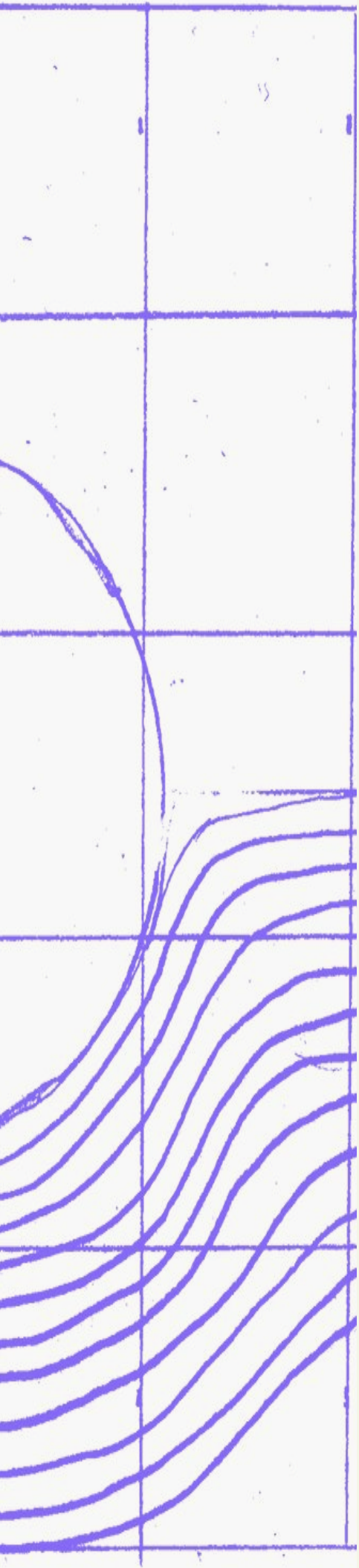

Guaranteed Income in the U.S.

A toolkit of best practices, resources, and existing models of planned and ongoing research in the U.S.

About the Jain Family Institute

The Jain Family Institute (JFI) is a nonpartisan applied research organization in the social sciences that works to bring research and policy from conception in theory to implementation in society. Within JFI's core policy area of guaranteed income, JFI is the design and implementation partner on The Compton Pledge and has consulted on the Stockton, CA SEED pilot, the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, and related policies in New York City and Chicago, as well as on forthcoming pilots in Newark and Atlanta. JFI is leading an evaluation of a 42,000-person guaranteed income program in Marica, Brazil, a keystone of the movement for a solidarity economy. JFI has also provided expert commentary on a range of cash transfer policies from relief checks to the EITC and CTC. Founded in 2014 by Robert Jain, JFI focuses on building evidence around the most pressing social problems. The Phenomenal World is JFI's independent publication of theory and commentary on the social sciences.

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What is in this toolkit?

This toolkit is designed to provide a concrete starting point for anyone interested in supporting a guaranteed income for their community, particularly by launching a guaranteed income pilot. It begins by answering some of the key questions that arise in this undertaking, including what guaranteed income is, why it is gaining attention right now, what the open questions are that a pilot might answer, and what is involved in the creation of a local pilot.

For those who are interested in creating a pilot accompanied by a research program, it outlines the current state of guaranteed income research and describes how new research can be designed to make a valuable contribution and avoid repeating findings. It also provides advice on how to design an effective messaging strategy to maximize the impact of your pilot through storytelling, consistent framing, and thoughtful communication of research results.

Finally, it provides an overview of the current state of the guaranteed income movement including ongoing and planned municipal pilots, past examples of guaranteed income in practice, and a description of the network of lawmakers, advocates, and philanthropists pushing the movement forward today.

Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit is built for a variety of audiences that are interested in the field of guaranteed income and seeking a starting point: policymakers working in local, state, or federal government in the U.S. or abroad; philanthropic leaders interested in effecting change through guaranteed income programs; and practitioners or non-profit leaders focused on economic inclusion, equity, and justice. For all of these audiences, this document provides tools to evaluate whether and how to pilot guaranteed income in a given community, and other ways to both learn from and contribute to the movement around direct cash policy.

Why did JFI create it?

JFI is a leading applied research organization in guaranteed income and cash policy. We have worked with public servants, local governments, foundations, international governments and media in their exploration of guaranteed income policy. This report provides answers to some of the questions we receive most frequently based on our research and insights from working in the field.

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Acknowledgements

This toolkit was built in collaboration and consultation between JFI's guaranteed income team and partner organizations conducting pilots or researching this policy alongside us. Special thanks to JFI Fellow in PR and Policy Communications, Charles de la Cruz, for his work on this toolkit, as well as Halah Ahmad, Stephen Nuñez, Alexander Jacobs, Molly Dektar, and Sidhya Balakrishnan. Likewise, we would like to acknowledge the contributions of Leah Hamilton, JFI Senior Fellow in Guaranteed Income and board member at Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN); Malcolm Berry at Basic Income Earth Network; Sarah Berger-Gonzalez at Stanford Basic Income Lab; Rachel Black and Sheida Elmi at the Aspen Institute's Financial Security Program; Stacia Martin of the University of Pennsylvania Center for Guaranteed Income Research, the University of Tennessee Knoxville and co-Principal Investigator of Stockton SEED; Nika Soon-Shiong and the Compton Pledge team; and to our many partners among pilot administrators in the U.S., without whom none of this work would be possible. Likewise, we want to thank the wider community of academics, advocates, policymakers and early implementers of this policy for their immense efforts to further a policy rooted in agency, trust, stability, and relief.

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The Basics

What is guaranteed income?

Guaranteed income (GI) is a type of cash transfer program that provides regular, unconditional, and unrestricted cash transfers to individuals or households. This differs from typical social safety net policies by providing a steady, predictable stream of cash to recipients to spend however they see fit without requiring that they perform specific activities—like working, going to school, or seeking employment—to remain eligible.

While guaranteed income is always unconditional, it may be *targeted* toward people below a certain income threshold. Targeting can take place at the *front end* through means-testing or at the *back end* through an income phase-out, meaning that everyone receives the benefit but people with higher incomes pay back some or all of this benefit through taxes. This targeting is distinct from conditionality, which refers to behavioral requirements for benefit recipients. Guaranteed income can be both unconditional and targeted. Universal basic income (UBI) refers to a guaranteed income that is both unconditional and untargeted. While the idea of a UBI has gained much attention in recent years, this toolkit is focused on the broader category of guaranteed income policy and advocacy, particularly through local pilots. In other words, we are focused on unconditional cash transfers generally, whether universal or income-targeted.

Among researchers, advocates, and pilot administrators, there are differences in opinion on the exact definitions of guaranteed income and UBI. For example, researchers at the Stanford Basic Income Lab consider GI to be income-targeted by definition and distinguish it from UBI based on this lack of universality. JFI defines guaranteed income more broadly as any regular, unconditional, and unrestricted cash transfers program whether universal (e.g. UBI) or targeted. This document uses the broader definition of GI.

Notably, most current pilots are front-end targeted for low-income recipients, while the wider vision for a guaranteed income policy is one that is universal, with any targeting occurring through post-hoc clawbacks in taxes or otherwise.

Why are many policymakers turning to guaranteed income policy?

Over the last several years, guaranteed income has exploded in popularity across the United States. A first round of pilots in 2017, led by Stockton's SEED program and The Magnolia Mother's Trust in Mississippi, brought increased attention to the need for guaranteed income as a policy tool to fight poverty, improve social mobility, and reduce economic inequality. These pilots, along

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with the creation of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, have fueled the creation of numerous local guaranteed income pilots across the country, including large pilots in Compton, CA; Chelsea, MA, Oakland, CA; and Newark, NJ (see section: "Planned and ongoing pilot research in the U.S.," for a running list). This is a growing movement driven by the recognition that existing policies have failed to break cycles of poverty or promote widespread prosperity and that new approaches are needed.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, federal, state and local governments as well as non-profit organizations provided effective cash relief to millions of individuals who became unemployed, had to stay home from work due to public health risks, or lost necessary income when they were already living paycheck to paycheck. Yet, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the deficiencies of the U.S. social safety net, with its patchwork of modest, targeted, means-tested, employment-conditioned programs, had become apparent. The limited assistance leaves the US with a financially fragile middle class, the highest post-tax poverty rate in the developed world, and dramatic racial and gender inequality. These issues became more dire during the pandemic and economic downturn of 2020. Safety net targeting means young adults, non-custodial parents, and others considered "undeserving" fall through the cracks; means testing imposes upfront burdens on the eligible and leads to delays and incorrect rejections; and employment conditioning punishes recipients for labor market conditions and can exacerbate economic downturns.

This system could be greatly improved. After all, Canada, the U.K., and other countries with similarly structured welfare regimes have managed to reduce poverty with more generous benefits, less onerous upfront paperwork, and gentler phase outs of means-tested benefits. But decades after the U.S. declared a War on Poverty, the ongoing stalemate has led to calls for a broader rethinking of how we structure our welfare state. And that is what U.S. guaranteed income advocates hope to accomplish.

Key components for effective guaranteed income

An effective guaranteed income is not a complete replacement for the existing network of safety net programs, but it can be designed to correct for many of its shortcomings. Above all, guaranteed income programs should be **universal** (available to all rather than subject to burdensome front-end means-testing, although they may be universal with targeting through post-hoc taxation), **unconditional** (not contingent on labor market participation, training, or other activities), and **unrestricted** (allowing recipients to decide how to spend funds). It is also important that they be designed while keeping in mind their interactions and potential conflicts with other safety net programs.

Universal

Front end targeting (means testing) requires households to prove that they meet eligibility requirements before they can receive aid. This has obstructed the efficient disbursement

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of funds and other benefits through existing welfare programs. It overburdens the most vulnerable with circuitous qualification tests and bureaucratic forms that hinder their ability to receive urgently needed support for which they are technically eligible.

In addition to limiting access, means testing can also create a "benefits cliff" in which, for example, a family's increased income means that they no longer qualify for benefits, but the value of the lost benefits is greater than the increase in income. The result is that an increase in household income can actually leave a family worse off financially.

The federal poverty line used to means-test benefits is a notoriously weak measure of household income precarity. Before the pandemic, 40% of Americans would have struggled to cover an unexpected $400 expense even though only about 10% of families fell below the official poverty line. In some cases, means-tests on asset values contribute to this problem by penalizing benefit recipients for accumulating savings. A universal program would provide cash benefits to every household with few to no upfront hoops to jump through.

