Defining Evidence

The federal Investing in Innovation, or i3, grant program outlines criteria for evaluating the research track records of school improvement interventions.

STRONG EVIDENCE   **MODERATE EVIDENCE**

	Scale-Up	Validation
i3 Label	Scale-Up	Validation
Overview	The evidence has strong causal conclusions and is easily generalizable to other situations.	The evidence is either highly generalizable with moderate causal relationships or has high causal relationships and is at least moderately generalizable.
Alignment	The program's research basis must have been related to the same practice, strategy, or program being proposed. For example, results for an after-school tutoring program for reading would not be used as evidence for justifying a math program.	
Methodology	The evidence must include either: • More than one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study; or • One large, well-designed and implemented randomized controlled trial covering multiple sites.	The evidence must include either: • At least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study, though the study may have a small sample size or other condition that limits its usefulness as a generalized result; or • At least one well-designed and implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study that did not demonstrate that its intervention and comparison groups were equal at the start of the intervention, but otherwise had no major flaws related to causation; or • Correlation research that includes strong statistical controls to prevent selection bias and determine the influence of internal factors.
Effect	The intervention must show statistically significant effects. Moreover, these effects must also be likely to be significant in a population of the same size as that of the target audience where it's intended for use..	The evidence must demonstrate that an intervention would have statistically significant results in a population of the same size as the target audience where it's intended for use.
Audience	The effect of the intervention must be substantial and important for the students it targets. For example, an intervention that improves reading comprehension generally, but provides no particular benefit for English-learners, would not be appropriate when selecting an English-language-learners reading intervention.	
Topics	The intervention should address topics appropriate to the school improvement priorities, such as improving student academic growth, closing achievement gaps among student groups, decreasing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, or increasing college enrollment and completion rates.	

NOTE: More details on the evidence guidelines can be found at: ww2.ed.gov/programs/innovation/evaluationwebinar.doc.