggests that these interventions may be, or are believed to be effective.
- (b) **scalable** — they correspond to interventions that could be implemented by governments, civil society organizations, or others, outside of the research context.

¹³On such “implicit mediation analysis,” see A. Gerber and D. P. Green. 2012. *Field Experiments: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. W.W. Norton & Co.

- (c) **simple** — since a goal is to understanding how interventions work, not simply whether they work, designs should focus on simple interventions and use complex interventions only when the design allows for an unpacking of the effects of the multiple parts.
- (d) **portable** — it should be possible to implement the interventions in other settings.
- (e) **punctual** — designs should focus on interventions that can be implemented in relatively short periods of time (circa 2-3 months) and for which it is plausible that effects would be observed in a short period of time (circa 12 months).
- (f) **ethical** — interventions should not create unusual risks for populations and insofar as they are likely to alter electoral outcomes, should be implemented by organizations mandated to engage in interventions of this form. Furthermore, interventions should ensure that the information utilized is not slanderous.

Critically, proposals should suggest how inferences from second arms contribute to understanding the core theoretical questions underlying the overall project. For example the extent to which outcomes shed light on instrumental versus other reasons for voting or supporting different candidates. The second arm may focus on an alternate means for providing information, or instead on an alternate treatment that is not informational.

4. Description of outcome measurement strategies

Describe data sources including official data or original survey data. Use of official data (such as election returns) is encouraged.

5. Describe scope for assessment of downstream effects.

Although we place emphasis on shorter-term participation in electoral processes—in part because our regranting window is fairly short—we also value designs that allow for significant learning about downstream effects, e.g. on the responsiveness of politicians to citizens’ needs and ultimately on the quality of service provision. Thus, proposals should discuss the relationship of interventions not only to shorter-term outcomes in terms of citizens’ behaviors (e.g. electoral participation) and attitudes towards government and politics but also to downstream objectives such as better public service delivery.

6. Estimation

Description of how effects are to be estimated. Include power calculations in this section.

7. Timeline for implementation and measurement

Include dates of intervention, dates of elections, and start date and end dates for data collection, ensuring that the timing fits within the window for this grant.

8. Description of Research Team

Please include the CV(s) of all listed PI(s) within an annex to the proposal.

9. Description of Implementation Team

Please include the CV(s) or organizational information on the implementation team within a separate annex.

10. **Line-item Budget**

Please provide a detailed line-item budget using the attached spreadsheet. To be included are costs of baseline surveys, travel and subsistence, interventions, data collection and acquisition, and equipment used while in the field. If relevant, please include as a separate column within the line-item budget any funding that will be supplied from another organization but will also support this intervention. Include as well information on other financial rewards sought that may also support this intervention. Indirect costs will not be covered beyond 9% of the total amount requested from EGAP. In addition, PI salaries will not be covered as a part of this regranting initiative.

11. **Approvals**

Please include, if available, proof of Government Approval(s) with regards to implementation of project and research.

4.7 What is the proposal deadline and timeline for funding?

We intend to follow the timeline below for applications and awards.

- Request for Expressions of Interest disseminated: February 10, 2014
- Submission of Expressions of Interest: March 17, 2014
- Request for Proposals (RFP) disseminated: 2 May 2014
- Submission of Proposals: June 16, 2014
- Awards announced: July 11, 2014

Table 1: EGAP Regranting Pool—Transparency Standards

#	Item	Description	When & how to share
1	Study Protocol	<p>A document prepared at the outset of the study, explaining a) the study’s purpose; b) the hypotheses it aims to test; c) the main outcome variables. For examples, see http://e-gap.org/design-registration/</p> <p><i>Note: We do not require that the ex post analysis be limited to what had been laid out ex ante, but the difference between ex-ante specifications and ex-post analysis must be very clearly noted in research.</i></p>	<p>The protocol must be posted at the EGAP registry after the initial meeting of researchers to present research designs and before initiation of outcome data collection.</p> <p>Initially protocols may be posted with gated access. Open public access must be granted no longer than 24 months after the end of the grant period.</p>
2	Project financials	A document outlining budgeted as well as incurred expenses associated with the project	Must be filed in an acceptable format with the IIS and CPD at UC Berkeley, who will compile
3	Sampling Frame	<p>A listing of the study population from which participants are selected</p> <p><i>Note: Individual identifiers and other sensitive information should be removed</i></p>	No longer than 24 months after the end of the grant period, at the EGAP registry or acceptable institutional/personal website
4	Sampling / Randomization File	<p>File(s) containing the commands...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to sample study participants from the sampling frame to allocate study participants into study arms <p>... presented in an intuitive manner & in the language of a common statistical package</p>	
5	Data Collection Instruments	Common example: survey questionnaires	
6	Raw Data	Complete sets of collected data as they first present themselves to the researchers in digital form	
7	Cleaning and Analysis File(s)	<p>File(s) containing...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> commands used to clean data and bring it into analyzable form; and to replicate and visualize every calculation and data table from the paper(s) or publication(s) 	
8	Codebook	File(s) assisting with the interpretation of data sets, e.g. by labeling data and linking it to data collection instruments	
9	Implementation Narrative	A document describing the intervention, the context in which subjects received treatment, any practical challenges encountered, and any further insights that appear relevant for a successful replication	
10	Working paper or publication	One or more write-ups reporting (but not necessarily limited to) all registered study outcomes, with explicit reference to the registry and archive entries	