Some may object to a system that includes people who need the cash assistance less, or not at all. **But a universal guaranteed income can be targeted on the back end such that everyone receives the benefit while wealthier households pay back some or all of it through progressive taxation.** In other words, front end targeting that places the bureaucratic burden on needy households applying for aid can be replaced with universal distribution and back end targeting that adds an extra item to the tax forms of high-income households instead. A universal program is both simpler to administer and more likely to ensure that nobody who needs assistance falls through the cracks.

Unconditional

Safety net programs in the U.S. are often accompanied by a set of conditions that must be met to continue receiving support. In some cases, like drug testing requirements, these conditions communicate a lack of respect for or trust in recipients that are often rooted in long standing racial prejudice. More commonly, financial support is conditioned on work requirements: recipients must either be employed, actively seeking employment, or engaged in job training activities. In each case, the burden falls to the already-disadvantaged recipient to navigate regularly the paperwork required to prove their eligibility.

Conditioning aid on employment status often undermines its own purpose. Perversely, it is when the economy is in recession and the need for assistance greatest that a work-conditioned safety net is least effective. When work is scarce, so too is assistance. For example, the EITC provides benefits only to people who are employed. As a result,

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recipients can be punished for forces outside of their control, including the hiring practices of employers.

Unconditional cash transfer programs avoid these issues. They remove the administrative burden of repeatedly demonstrating compliance. And by eliminating work requirements they ensure that people are able to receive support even during economic downturns and in the face of employment discrimination.

Unrestricted

Unlike benefits like food stamps or housing vouchers, a guaranteed income is intended to allow recipients to decide how to use the funds in the ways that best fit their needs. Unrestricted aid programs place value on recipients' autonomy and judgment while recognizing their expertise over their own financial lives. Spending restrictions in existing welfare programs are ultimately rooted in a lack of trust in recipients, but research consistently supports the fact that when provided with cash support people use the money responsibly. As a policy principle, unrestricted aid is about recognizing that poverty results from a lack of resources, not a lack of judgment.

Regular, predictable payments over time

Financial security is rooted in stable and predictable income. Though research is inconclusive on the optimal disbursement frequency (monthly versus yearly or otherwise), existing research suggests that a regular, and therefore predictable, pace of cash transfers affords families the financial stability for long-term financial planning.

In tandem with other safety net programs

Guaranteed income policy is not a panacea. While it *may* better serve the role of income support than TANF, SNAP, or EITC if it is implemented with less paternalism and administrative burden, it cannot replace important public insurance programs like Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, or Medicaid/Medicare. And it is no substitute for direct government intervention where markets simply don't work (well) such as in healthcare, child care, and education. Likewise, there can be proposals for guaranteed income to exist alongside other forms of income support; many emerging pilots will provide useful case studies for this, such that marginalized communities have robust economic security and the potential for economic mobility. For a deeper look at ways a guaranteed income could fit into the existing safety net, see JFI's recent white paper on this topic, "Reweaving the Safety Net." To explore some of the ways that guaranteed income would interact with benefits from other federal, state, and local programs for a range of household situations, check out this net GI value calculator created by the Atlanta Fed.

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What is a guaranteed income pilot?

A guaranteed income pilot is a program that provides cash transfers to a limited group of participants for a specific period of time while collecting data that can inform policymakers and researchers as well as contribute to ongoing public discourse around guaranteed income policy.

While this can take the form of a rigorous quantitative study of participant outcomes, there are a range of means by which a pilot can make a valuable contribution. For example, there is much room for experimentation with different methods of administering guaranteed income through partnerships with financial institutions and local organizations, or through varying frequencies and amounts. And in addition to quantitative measures, there is much to be gained from both qualitative research and, separately, storytelling. Qualitative research can give necessary nuance and evidence to explain quantitative outcomes and inform better research foci. Storytelling can shed light on the lived experience of recipients within wider media and break down tropes in public perceptions of social benefits. Quantitative research can provide more generalizable evidence for causation within positive GI outcomes. Many researchers are focused on all three of those, including JFI, GiveDirectly, and the Center for Guaranteed Income, which incorporates mixed methods RCTs with participatory action research (PAR).

Local pilots have typically been privately funded through philanthropic donations or institutional grants. That is, in part, because sustainable public financing of a guaranteed income policy is difficult to achieve at the local level. As a result, the long-term goal of the guaranteed income movement is the establishment of a guaranteed income policy at the state or federal level where this kind of large-scale public financing would be feasible. While there is much to be gained from local pilots in terms of research and influence on public opinion, it is important to remember that these pilots are advocacy opportunities that represent small steps toward this larger goal.

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Anatomy of a guaranteed income pilot

This graphic outlines the key stakeholders that form the core of any guaranteed income pilot, drawing on the Stanford Basic Income in Cities guide, and corroborated by JFI's work. **Communities** are important participants at every stage of the process, from early consultation on pilot design to long-term advocacy and storytelling around the pilot's vision. **Policymakers** facilitate the pilot or policy implementation through coordination with existing social service programs and communications that channel public buy-in for sustained advocacy even after the pilot has ended. The **Funding Team** secures financing for the pilot, including funds for distribution to participants and the costs of administration and research evaluation. Recent municipal pilots have most often been funded through philanthropic donations and institutional grants, but in some cases local governments may be able to fund a pilot by drawing on discretionary funds, federal pass-through grants, or even emergency funds.

Researchers are in charge of designing the guaranteed income program in ways that will provide insights into open questions around the impact of GI on the community and the optimal methods of program implementation. The next section will cover these questions of research design in more depth. Finally, the **Communications Team** plays a key role in using the pilot as an opportunity to build widespread support for guaranteed income. This involves direct engagement to share community members' stories with the broader public, ensuring that the pilot gains the attention of media and legislators, while developing a consistent messaging strategy that clarifies the pilot's guiding vision throughout. The team also collaborates with researchers to ensure that research results are communicated effectively. The elements of an effective messaging strategy are discussed below in the "Pilot Messaging" section.

Although there will often be overlap between these different stakeholder groups, it is useful to distinguish them functionally from the very beginning in order to effectively coordinate the key elements of a successful guaranteed income pilot. Further practical notes on pilot planning are on page 18.

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What to know if you are considering a guaranteed income research project for your community

There are several ways to contribute to the movement around guaranteed income. One of those ways is to pilot a guaranteed income program in your community and research its effects. If you are considering doing so it is important to understand what research has already been done, what the open questions about guaranteed income are, and what it takes to collect evidence on GI. In this section we provide an overview of each of these topics to help you think through whether a pilot is right for your community.

What evidence do we already have about guaranteed income's effects?

Although there has been a surge of recent interest and research on GI, scholars have been studying cash transfer policy for decades. This includes research on guaranteed income-like pilots and policies like the North American Negative Income Tax experiments in the 1970s and the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, which has offered checks annually to residents since 1982. But it also includes research into inheritances, lottery winnings, conditional cash transfer programs, and pensions. Cash is cash, so much of what we know about the effects of additional income in general on household wellbeing and choices applies to guaranteed income.

Extensive social science research on cash transfer programs around the world shows that cash transfers increase expenditure on education and training, improve food security, increase durable good consumption (buying a car, a refrigerator, etc.), and improve measures of well-being. The positive impact of guaranteed income has been studied for decades, with evidence indicating that cash transfers are an effective anti-poverty measure with an array of welfare benefits. Empirical evidence also indicates that people keep their jobs and spend the extra money on groceries, utilities or other basic needs; those who work fewer hours largely invest that time in education, job training, or caring for children. Key findings include:

- There is little evidence that cash transfers decrease the motivation to work.
- Cash transfers do not lead to spending on "temptation goods."
- Cash transfers reduce inequality, and have had multiple positive impacts on recipients' welfare, alongside positive spillover effects for non-recipients.

In other words, there is already a robust literature on the employment, poverty/material hardship, and consumption effects of GI. We do not need to demonstrate that GI will not lead to a major

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reduction in the labor supply nor increased drug/tobacco/alcohol consumption; researchers have already established this several times across several countries. To the extent that this message has not been absorbed by the public, that is best rectified through further communication efforts rather than additional research.

What are the open questions around guaranteed income?

In light of the above, why pilot guaranteed income at all? It is useful to break that question down into two separate ones:

- Do we need to pilot guaranteed income before moving forward with efforts to enact one on a state or federal level?

- Are there important unanswered questions that further research can address that would be of value to policy makers?

The answer to the first question is, as regards more evidence needed, no. We already know enough about how GI works for GI advocates to push for GI legislation. Still, local piloting efforts can have an impact for short-term poverty alleviation, and serve a key role in building public awareness and support for the policy, as addressed in later sections.

The answer to the second question, however, is definitely yes. There are several important outstanding questions around guaranteed income policy that researchers should address. It is also worth looking into what pilots are currently being developed or are underway to answer some of these open questions. See the section on "planned and ongoing pilots" to check if there are existing initiatives in your area or on the questions you might want to answer.

Some of the urgent questions for researchers include:

- What are the macroeconomic effects of GI (e.g. price, wages, or inflation effects) and how can it be responsibly financed?
- How much money should each individual receive considering the need to fund other important safety net policies?
- How often should the money be disbursed? Yearly? Quarterly? Biweekly?
- How do we build a cash disbursement infrastructure that quickly and efficiently gets money into recipients' hands?
- What are the long-term effects of GI on education, criminal justice involvement, civic and political engagement, and other lesser studied outcomes?
- What programs should GI be paired with to maximize its benefits?
- What are the broader political effects of GI on public perception of the safety net, the stigma attached to government assistance, etc.?

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- What outcome measures are most salient to inform robust benefit-cost analyses for policymakers? How do the economic benefits to individuals and communities compare to the costs of the program?
- *How* does a GI generate the observed impacts? For example, what effects on recipient decision-making and future planning might explain better educational or other outcomes? Likewise, how do GI recipients compare their experiences with means-tested programs, particularly with regard to the unconditional and unrestricted nature of GI support? Qualitative research can particularly elucidate these questions.
- What effects do GI recipients' perceptions and meaning-making have on their outcomes? What meanings do recipients attach to the program design?

Where can pilot research usefully contribute/which of these questions can pilots help answer?

There is, as noted above, research still to be done on guaranteed income. Pilots can contribute answers to some but not all open questions—though it is worth emphasizing that the cost of high-quality research, persuasive to academics and policymakers, is substantial. That said, an RCT of significant scale could definitively solidify the shape of an ideal guaranteed income policy. Pilots can also provide important data on the effects of variation in disbursement amount and frequency or of pairing GI with other services. Still, they are ill-equipped to investigate things like different financing schemes or macroeconomic effects. This is because GI pilots are by necessity limited in size and duration and will not generate the sorts of economy-wide economic effects on prices, wages, and interest rates that scholars are interested in exploring. Such questions have been more usefully investigated through models and sophisticated simulations of local and national economics than real-world pilots.

Pilots can contribute to our understanding of guaranteed income in important ways by focusing on the open questions discussed above. Additionally, as discussed below in the messaging section, pilots can play a valuable role in bringing public attention to the need for and benefits of guaranteed income policy even without a significant research component. If a more ambitious impact analysis is not feasible, making an effort to publicize the stories of recipients and developing a consistent messaging strategy can allow a guaranteed income pilot to have real impact on public opinion. Even small pilots can contribute to research by helping us develop best practices for implementation.

How can guaranteed income pilots and programs be funded?

Almost all guaranteed income pilots currently underway in the U.S. have been privately funded with philanthropic dollars and/or institutional grants, with only recent examples of emergency or one-time funds used or proposed in the cases of St. Paul, Mountain View, Los Angeles, and a few others. Typically the majority of the program dollars have come from high-net-worth individuals

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but recently, and in response to the pandemic, philanthropic foundations have begun to express interest in funding pilots and associated research.

Guaranteed income pilots with a significant research component generally require initial funding of at least $5-10 million, with about 20% of funds going to research and administrative costs. Smaller pilots focused more on messaging and sharing recipient stories can be launched with a smaller budget and less overhead.

A universal guaranteed income policy at the state or federal level can potentially be funded through a wealth tax, an increase in progressive income tax, a VAT tax, a carbon tax, a budget reallocation, or dividend from sources including natural resource royalties, casino revenue, or other social wealth funds. This is an area of substantial interest to the research community though, as noted, this work is typically done through modeling and simulation. In 2021, JFI will release a deep-dive analysis of the implications of financing choice for guaranteed income as part of its whitepaper series, "From Idea to Reality: Getting to Guaranteed Income."

What kinds of research can accompany pilots?

Pilot programs need not include a rigorous research study, but policymakers and researchers are often interested in studying the implementation and impact of the pilot program to draw lessons that can be applied in future policy design. Those interested in exploring a study should be mindful that research can be expensive, operationally complex, and potentially burdensome for participants.

There are two main types of research projects typically attached to a pilot (often together): Impact analysis and implementation analysis. Impact or outcome analysis is an exploration of the effect that the program had on participants, their households, and/or their communities; implementation analysis explores the development and roll-out of the pilot itself, including what went well and what did not.

Impact analysis

Impact or outcome analyses can be performed using a wide variety of methodologies. This includes qualitative analyses like interviews and focus groups as well as formal statistical analysis of outcomes using administrative and survey data. Formal impact analysis includes attempts to identify and establish a counterfactual: what would have happened in the absence of the program? For example, if a program participant started the program with a $35,000/year salary and ended it with a $45,000/year salary, how much of that change can be attributed to participation in the program? Might this change have occurred anyway?

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The techniques researchers use to establish the counterfactual and thus estimate the "impact" of the program are complex and outside the scope of this document. However, generally speaking, researchers either devise an experiment or a "quasi experiment." Experiments involve random assignment of participants to the program group(s) to create two or more groups that are broadly similar. This allows researchers to rule out differences in individual or household characteristics or circumstances as potential causes in any observed differences in outcome. Quasi-experiments typically use coincidences, arbitrary eligibility thresholds, and other statistical techniques to mimic experimental conditions.

All impact analyses, whether qualitative or quantitative, must be approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), an entity that reviews research proposals to ensure they are ethical and protect participants' data and privacy. Universities and non-profit research organizations typically have their own IRBs or work with an external board.

While a qualitative research plan can be done relatively cheaply and effectively with 30-50 individuals (including some that are not receiving the program benefit), quantitative research requires much larger sample sizes and much more expensive data collection. This is because experiments and quasi-experiments need hundreds or thousands of participants to both to ensure that they have established the counterfactual and to ensure that they can detect the impact within the statistical "noise" and generate a precise estimate. RCTs (experiments) require at least 100 individuals/households (assigned 50/50 between program and control groups) to establish causality and typically 800 or more to generate confidence that program impacts will be reliably captured. Quasi-experimental analysis may instead require 2,000 to 4,000 study participants to do the same.

The size requirements to do formal impact analysis, of course, also generate sizable data collection costs—costs over and above those of the program itself. Some important participant outcomes can be measured using administrative data (though there is time and expenditure involved in gaining access to these records) but many require fielding surveys. This can be costly due to tracking and other logistical costs and the typical need to provide payments to survey respondents to reimburse them for their time. Pilots undergoing formal impact analysis, therefore, typically cost in excess of $1 million.

For those interested in impact analysis but unable to absorb such costs, there are generally two good contingencies. The first is to pool resources with other organizations and/or municipalities to build a sufficient sample. A "multi-site" study where each individual site is small can, through pooling, potentially generate precise impact estimates. The second is to focus on qualitative impact analysis rather than on statistical modeling. Qualitative research fleshes out impact analysis and helps scholars understand the "why" behind observed impacts (some examples include an ongoing study of Baby's First Years, an unconditional cash program for mothers after childbirth). It is valuable on its own or, when paired with statistical analysis, in a so-called mixed-methods design.

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It is, by contrast, not advisable to attempt an experiment with a very small sample or to use a non-experimental method to generate impact estimates (e.g. a pre/post design). These approaches will not generate useful data for the field and will thus make demands on pilot participants' time for minimal gain.

Implementation analysis

Implementation analysis explores the development and roll-out of a program and can be immensely useful in helping policymakers better understand the logistical challenges in serving a population and how to effectively and quickly administer aid. While we understand a great deal about the impacts of cash assistance on individual and household wellbeing, we have considerably less knowledge of how best to get cash into people's hands. Whether it be government officials investigating the failures in federal aid disbursement during the COVID-19 crisis or nonprofits looking to better identify, reach, or reimburse clients, there is great need for analysis of what works and what doesn't in cash infrastructure design. Therefore government and nonprofit organizations running pilots can contribute meaningfully to the research around GI policy by focusing all or part of their research on these topics. This is typically done through qualitative analysis: interviews and focus groups with study participants and with employees and leaders of the organizations involved in the pilot efforts. It may also include an analysis of record keeping practices, computer systems, and any materials or methods used to interact with (potential) cash recipients.

With these different avenues of research in mind, you can think of your options in terms of three broad categories of pilot, depicted below along with some of the key questions that should inform your decisions about pilot design from the beginning. In general, impact analysis will require the largest budget and sample size, while a pilot that emphasizes storytelling rather than formal research can be executed with the fewest resources. But regardless of type, any pilot can make a valuable contribution to the guaranteed income movement through messaging and advocacy.

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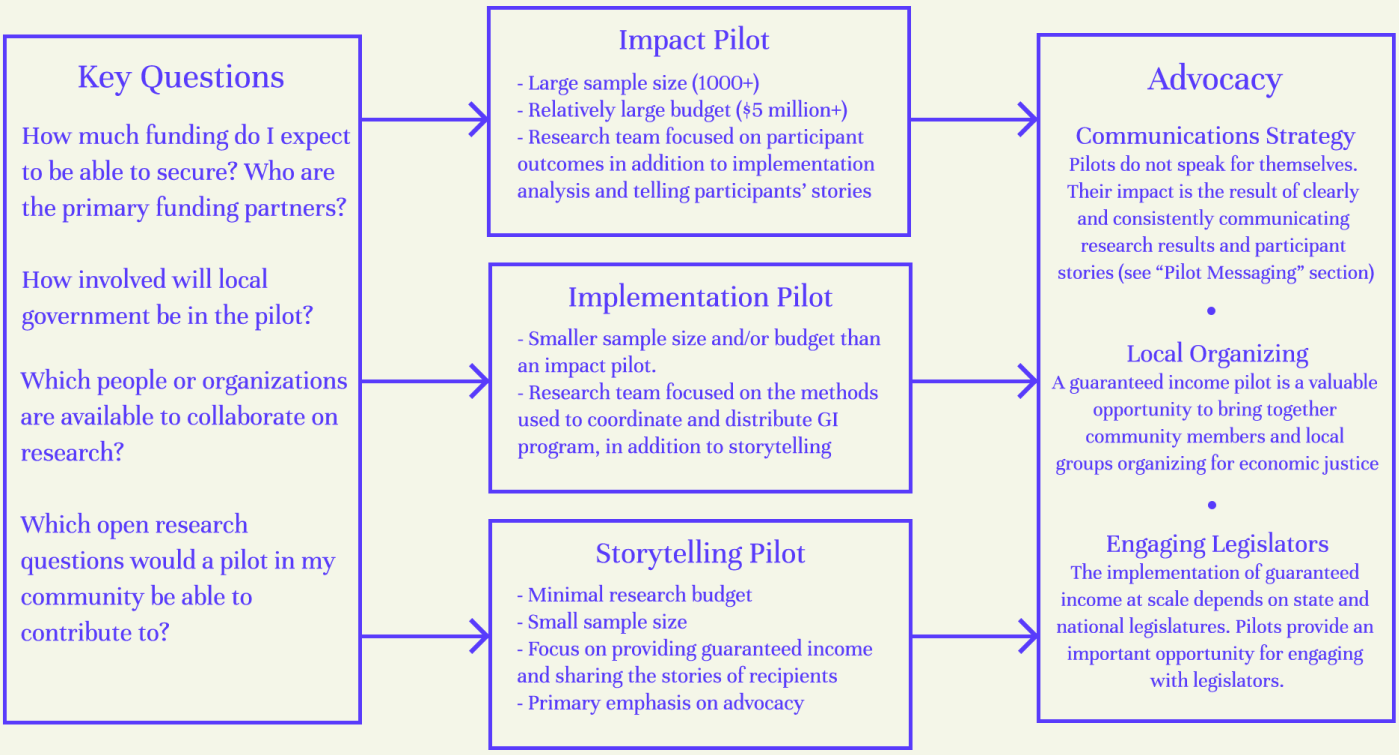

What are some best practices for pilot design?

Along with many others in guaranteed income research, we find that pilots are most successful when they are built in consultation with community members and their specific needs. Rachel Black and Aisha Nyandoro have also advised and modeled this approach. Moreover, a clear messaging strategy is a core component of a successful pilot, rather than relying on the program to "speak for itself." Drawing on JFI's experiences working with multiple municipalities in the U.S. and internationally, our research team can help you evaluate appropriate guaranteed income approaches for your locality alongside community-based organizations that should fundamentally inform the design.

Many cities have also found it valuable to create a dedicated **task force**, assembling multiple stakeholders to define the community needs motivating the pilot and to collaborate on its vision, design, and implementation. Such a coalition of local nonprofits, community leaders, academics, and residents also can help generate public attention and strengthen the pilot's connection to local perspectives and expertise. A task force may also provide a forum to discuss research design and any supportive programs. Task forces typically produce reports (e.g. Newark's, or Atlanta's) which may be of use in subsequent fundraising efforts.

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Though each pilot should be designed for the specific needs of its community there are several best practices designers should consider:

Target low-income individuals
Although the ideal guaranteed income program would be universal, with the limited resources available for any pilot, targeting low-income households ensures the greatest benefit for those most in need. To target low-income populations is often to address issues of racial, gender-based and economic inequality, as communities of color are often most marginalized by the existing safety net and both historic and present economic policy. This targeting can be crucial for storytelling efforts because the stories of low-income communities, especially of color, can help amplify voices often ignored by the media and rebut harmful stereotypes about the value of cash as an anti-poverty tool.

Provide full-package services
Cash transfers can be more effective when they are accompanied by additional forms of support from local organizations such as financial coaching and job placement assistance. Participation in these services should always be completely voluntary for recipients, consistent with the unconditional nature of guaranteed income. Understanding how guaranteed income interacts best with other support programs is also one of the pressing questions for GI research, so pilots should seek these synergies both for their immediate benefits and because they provide opportunities for learning.

Enhance individual agency
In line with the principles of unrestricted and unconditional guaranteed income, pilots should enhance individual agency by providing cash transfers with no strings attached. This maximizes recipients' agency by leaving it to them to decide how best to use the funds in their unique circumstances.

Promote long-term economic inclusion
A pilot is an opportunity to improve the well-being of recipients by connecting them to the resources and infrastructure they need in the long-term, not just while they are receiving benefits. For example, connecting recipients to local credit unions or nonprofits that provide low or no-cost financial services can help support the unbanked. Pilots may also offer the opportunity to rethink or newly build payments infrastructure. These improvements can persist and continue to provide benefit to residents after the pilot period.

Provide regular, not one-time, support
A pilot should be designed to provide regular cash transfers over a period of time rather than all at once. While participants might benefit from a one-time transfer, it is the predictability and long-term security provided by recurring cash transfers that are of

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greatest interest both to researchers and value to the public. Providing payments over time has the added benefit of expanding the presence of the pilot in public discourse.

Offer simple, efficient enrollment procedures
Enrollment should involve minimal paperwork and demonstration of need. Reducing barriers like these, which currently prevent millions from receiving means-tested social benefits to which they are entitled, is one of the virtues of guaranteed income policy; this should be reflected in the pilot's enrollment procedures.

Serve a long-term guaranteed income agenda
Guaranteed income pilots do not create impact in isolation, but rather through engagement with the broader movement for guaranteed income and economic justice. Pilots should be designed with this context in mind, working with advocacy organizations oriented towards future policy. In addition to focusing on research questions that are likely to drive the discourse forward rather than reiterating established claims, pilots should be designed with a deliberate messaging strategy that engages with and supports the broader movement.

Involving participants in the research design and centring their agency and needs is inherent to a successful implementation of the above principles (also see Rachel Black and Aisha Nyandoro's work on this). Likewise, participant confidentiality should be prioritized. In general, participants should understand that choosing not to participate in the research has no bearing on their pilot payments. Separating continued participation in research from continued receipt of payments is important to avoid creating a coercive situation. This should be addressed during the IRB review.

Planning a Pilot

A successful guaranteed income pilot is often a multi-year project that requires careful planning and coordination. This section will cover some of the practical questions that emerge in designing and executing a pilot, including timelines, costs, and potential obstacles. The Guaranteed Income Community of Practice (GICP), formed in 2021, of which JFI is a member, can also be a resource for emerging questions. While the details below provide a starting point for scoping out the planning needs and timeline of a pilot, a closer look at your own needs may be best served by further conversations with us or our partners. Reach out to jfi@jainfamilyinstitute.org to chat or to be connected with another pilot.

Pilot costs

The total cost of a pilot will include both the money distributed to recipients and the costs of evaluation and administration, which can be expected to take up roughly 20% of the budget with a robust research program. For a given level of funding, program administrators and researchers must find a balance between **benefit size**, **benefit duration**, and **number of recipients**. For example, one million dollars could provide (a) 100 people $833/mo for a year, (b) 50 people

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$1666/mo for a year, or (c) 200 people $833/mo for 6 months. These three parameters will be balanced based on the pilot's objectives.

In 2020 the city of Newark, NJ collaborated with JFI to release a task force report which includes a helpful breakdown of the relative costs of a few different pilot designs (see right). These designs are inspired by earlier research on unconditional cash transfers in Kenya by JFI senior fellow Johannes Haushofer & Jeremy Shapiro.

PILOT STUDY 1	PILOT STUDY 2	PILOT STUDY 3
500 participants randomly assigned to receive either $250/month or $500/month for 18-months (50/50)[64]	1000 participants randomly assigned to receive either $500/month or no cash benefit for 18 months (50/50).	1000 participants randomly assigned to receive 9,000 dollars lump sum or $500/month for 18 months[64]
Disbursement: 250 program A group members x 250 dollars x 18 months: $1,125,000 Disbursement: 250 program B group members x 500 dollars x 18 months: $2,250,000	Disbursement: 500 program group members x 500 dollars x 18 months: $4,500,000	Disbursement: 1000 participants receiving 9,000 dollars over 18 months: $9,000,000
1 endline survey at 80 percent response rate: $400,000	1 endline survey at 80 percent response rate: $800,000	1 endline survey at 80 percent response rate: $800,000
Qualitative research including interviews with staff and participants: $50,000	Qualitative research including interviews with staff and participants: $100,000	Qualitative research including interviews with staff and participants: $100,000
Overhead: 20%	Overhead: 20%	Overhead: 20%
Total: $4,590,000	Total: $6,480,000	Total: 11,880,000

The task force report for Atlanta's guaranteed income pilot provides some helpful cost estimates for different program sizes. JFI provided estimates that a program with 600 recipients in which half receive $800/mo for 36 months and half receive $200/mo for 36 months will total about $13 million, including administration and evaluation. Generally, an RCT research program focused on quantitative impact analysis will require a cohort of at least this size to ensure that its findings are robust. On the other hand, the report also describes a potential qualitative research program with a cohort of just 200 participants in which 130 receive $800/mo for 36 months and 7 receive $200/mo for 36 months. The total for this smaller program would be about $5 million.

Developing a Timeline

A guaranteed income pilot will generally be designed to distribute benefits for at least one year in order to provide researchers with enough information to make meaningful evaluations. Many pilots are designed to run for two or more years to better understand the long-term impacts of guaranteed income. However, creating a successful GI pilot is a process that begins well before payments start going out and continues after they have stopped. It is important to start

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developing an expected timeline early to ensure that there is enough time allotted for key prerequisites for a successful pilot launch.

Fundraising can be time consuming. A pilot may require multiple funders including foundations and high-net-worth individuals and each may be hesitant to be the first mover on the project. Money may also come with strings attached or earmarking (reserved for program or research costs alone). While pilots with early support from funders have been able to begin administering cash on an accelerated pilot design schedule, such as within 3-4 months, these scenarios often rely on significant staffing capacity, existing pilot or research designs, and the structures of existing service providers and platforms to reach intended recipients or administer cash. Such programs can also be hampered by the existing limitations of the structures they employ. More likely fundraising timelines would be a year and two years to encompass both direct cash and research or administrative costs.

A successful pilot requires extensive coordinated efforts to implement. You will need to find implementation partners: organizations who can help you identify participants from the clientele roster or from other data sources (e.g. in Compton, a handful of community-based organizations alongside the City); organizations that can distribute money or that can develop a cash disbursement platform should such a system be needed (e.g. MoCaFi, or the Compton Pledge Portal with Venmo, Paypal and other financial partners); and organizations or individuals who can play the role of communications lead and interface with the media and your local community. If you are planning on exploring cash assistance as an overlay on existing benefits rather than a benefit that may substitute others or conflict with eligibility, you may wish to request waivers from the department that oversees state-administered benefits. This can involve lawyers where statutes are unclear. But even straightforward waiver applications, such as for SNAP, can take 6 to 12 months to resolve.

Research can take time to design. Once you bring a team on board, they may wish to build an advisory council; researchers will likely want to come up with several options that depend on fundraising success to ensure a statistically valid design even if the project falls short of fundraising goals; research must be conducted under the supervision of an Institutional Review Board and an application process that can take 3-6 months to conclude; the research team may need to find and hire a subcontracting organization to carry out survey field work (this is common practice in evaluation); and, of course, researchers will have to develop data collection instruments, data sharing agreements/NDAs, and a formal analysis plan for the pilot.
While much of this work can be done in parallel it is important to allocate sufficient time for it, especially given the possibility of “snags” in the process.

Common administrative challenges include public benefits eligibility and participant selection. Providing low-income pilot participants with additional income creates risks that this additional income will disqualify them for public benefits programs they are enrolled in. These risks should be anticipated and addressed ahead of time to ensure that participation in the pilot does not

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leave anyone worse off. Public benefits programs exist at the federal, state, and local level with eligibility requirements that vary with geography. Navigating the set of public programs that pilot participants may be enrolled in will require consultation with legal counsel and benefits specialists.

Mayors for a Guaranteed Income has produced a useful overview of program design considerations in relation to public benefits. They suggest structuring pilot benefits as gifts when possible, which can prevent them from being counted toward safety net eligibility requirements and, when less than the annual gift exclusion amount, do not need to be reported in tax filings. In other cases it may be necessary to seek waivers from government agencies to ensure that pilot participants do not lose public benefits.

Regarding participant selection and recruitment, there are a number of methods of recruiting and selecting participants in a given guaranteed income pilot or program. Depending on the research objectives and target populations, it can be very difficult to both select within and to reach vulnerable populations. Random selection among those in need helps make this process more fair. Likewise, a pilot may choose to provide cash to individuals or households (and within households sometimes designating who receives funds to ensure the income supports the full family). Moreover, **maintaining the principles of a guaranteed income, and ensuring an effective intervention, relies on minimizing the burden on recipients to receive cash, and expanding eligibility as widely as possible within the scope of the pilot's research.** Some examples from existing programs include:

> In Hudson, New York, the pilot created a simple application that was circulated through community-based organizations and publicized by the city. A communications campaign through local partners helped allay any fears that the application was a fraud. Then, a weighted lottery system was used to favor applicants in greatest need across a variety of factors.
>
> In Compton, the pilot worked with community based organizations to complement lists of city residents with individuals who often fall outside of governmental resources. Then, Compton selected randomly from those lists of low-income qualifying households. Despite widespread media coverage in local and national news outlets, Compton's enrollment, like all pilots, required a careful process of continuing to build trust through local partners, and multiple conversations with residents. It was also crucial to make clear to the public how recipients would be selected. Stockton SEED created a simple explanatory video on social media, as did Compton, as a tool to address significant inbound to the mayor's office regarding how to join the program.
>
> In Maricá, Brazil, three years of prior residency is required to apply for a Mumbuca card through the city government's basic income policy. In that case, anyone with three years'

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residence and at the designated income level can receive the guaranteed income. There are now many models.

To discuss selection approaches unique to your pilot and context, reach out to us at jfi@jainfamilyinstitute.org.

Pilot Messaging

The greatest obstacle to the implementation of guaranteed income policy is not a lack of research, but a lack of political will. At this point, much of the impact of local guaranteed income pilots will come from their ability to influence established attitudes and narratives rather than to provide more empirical evidence reaffirming the benefits of guaranteed income. **The purpose of a guaranteed income pilot should be understood to include its effects on public opinion through messaging, not just its research findings.**

This broader shift in public opinion is essential for building popular support for implementing guaranteed income as a permanent program at the state or federal level. Every pilot, large or small, can contribute to this effort—and make a positive impact in the lives of local residents.

This section will focus on three aspects of effective communication around guaranteed income pilots: storytelling (highlighting the lives and experience of recipients), framing (communicating the benefits of GI by strategically focusing on key elements), and communicating research.

Storytelling

In order to effectively shift public attitudes towards a guaranteed income, it is important to first understand the established narratives and arguments supporting it. A few of the most common such arguments are:

1. That it can **eliminate poverty** and **increase well-being** by providing an income floor for everyone
2. That it increases **economic and social mobility** by providing people with the economic security they need to pursue new opportunities and weather economic shocks
3. That it ensures that **everyone in need of support receives it** rather than erecting barriers through means-testing and administrative requirements
4. That it **reduces economic inequality** and helps **close racial wealth gaps** by redistributing income

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In addition, it is important to understand that changing negative or false narratives about guaranteed income and the safety net often requires changing the narrator. Cynicism about how poor people spend money has often been perpetuated by leaders or analysts who have no experience with financial precarity. Pilots can partake in narrative change by uplifting those with lived experiences of poverty and experiences accessing highly-conditional benefits programs. Transforming the policy debate can involve changing the narrator of policy or research evidence, and supporting the storytelling capacities of those "target populations" for guaranteed income, individuals most marginalized by existing economic and welfare systems, especially across race and gender.

In our experience, the strongest opposition to these claims comes less from doubts about their accuracy than from doubts about whether they are goals that we should collectively pursue—or whether the government should allocate additional resources towards these goals. Many might grant that a guaranteed income would reduce poverty while also denying that poverty-reduction through redistribution should be a policy goal. This belief is a matter of values rather than evidence.

The two most prevalent rebuttals, firmly refuted by empirical research, are that a guaranteed income would:

1. Induce people to become "freeloaders" who receive income without working
2. Be spent irresponsibly on "temptation goods" by low-income recipients

That empirical evidence from decades of cash transfer study runs counter to these claims is insufficient to dislodge them, for they are rooted not in evidence but in long-established race and gender-based narratives about poverty. We believe these attitudes can be transformed not by more evidence, but rather through changes in rhetoric and attitudes.

Many of these established narratives are closely associated with the concept of "welfare" understood by many not just as anti-poverty policy, but as a system in which the government provides resources to the "undeserving" poor who choose to rely on this support rather than working harder to support themselves. These attitudes found most pernicious expression in the figure of the "welfare queen" in the 1980s and 90s, a political symbol used to reinforce the harmful perception of welfare programs as a hand-out to black people taking advantage of the system rather than as essential economic support for low-income families of all races. In the United States, distinctions between the deserving and undeserving poor are often rooted in race and class prejudice; many other nations labor under similar illusions about poverty, in which the poor remain so only by lack of effort or self-discipline.

Every life touched by a guaranteed income program, whatever its size, is an opportunity to rebut such harmful stereotypes in the public imagination. In lieu of abstract stereotypes about poverty,

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pilot storytelling can offer humanized and relatable examples of people fighting to get ahead in a system that too often works against them.

The key storytelling message is that poverty is the result of a lack of resources, not a lack of character, and that a guaranteed income makes a significant and positive impact on peoples' lives**.** Stories transform attitudes and narratives at an emotional level through rich, embodied stories. This is especially important because the voices of low-income populations are so often absent in mainstream discourse.

Framing

As a fast-growing policy area with a wide range of social and economic effects, guaranteed income resonates for different reasons with particular audiences. Accordingly, an effective messaging strategy should make use of one or more frames most effective for its intended audience(s).

Through our work on guaranteed income and across a number of key messaging studies conducted by other scholars, JFI has found certain frames particularly effective in mobilizing support for guaranteed income. Of the list below, pilots would do well to choose some, but not all, to place at the heart of their messaging strategy. That choice, in turn, will depend on your local social and political context. For example, forthcoming research from Catherine Thomas (alongside Markus, H. and Walton, G.) suggests that conservative audiences respond more positively to frames that center the effects of GI on individual freedom and autonomy rather than economic security or financial stability, a conclusion consistent with the recommendations of progressive messaging experts for communications around welfare policy more generally. Stanford Basic Income Lab has also examined the impacts of different names used to describe cash policy and pilots. In general, **your framing strategy should be based on careful consideration of your audience's values, political orientations, and the local and national issues that are most salient to them**. Whatever you choose to focus on, it is important to be consistent in your framing approach over time.

Guaranteed Income Frames

Poverty Alleviation
A guaranteed income can eliminate or significantly reduce poverty by providing an income floor that ensures that everyone has enough to survive. As a society, we have the resources to ensure that nobody falls into destitution and should recognize a right to basic subsistence.

This frame can also be used to emphasize that a guaranteed income provides a buffer against economic shocks -- unexpected bills, repairs, injuries, irregular employment, or sudden job loss—that keep people trapped in poverty. That is, a guaranteed income not

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only lifts people out of poverty in the short term through cash transfers, but also in the longer term by ensuring that they have the positive cash-flow necessary to save in the face of volatility.

Economic Stimulus and Community Development
A guaranteed income is a powerful economic stimulus that puts money directly into the pockets of people who will spend it locally, supporting the growth of small businesses and local economies even in low-income areas. There is also evidence that providing community members with a guaranteed income reduces both property crime and violent crime.

Agency and Social Mobility
A guaranteed income gives people more agency over their lives by providing them with the financial stability they need to pursue their goals without depending entirely on their employer. It facilitates social mobility by encouraging people to pursue potentially risky new opportunities—including education, entrepreneurship, or relocation—with the knowledge that they have a financial buffer. It also supports social mobility by providing protection against the economic shocks that often keep families trapped in cycles of poverty.

Breaking Intergenerational Cycles of Poverty
Guaranteed income programs represent a commitment not just to a minimum standard of living for all, but to the idea that every child deserves to grow up with the resources they need to thrive. Children who grow up in financially secure households are more likely to succeed in school and have more positive outcomes throughout life.

Reducing poverty through cash transfers is not just about helping individuals achieve financial stability; it's also about ensuring that children are not unfairly disadvantaged simply because they were born into one household rather than another. A guaranteed income for parents impacts the whole family, disrupting intergenerational poverty cycles by simultaneously helping parents build financial security and providing children the resources and stable environment they need to flourish.

Racial and Economic Equality
While there are a range of methods that might be used to finance a guaranteed income, it is a fundamentally redistributive policy representing a net transfer of resources from higher to lower income populations relative to the status quo. A guaranteed income is therefore a direct way to reduce economic inequality. Because people of color are disproportionately affected by low wages, income volatility, and poverty, this reduction in economic inequality also reduces racial income and wealth gaps.

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Communicating Research

The above discussions of storytelling and framing are important for any guaranteed income pilot whether or not it has a research component. But for pilots that *are* designed as research programs it is also important to think about how research findings are communicated. Communicating research to the public involves several different actors, including researchers, politicians, activists, and journalists, which creates many opportunities for miscommunication.

Karl Widerquist has argued that the different preconceptions of each of these audiences can create a game of "telephone" as findings grow distorted while communicated across audiences with different expectations. For example, researchers are trained to answer specific empirical questions in a balanced way, often hedging their findings with potential challenges, doubts, and further questions. The public, on the other hand, often expects more clear-cut answers not just to empirical questions but also to ethical questions about what policies ought to be implemented. Ethical social science research can tell us what is the case, not what we ought to do with that information. The resulting absence of clear ethical conclusions invites various actors to spin the research in ways that support their views and sow confusion about the meaning of the results.

Widerquist suggests four strategies for ensuring that such research-oriented guaranteed income pilots contribute effectively to public understanding:

1. **Work back and forth from public discussion to the experiment** - The design of a research pilot should start from an engagement with ongoing public discussions and be oriented toward answering questions relevant to them. Reports about experimental findings should relate them to these salient questions.

2. **Focus on the effects rather than the side effects** - Researchers often focus on answering questions that are more quantifiable at the expense of answering questions that are less precisely measurable but more relevant to public discussions. In many cases, it is more valuable to provide an imprecise answer to salient questions than a precise answer to questions that are difficult for the public to appreciate or engage with.

3. **Focus on the bottom line** - Although there are many facets of public discussion about guaranteed income, observers, and especially the media, are ultimately looking for conclusions that relate to the bottom line: an overall evaluation of guaranteed income as a long-term national policy. No single pilot will be able to provide a definite conclusion to questions about the bottom line, but it is important to communicate clearly how specific findings relate to the viability, costs, and benefits of a state or national guaranteed income policy.

4. **Address the ethical controversy** - Although empirical research cannot resolve ethical questions about what ought to be done, it is important for researchers to engage with

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public concerns and reduce the potential for spin by clearly explaining what their findings mean for people holding different ethical positions.

Finally, it is important to consider the public perception of the need for additional pilots. Almaz Zelleke has argued that new pilots can actually hinder progress toward the implementation of a permanent guaranteed income by falsely signalling to the public that it is still an untested policy whose significant unknowns must be tested before any large-scale implementation.

When creating a research pilot, you should be sure to communicate that new research on guaranteed income is valuable not because it will tell us whether guaranteed income "works," but because it can help refine our understanding of how to a) optimize the design of GI policy and b) contribute to a shift in the narrative around guaranteed income. In other words: emphasize both the questions your pilot seeks to answer and the ones—like impact on overall well-being—that are already well-established.

The Guaranteed Income Movement

Although the concept of a guaranteed income is not new, the movement that has developed in support of it in recent years represents an exciting boost in public awareness and support for guaranteed income policy. Much of this momentum has been driven by the explosion of local pilots created in the wake of the Stockton SEED demonstration and as part of the creation of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income. Andrew Yang's 2020 presidential campaign, which promoted a $1,000 per month universal basic income, also had a significant impact on public awareness of guaranteed income as a policy option.

Most recently, the economic crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic has created an immediate need for expanded cash transfers through universal cash assistance and large increases in unemployment benefits. These policies have the benefits of direct cash transfers and add to the public momentum in support of guaranteed income not just as a response to crises, but as a permanent part of the social benefits system. This section provides further context for guaranteed income advocacy today by compiling lists of recent local pilots, past examples of guaranteed income in practice, and some of the key individuals and organizations advocating for guaranteed income today. For an updated list of past, ongoing, and planned guaranteed income pilots please also consult the Stanford Basic Income Lab's global map.

Planned and ongoing pilot research in the U.S.

Below is a look at the cities implementing guaranteed income pilots and their relative differences in design and targeting. For a larger list of cities interested in guaranteed income pilots, see the Mayors for Guaranteed Income website. Programs indicated with a star (*) have begun providing cash. Please reach out if you are working on a pilot and would like for it to be included in this list.

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City / Area	Recipients	Amount	Frequency	Length	Targeting	Notes
Jackson, MS* (2018, 2020)	20, 110	$1,000	monthly	12 months	African-American mothers	After the initial pilot of 20 people from 2018-2019, a second pilot with more than 110 participants began in March 2020. website
Stockton, CA* (2018)	150	$500	monthly	24 months	Residents of neighborhoods with <$46k median income	Initiated by Mayor Michael Tubbs, founder of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income. View the Stockton SEED website here.
Compton, CA* (2020)	800	$300-600	varies	24 months	Low-income, formerly incarcerated, and undocumented residents	Known as the Compton Pledge, this privately funded program is spearheaded by Mayor Aja Brown in collaboration with the Fund for Guaranteed Income. website
Santa Clara County, CA* (2020)	72	$1000	monthly	1 year	24-year-olds transitioning out of foster care support	In July 2020, Santa Clara County began administering the pilot with support from MyPath and Excite Credit Union, with $900,000 in public funds and financial advising. The pilot was approved by the county's board of supervisors. Press announcement here.
Chelsea, MA* (2020)	2,000	$200-400	monthly	~10 months	Low-income families	Funded by the City of Chelsea along with private funders like the Shah Family Foundation. Fundraising continues in an effort to extend the pilot's duration.
Hudson, NY* (2020)	25	$500	monthly	5 years	Income <$35k	Funded by two non-profits: The Spark of Hudson and the Humanity Forward Foundation. website
St. Paul, MN* (2021)	150	$500	monthly	18 months	Families participating in the "CollegeBound Saint Paul" program	Proposed by Mayor Melvin Carter and unanimously approved by the city council in September 2020. website
Lynn, MA* (2021)	15	$400	monthly	36 months	New mothers	The Family Health Project participants refer into the program through federally qualified community health centers, a corporate partner provides debit cards, and a social services firm provides onboarding and administrative support. Privately funded.
Richmond, VA* (2020)	55	$500	monthly	2 years	Low-income families in existing anti-poverty programs; employed but excluded from traditional benefits programs	The Richmond Resilience Initiative started in 2020 with 18 families and was funded through CARES Act funds, but it has since been expanded to add 37 families as part of Mayors for Guaranteed Income.
Columbia, SC	100	$500	monthly	1 year	Black fathers in Columbia within an	The Columbia Life Improvement Monetary Boost (CLIMB) program was

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(2020)					existing program	founded in Dec. 2020 by Mayor Stephen Benjamin alongside Midlands Fatherhood Coalition, and supported by private funds. To begin spring 2021.
Long Beach, CA (2021)	150	$500	monthly	6 months	Artists	Mayor Robert Garcia's proposal was accepted by the city council in Nov 2020 and is in the planning stages.
Pittsburg, PA (2021)	200	$500	monthly	2 years	Families earning <50% of area median income	Mayor Bill Peduto is calling this pilot the "Assured Cash Experiment of Pittsburgh." Half of the funds are to be sent to households run by black women with the hope of reducing racial and gender inequalities.
San Francisco, CA (2021)	150	$1,000	monthly	2 years	Black and Pacific Islander women during pregnancy & postpartum	A partnership between the San Francisco Department of Public Health, Hellman Foundation, and University of California - San Francisco to decrease infant mortality.
Oakland, CA (2021)	600	$500	monthly	18 months	BIPOC families earning <50% of area median income, with half earning below 138% of the federal poverty line	Led by Mayor Libby Schaaf, one of the Mayors for a Guaranteed income, the "Oakland Resilient Families" program is supported by the Family Independence Initiative. Payments starting as soon as spring 2021.
San Diego, CA (2021)	150	$500	monthly	2 years	Random selection of low-income families with children under 12 within hardest-hit zip codes for COVID-19 and child poverty	A pilot serving both San Diego and National City families, Resilient Communities for Every Child is supported and housed by Jewish Family Service of San Diego, with a $2 million fundraising goal.
Marin County, CA (2021)	125	$1000	monthly	2 years	Low-income mothers of color with children under 18 years of age, with priority for those ineligible for federal benefits	Introduced with unanimous support of Marin county supervisors, MOMentum has the financial support of the Marin Community Foundation and Family Independence Initiative as an administrative partner for payments.
Cambridge, MA (2021)	120	$500	monthly	18 months	Single-parent households earning 80% of area median income (AMI) who have children under age 18	The City of Cambridge announced Cambridge RISE (Recurring Income for Success and Empowerment) in April 2021, a project spearheaded by Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui with support from Cambridge Community Foundation, Harvard University, MIT, and Boston Foundation.
Tacoma, WA (2021)	100	$500	monthly	1 year	Tacoma residents, single head of household, and Asset-Limited-Income-Constrained while Employed (ALICE)	The GRIT Demonstration, Growing Resilience in Tacoma, is a partnership between Mayor Victoria Woodards and United Way of Pierce County, and part of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income (MGI). It will rely on private funds.

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New York, NY (2021)	100	$500-1000	biweekly	~3 years	Low-income Black and immigrant mothers during first 1000 days of life	Funded and implemented by the Monarch Foundation, the program aims to reach those in Washington Heights & Harlem, with hopes of expanding to other areas.
San Francisco, CA (2021)	50	$330	monthly	6 months	Young parenting mothers of Hilltop School	MyPath and Hilltop School aim to provide financial mentoring and cohort-based learning circles to those receiving the basic income. More here.
West Garfield Park, IL (2020)	30	$500	monthly	18 months	Formerly incarcerated individuals in the neighborhood	Fundraising for EAT (Equity and Transformation) Chicago's pilot began in Nov. 2020 and the program aims to begin disbursement in August 2021.
Other nascent proposals (2021)						
Los Angeles, CA	Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti was among the founding mayors of the Mayors for Guaranteed Income and has proposed expanding his previous Angeleno Campaign, which provided one-time prepaid debit cards of $700-1500 to eligible families as part of a $10 million emergency assistance campaign of Accelerator for America alongside Mastercards' City Possible initiative. The program aimed to reach low-wage or hourly workers whose jobs were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and received over 400,000 applicants. The expanded guaranteed income program aims to give $1000 per month to 2000 families in Los Angeles, with a proposed budget of $24 million.					
Atlanta, GA	Beginning the week of Juneteenth 2020, Atlanta City Council member Amir Farokhi launched a task force to explore the potential for a guaranteed income program to reduce economic inequality in Atlanta, and particularly Atlanta's historic fourth ward. The Old Fourth Ward Economic Security Task Force brought together 28 local and national stakeholders, with the Georgia Budget & Policy Institute, Economic Security Project and JFI among those weighing in. A key objective was to tackle wealth stratification and particular insecurity among Black and Latinx Atlantans. Their report was published in January 2020. Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms is also a member of Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, launched in 2020 with 34 mayors joining their advocacy to date.					
Newark, NJ	Mayor Ras Baraka of Newark began exploring a guaranteed income program in 2019, forming a Task Force of community-based organizations and national research groups, like JFI, to investigate the role a guaranteed income program could play to address failures of the existing safety net, a lack of economic mobility in Newark, and especially housing precarity. The Newark Guaranteed Income Task Force report, published in early 2020, provides three potential pilot frameworks and recommended policy changes at the state and federal level, while underscoring the specific needs of Newark residents. Since then, Newark launched the Newark Movement for Economic Equity, with plans to begin a first cohort of 30 recipients in spring of 2021.					
Chicago, IL	Aldermen Gilbert Villegas, Sophia King, and Maria Hadden are advocating for the introduction of a guaranteed income providing $500/month to 5,000 of Chicago's neediest families. The pilot would be funded by allocating $30 million of the $1.8 billion in federal relief funds Chicago is expected to receive this year. This effort is distinct from the task force assembled two years ago to examine the potential for a 1,000 person guaranteed income pilot in the city. Other initiatives in Chicago are pushing for regular cash transfer programs for new moms as well.					
New York, NY	Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and Point Source Youth have been undertaking plans for a direct cash transfer program (DCTP) for young adults facing homelessness in NYC. The target group is 30 young adults, with 30 others receiving usual services and shelters already available (an RCT model). The cash transfers will be $1250/mo for 2 years, with participants able to choose payment frequency and mechanism (Venmo, Paypa, direct deposit, card) through UpTogether's online platform. The participants will also receive optional support services.					
Denver, CO	The Denver Basic Income Project founded by Mark Donovan, Denver-based philanthropist and entrepreneur, with the support of Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock, and researchers at the University of Denver's Center for Housing and Homeless Research. The pilot is explicitly focused on the unhoused, and will provide $1000 per month to 260 individuals, a lump sum of $6500 to 260 more, followed by $500 per month to the lump-sum contingent. A control group of 300 will receive $50 per month for their participation. The project aims to begin payments July 1, 2021.					
Oakland County,	A collaborative group made up of the 18th District Oakland County Commissioner's office, Lighthouse, a local housing non-profit, and researchers from Wayne State University are drafting a pilot program. The focus of this pilot					

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MI	is unique in the space. While others have focused on the efficacy of cash transfers towards positive economic outcomes - this pilot intends to shed light on the physio/psychological impacts that guaranteed income have on an individual and family's health.
Minneapolis, MN*	The Nancy Somers Family Foundation facilitated funding for a pilot providing $1000 monthly for 15 individuals through a local anti-poverty non-profit, Avivo. The pilot began amid the urgency of the pandemic in 2020 and included low income individuals who were unhoused, challenged by mental illness and/or enrolled in a career training program at Avivo; it will extend for 1 year. The group aims to expand the initiative as "Project Solid Ground" at Avivo, pending future funding.
Long Beach, CA	Mayor Robert Garcia announced in January 2021 the intent to create a basic income program for low-income students at Long Beach City College. The City Council had previously considered proposals to provide $500 per month over six months for up to 150 artists. The city previously also provided $1,000 per month in rental assistance, in part supported by CARES Act funds. San Diego was among 15 cities awarded funds from Jack Dorsey as part of the Mayors for Guaranteed Income, with the aim to supplement funds with private sources. More specific details are not yet available.
Las Vegas, NV	A Las Vegas City Council candidate supportive of guaranteed income has proposed a program that would aim to provide annual lump sum payments to 60,000 residents in initial disbursements (~9% of the city population).
Mountain View, CA	In April 2021, Mountain View City Council voted to pilot a guaranteed income program. The council plans to dedicate $1 million in American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds alongside any philanthropic or corporation donations. Provided exclusively ARPA funding, the recipients would receive $500 per month for 1 year. While the program design is forthcoming, Mayor Abe-Koga indicated an interest in targeting low-income families, similar to affordable housing.
Nashville, TN	Moving Nashville Forward is a pilot program intended to target residents in North Nashville (zip code 37208), a community that has faced acutely a history of systemic discrimation. The pilot is currently fundraising to provide 100 families a monthly guaranteed income of $1000 to families with annual incomes under $40,000. Organizers include Gideon's Army, a group that has supported local tornado recovery efforts, with support from Dr. Stacia West, a University of Tennessee Knoxville Assistant Professor and one of the co-Principal Investigators of Stockton SEED.
South San Francisco	South San Francisco has been considering a pilot since early 2021, based on presentations on UBI to the city council led by City Manager Mike Futrell and his team. While eligibility and program design specifics are forthcoming, the group identified the YMCA as a program administrator.
Gainesville, FL	In collaboration with local nonprofit Community Spring, Mayor Lauren Poe aims to provide a $600/mo guaranteed income for two years to formerly incarcerated residents. First payments are expected to go out October 1.
Gary, Indiana	The Guaranteed Income Validation Efforts (GIVE) program is fundraising to support 125 low-income residents with $500/mo. Income cut-offs are at $35,000/year and citywide surveys are being used to identify potential recipients. The effort is supported by Mayors for Guaranteed Income and is looking to raise $1.6M.
Puget Sound, WA	In a program to target pregnant families within the Puget Sound urban Indian and Pacific Islander communities, the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Seattle Indian Health Board, Cowlitz Behavioral Health, Native American Women's Dialogue on Infant Mortality, and Pacific Islander Health Board are designing a 3-year pilot supported by Perigee Fund. Learn more about their wrap-around services here, and Perigee Fund's interests here.
Paterson, NJ	Announced in March 2021, Paterson's Mayor Andre Sayegh aims to provide 110 low-income residents with $400 per month, regardless of employment status. The income cut-off for individuals and families is $30,000 and $88,000 respectively. Residents applied online by April 30 and a lottery system is set to select recipients in May 2021, for payments to begin in July. The research is supported by the Center for Guaranteed Income.
New York, NY	The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is working to launch Creatives Rebuild New York (CRNY) to support dozens of small-to-midsize community arts organizations and over 1000 individual artists with cash over 2 years. More here.
Boston, MA	The Community Love Fund is a landmark guaranteed income initiative of the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women & Families and Justice as Healing. The aim is to provide unconditional monthly cash transfers to formerly incarcerated women in Roxbury (Boston) for one year, beginning in 2021. More here.
Nevada	The Move Nevada Forward initiative is focused on advancing economic rights for Nevadans with a particular focus in 2021 on establishing a basic income experiment statewide. It is a coalition of grassroots-led nonprofits. There are other groups in Nevada working to rally public officials for a guaranteed income program in Las Vegas as well.

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**These programs have begun to deliver the guaranteed income.*

Has guaranteed income ever been tried in the United States?

The answer to this question is yes and no. A population-wide guaranteed income has not been tried in the U.S., but forms of regular cash transfer policies have been implemented. The most well-known example of a guaranteed income at the state level is the Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend, which inspired 2020 Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Yang's proposal to implement a UBI nationwide. The examples below are antecedents to a future cash transfer policy that would more closely represent a guaranteed income at scale.

EITC, Child Tax Credit, and similar cash relief

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a refundable tax credit provided by the federal government (and by about half of state governments) for low-income workers, particularly those with children. While childless households can receive a maximum federal benefit of $538 in 2020, households with one child can receive up to $3,500 annually and those with three or more children can receive up to $6,660. Because this tax credit is refundable, households receive these amounts in cash as a refund after subtracting remaining taxes owed. Each year the federal government distributes about $70 billion in tax credits through this program, lifting millions out of poverty through what are effectively cash transfers.

Using thirty years' worth of data on EITC policy expansions, researchers Bastian and Jones (2018) concluded that EITC is one of the least expensive anti-poverty programs in the United States. For every $350 in EITC spending, total government revenues increased by $303, compensating for 87% of the program cost through positive spillover effects. EITC expansions were found to increase average annual earnings and labor supply, increase payroll and sales taxes paid, and reduce dependence on public assistance.

The Child Tax Credit (CTC) provides low-income parents with a fully refundable tax credit for each dependent child. As of 2018, it provided a $2,000 annual tax credit per qualifying child with a maximum refundable amount of $1,400. Although it is not targeted exclusively at low-income families, the CTC is an important anti-poverty program, lifting over 4 million people—including 2 million children—out of poverty in 2018. In 2021, the CTC was temporarily expanded until the end of the year as a part of the American Rescue Plan Act. While this expansion is in effect, roughly 80% of parents receive a credit of $300/mo ($3,600/year) for each child under 6 and $250/mo ($3,000/year) for children age 6-17. Unlike the ordinary CTC, the expanded credit is fully refundable, available to parents with little to no income, and can be distributed monthly rather than all at once after filing taxes. In this way, the expanded CTC much more closely resembles child allowance programs found in other countries (i.e. guaranteed income for parents). Making this expansion permanent would be a large step forward for social policy in the United States. For more details check out JFI's policy brief comparing CTC expansion proposals.

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Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend

The Alaska Permanent Fund has paid a yearly dividend to state residents since 1982. Established to conserve revenue from oil and mineral resources to benefit all Alaskans, the fund also grows its principal through investment and pays out an average dividend of around $1,600 per year to each resident. It is both the largest and the longest running example of guaranteed income in practice.

Eastern Band of Cherokee Basic Income

In 1996, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina opened a casino and decided to distribute a portion of its annual profits to every tribe member in the form of a cash subsidy. The payouts began at around $500 per person per year but have increased to several thousand dollars since. In addition to increased financial security, researchers observed a range of positive effects on community members receiving this additional income, including reduced behavioral and emotional problems in children and less depression, anxiety, and alcohol dependence in adults.

Which individuals and organizations are working on guaranteed income policy?

The movement for guaranteed income policy is international, and this section does not provide an exhaustive list of the many important organizations and individuals who contribute significantly to the field. In the U.S., the "big tent" of advocacy organizations can include those supporting a wide variety of cash-based safety net policies that involve a regular payment or income floor. Similar policies include a Child Allowance or Child Tax Credit (CTC), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and historic Negative Income Tax, advocates of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and programs that guarantee businesses can provide paychecks to workers during widespread government and business shut-downs as we saw in 2020 (such as the Paycheck Protection Program, Paycheck Recovery Act, etc.). Notably, interest in federal cash relief in 2020 came alongside the expansion of unemployment insurance programs that can likewise guarantee an income floor, although in more limited and highly-conditioned ways. The importance of these other programs for guaranteed income policy is that many advocates for such benefits believe in fundamentally similar social safety net measures rooted in cash support. **Below are some of the notable organizations that occupy the wider landscape of advocacy and research on guaranteed income or cash transfer policy:**

Cash support advocates in Congress

"Advocates" are defined as those that have cosponsored or introduced legislation that provides for an income floor or cash-based family support program. This list is not comprehensive of all

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cosponsors or all cash transfer legislation, but rather focuses on leading figures in policy that either directly models a guaranteed income or that begins with more modest measures, like a child allowance that provides baseline income for parents and caretakers with children.

The legislation that most resembles a guaranteed income has come from these progressive offices:

- Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ)
  - Guaranteed Income Pilot Program Act of 2020 (one-pager here)
- Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI)
  - Automatic Boost to Communities Act ("ABC Act"), BOOST Act (previously known as the LIFT+ Act)
- Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN)
  - RELIEF Act and letters for continuous relief checks

Legislation around an income floor for parents has even wider support, with many of those advocates also supporting regular payments during the crisis of the coronavirus pandemic. Notably, there is widespread Democratic support for a child tax credit (CTC) proposal, especially with President Biden's American Rescue Plan expansion and American Families Plan. Below are just a few key champions of a CTC expansion:

- Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-CT)
- Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
- Rep. Suzan DelBene (D-WA)
- Sen. Richard Neal (D-MA)
- Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT)
- Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)

In addition to the Child Tax Credit, Families First Coronavirus Response:

- Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CO)
- Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
- Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ)

Among other forms of pandemic-related income support were several different paycheck protection bills. Such bills work similarly to the EITC in that they are employment-conditioned. Also included below is an expansion of the EITC:

- Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT)
  - Paycheck Recovery Act
- Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-WA)

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    - Paycheck Recovery Act
    - Co-sponsored Rep. Tlaib's ABC Act
- Former Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA)
    - LIFT Act
    - Monthly Economic Crisis Support Act

Among Republican legislators, support has primarily centered around a pandemic-specific relief. Nonetheless, the following legislators supported more robust checks for families in the wake of COVID-19:

- Sen. Josh Hawley (R-MO)
- Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR)
- Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT)
    - Also supports the Child Tax Credit
- Rep. Justin Amash (R-MI)
- Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL)
- Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT)

Emergency cash relief legislation has garnered much greater support than regular cash relief legislation. While support for the CARES Act, which passed with bipartisan support in the House and Senate, is one example, a few key legislators have put forth additional and more sweeping legislation for cash transfers throughout the course of the pandemic and its economic downturn, including some mentioned above. Some additional examples include:

- Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA)
    - Emergency Money to the People Act
- Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH)
    - Emergency Money to the People Act
- Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA)
    - House Financial Services Committee proposal
- Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY)
    - Amendment to the CASH Act
    - Cosponsored ABC Act

Efforts are also being made at the state and municipal level to create guaranteed income pilots and programs. Some examples of state level advocates are:

- NY State Sen. Kevin S. Parker
    - Senate Bill S6696 proposing the creation of a 2-year statewide guaranteed income pilot with 10,000 recipients

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    - Senate Bill S6552 proposing a state-wide universal basic income pilot program and funds to support it
- NY State Sen. Leroy Comrie
    - Senate Bill S6696 co-sponsor
- MA State Sen. James B. Eldridge
    - Bill H.1632 proposing the creation of a state-level universal basic income program
- MA State Rep. Tami L. Gouveia
    - Bill H.1632 joint petitioner
- CA Assemblymember Evan Low
    - AB-65 Stating legislature's intent to implement a universal basic income in California
    - AB-1338 Exempting guaranteed income demonstrations' cash transfers from means tests for CalWORKS, CalFRESH, CalEITC
- CA State Sen. Dave Cortese
    - SB-739 The UBI for Transition Age Foster Youth Act, a bill to provide 3-years of UBI, $1000/mo for foster youth

Academic champions for guaranteed income

Among academics, there is a growing acknowledgment of the longstanding empirical evidence in favor of a guaranteed income or similar cash transfer policy. In an open letter to Congress of over 150 economists and social scientists, academics argued in July 2020 for additional cash relief for families alongside expanded cash-based safety net policies like unemployment insurance. Notable academics working most directly on cash transfer research and guaranteed income include: Our own researchers, Sidhya Balakrishnan, Stephen Nuñez, Johannes Haushofer (also of GiveDirectly), Leah Hamilton, Maximilian Kasy, and Paul Katz; co-Directors of the newly-launched Center for Guaranteed Income Research at the University of Pennsylvania, Stacia West and Amy Castro Baker; major international researchers in the Brazilian Basic Income Network such as Fabio Waltenberg; Fernando Freitas, Roberta Mendes e Costa; at OpenResearchLabs (formerly YC Research) Elizabeth Rhodes; and, while not all advocates for guaranteed income, longtime cash transfer researchers like Sandra Black, Susan Dynarski, Evelyn Forget, Maura Francese, Ugo Gentilini, Michael Howard, Hilary Hoynes, Damon Jones, Michael A. Lewis, Ioana Marinescu, Delphine Prady, Jesse Rothstein, Philippe Van Parijs, Karl Widerquist, and Almaz Zelleke have written important work on the subject.

Advocates & civil society in support of guaranteed income

A wide and growing number of grassroots organizations support recurring cash transfers for low-income individuals in particular. During the protest movement surrounding the murder of

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George Floyd in 2020, the Movement for Black Lives (M4BL) included a call for guaranteed income in its week of action demands. In addition, M4BL released what has been called "a modern-day Civil Rights Act" known as the BREATHE Act, which calls for a guaranteed income among its economic justice policy proposals. The Compton Pledge guaranteed income pilot worked alongside local organizers of the Electoral Justice Project of M4BL to introduce and pass a local resolution of the BREATHE Act to that effect. With a more direct focus on guaranteed income, the Income Movement Foundation is an advocacy group building grassroots support for a federal basic income. The Economic Security Project (ESP) advocates for a guaranteed income as well as an expanded EITC. ESP was instrumental in launching Mayors for Guaranteed Income (MGI) in 2020, which was led by Mayor Michael Tubbs of Stockton, California alongside over 20 founding mayors calling for pilots and guaranteed income policy at a federal level. Another organization to emerge in 2020 was Humanity Forward, a group that was built after the end of Andrew Yang's 2020 presidential run in which he called for a universal basic income in the U.S.

More recent and emerging examples in 2021 include grassroots organizations and movements that supported the launch of the Compton, California guaranteed income, the Compton Pledge, which was built by the Fund for Guaranteed Income (also launched in 2020 by Nika Soon-Shiong) and JFI. The supportive partners include founding leaders in the Black Lives Matter movement, the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Essie Justice Group, One Fair Wage, and A New Way of Life Reentry Project, among others. This growing support for a major guaranteed income initiative in the U.S. may signal more widespread support from these organizations to come. In addition, a Guaranteed Income Community of Practice has formed around multiple emerging pilots (see here).

Philanthropy

Much like the public support for cash transfers, there is a growing interest among funders to enable guaranteed income pilots that build on the research and public narrative. Among them are the newly-established Fund for Guaranteed Income, the Schusterman Family Foundation, the Family Independence Initiative, the Shah Family Foundation, Humanity Forward Foundation, Jack Dorsey, and the Economic Security Project (although notably they focus especially on advocacy). Progressive philanthropist George Soros has also advocated for government-based direct cash relief. In developing countries, GiveDirectly has financed guaranteed income programs as well.

Joining the Movement

If you are interested in contributing to guaranteed income research and advocacy through a community pilot, research or advocacy, JFI can be a resource and partner on additional questions that may not be addressed in this report. As a non-profit, non-partisan research group, we are ready to offer our network and support to initiatives that build on the evidence for a GI in the US. Reach out to us at jfi@jainfamilyinstitute.org and we'll discuss potential next steps.

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Further Reading and Global Perspectives

JFI's publication *Phenomenal World* provides a thorough review of existing academic research on guaranteed income, UBI, and other cash policies - see here.

JFI also publishes an ongoing whitepaper series titled *From Idea to Reality: Getting to Guaranteed Income.* The series is designed to provide a concrete analysis of the path toward guaranteed income policy in the U.S. by examining specific implementation questions and challenges. View the series here.

Stanford's Basic Income Lab has created a useful and practice-oriented guide for those looking to create municipal basic income pilots. You can access their guide, *Basic Income in Cities*, here.

The Aspen Institute's Financial Security Program released a three-part report bringing together what is known about the need for, innovations in, and the effects of cash transfer programs. You can view the report here.

Ugo Gentilini, along with others at the World Bank, have put together a comprehensive review of social protection programs—including cash transfers—implemented around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. View the report here.

Brazil's Bolsa Família

Brazil has been, since 2004, the only country in the world to legislate every citizen's right to a basic income. That same year, Brazil introduced a transformative cash assistance program that proponents see as the first step toward securing that right. Known as Bolsa Família, the program provides families with direct cash transfers in return for keeping their kids in school and attending preventative health care visits. After ten years, Bolsa Família helped cut the percentage of Brazilians living in extreme poverty in half, from 9.7% to 2.7%. It remains the largest conditional cash transfer program in the world, reaching about a quarter of the population (50 million people).

Within Brazil, the city of Maricá has recently launched an ambitious guaranteed income policy providing more than 42,000 residents with income equivalent to about three quarters of the national poverty line. JFI is closely involved with the accompanying research program designed to study the effects and administration of large-scale guaranteed income policies. You can learn more about Bolsa Família and the Maricá program here.

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GiveDirectly program in Kenya

GiveDirectly has been running one of the largest and longest guaranteed income research programs in the world in Kenya, where they are providing cash transfers to 20,000 individuals across 197 villages. Some recipients will receive regular payments for as long as twelve years. By varying the lengths of time that individuals receive benefits, as well as whether they receive the cash monthly or all at once in a lump sum, researchers hope to learn more about the long-term effects of guaranteed income and the impact of different disbursement patterns.

In addition to the primary pool of subjects, two additional villages are receiving monthly payments for twelve years without being a part of the main study so that researchers can have more in-depth qualitative conversations with them about their experience. This group is very much aligned with the storytelling aspect of pilots discussed earlier. You can read more about the study here.

Other global implementations

- The Iranian government created a universal basic income program in 2011, providing monthly transfers amounting to 29% of median household income. Research on its effects did not find evidence of a significant effect on labor supply outside of people in their twenties who were more likely to enroll in higher education.

- Finland conducted a guaranteed income experiment for two years from the beginning of 2017 to the end of 2018. During this time 2,000 unemployed persons received 560 Euros every month, regardless of any other income they had or whether they were looking for work. However, this program had major design and implementation flaws. Read more about the experiment here.

- Many European countries have long-established child allowance programs which provide recurring cash transfers to parents based on the number of children they have. For example, in Germany parents receive a little over 200 Euros per month for each child. You can read more about child allowance policy in various European countries here.

- During the COVID-19 pandemic Spain has introduced a targeted guaranteed minimum income program with the intention of continuing it indefinitely. The program would reach over three million of the country's poorest households and be means-tested according to the type of family, number of children, and financial need.

- During the pandemic, Japan has provided direct cash transfers of $930 to every citizen in addition to doubling the existing child allowance, bringing it to approximately $200 per month per child.

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