



## Technical Assistance: City Leadership to Reduce the Use of Jails Request for Proposals June, 2017

Jail overuse constitutes a critical, under-addressed aspect of America’s mass incarceration crisis and has ongoing, destructive effects in America’s cities. A new national initiative, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation’s [Safety and Justice Challenge](#), focuses on the overuse of local jails and has begun to generate alternative strategies that have the potential to remedy the problem. As a Strategic Ally in the Safety and Justice Challenge, the NLC’s Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) is working to help cities that seek to apply and adapt these strategies, reaching additional sites beyond the first 40 jurisdictions chosen competitively to receive Challenge support. NLC’s engagement and role stem from the observation that, through administration of policing and other services, municipal leaders have access to key levers for change and opportunities to reduce the harm caused by current policies.

### Goals

This technical assistance initiative will support up to six cities to:

1. Deeply engage the mayor and other city leaders in reducing the use of jails.
2. Launch or improve sustainable, formal stakeholder collaboration focused on reducing the use of jails and pilot or enhance models to engage residents most affected by jailing policies.
3. Achieve measurable reductions in the use of jails (especially for young adults and people with behavioral health needs) **and** in racial and ethnic disparities in arrests and jailing.
4. Learn from peers and colleagues across the nation to broaden the reach of reforms that successfully reduce the use of jails.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for this technical assistance initiative hosted by NLC’s YEF Institute, the mayor and city team must demonstrate a broad commitment to participate throughout a 20-month period beginning in August 2017 and the mayor must commit to attend the Mayors’ Institute described below. The YEF Institute will give preference to cities that are current members of NLC. The YEF Institute will prioritize applications from cities that do NOT currently receive support from the Safety and Justice Challenge as core, partner, or innovation sites, including cities within a county jurisdiction receiving such support. *Please check this list of [Challenge sites](#) prior to starting work on an application.*

## Project Timeline

The technical assistance period will occur August 2017 through April 2019.

Activity	Estimated Dates
Informational webinar for potential applicants <i>YEF Institute strongly encourages interested cities to participate in this webinar for important application instructions.</i>	3:00 PM EDT June 29, 2017
City proposals due to NLC	5:00 PM EDT Friday, July 21, 2017
TA cohort cities selected and notified	August 14, 2017
Ongoing technical assistance and site visits	August 2017-April 2019
Opening cross-site meeting <i>Washington, DC</i>	October 16-18, 2017
Mayors' Institute	March 2018*
Intermediate check-in meeting for lead staff	October 2018*
Closing cross-site meeting	April 2019*
<i>*Dates and location to be determined with input from selected cities and mayors.</i>	

The YEF Institute offers this technical assistance pending full funding approval by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, expected late June 2017.

## Background

As documented through the [Safety and Justice Challenge](#), local jurisdictions currently use jails heavily for short sentences and to detain people who do not constitute threats to public safety nor flight risks. These practices take an outsized toll on communities of color, young people, and people with behavioral health treatment needs (i.e., mental health and substance abuse). Whereas African Americans and Latinos make up 30 percent of the U.S. population, they constitute 51 percent of the country's jail population.

This racial and ethnic disproportionality holds true among the young adult population (ages 18-24). Overall, young people are overrepresented in jails compared to their proportion in the general population, and rates of arrest for African American and Latino young people outpace rates of arrest for white youth in communities across the country.

The dramatic reduction in inpatient [mental health](#) care services in recent decades, coupled with the sharp increase in the use of [opiates and other drugs](#), has left gaps in community treatment options for individuals with mental health or substance abuse treatment needs – gaps that jails have increasingly ended up filling by detaining people who are experiencing crises of this nature.

In addition, the nation's cities bear a significant share of the burden of high costs, both direct and indirect, caused by jail overuse. Whereas few cities administer their own jails, cities often contribute fees for detaining people in local, county-run jails, and some cities share in the capital costs for jail construction and repair. Beyond these direct costs, cities also bear the burden of cycles of crime, mental health and substance abuse crises, severely restricted work and education opportunities for people with criminal records, disruptions of family life, and disenfranchisement of large swaths of city neighborhoods from civic life.

## Project Overview

The [\*City Leadership to Reduce the Use of Jails\*](#) initiative of the YEF Institute addresses the urgent need within cities to increase public safety and improve outcomes for youth, children and families. The initiative seeks to expand the number of cities ready to pursue these goals by reducing the use of counter-productive criminal justice strategies that interrupt or delay too many individuals' ability to contribute to their cities' economic, educational, and social well-being. Specifically, the initiative will address the current shortfall of platforms and strategies for municipal leaders to reduce the overreliance on jails, the misuse of jails for people with behavioral health needs, and the persistent, severe racial and ethnic disparities in rates of detention in jails.

With generous support from John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety and Justice Challenge, The YEF Institute's *City Leadership to Reduce the Use of Jails* project will support cities that are committed to reducing the misuse and overuse of jails through sustained technical assistance.

## Technical Assistance

The YEF Institute will competitively select a diverse group of up to six cities to receive intensive technical assistance through this initiative. The YEF Institute will assist participating cities in collecting and analyzing local data to identify opportunities for progress, developing and implementing strategies that redress local gaps and needs, and maximizing local potential to reduce the misuse and overuse of jails, especially for people of color, people with behavioral health treatment needs, and/or young adults.

The YEF Institute will support cities in achieving two of the following three goals:

- Increasing pre-arrest diversion **OR**
- Developing a system of robust community-based alternatives to the criminal justice system; **AND**
- Reducing racial and ethnic disparities in arrests and jail bookings (*required*).

Examples of policies or other reforms cities might pursue with support from the YEF Institute include, but are not limited to:

- New or revised data collection practices and agreements to support decision-making and measuring results, especially regarding racial and ethnic disparities.
- New or improved collaborative agreements and community engagement models to coordinate and sustain reforms.
- New or revised ordinances, tools and policies to reduce arrests of people, especially young adults of color or those with behavioral health needs.
- New or enhanced "one-stop" assessment and service centers or other assessment and referral mechanisms to support early diversion and connection to community-based services.
- New mechanisms or commitments to build, enhance and/or sustain a robust continuum of community-based services as alternatives to the criminal justice system for young adults, especially young adults with behavioral health needs.

A key component of the technical assistance will be a **Mayors' Institute on Jail Use Reduction** designed to engage the mayors of the six cities receiving technical assistance, along with key staff members and system partners. Mayors will engage in data analysis, preparation of a case statement, and an intensive discussion among peers and national experts about each city's challenges and goals related to reducing

the overuse of jails. Through the Institute, mayors will receive practical guidance specifically tailored to their circumstances and needs while also considering potential course corrections on goals and strategies identified through the technical assistance process.

### **Benefits to Participating Cities**

Selected cities will gain access to a broad range of benefits, including:

- Technical assistance and guidance to develop a case statement describing a challenge the mayor commits to tackling and on which the mayor seeks peer advice and feedback;
- Ongoing technical assistance in collecting and using data to develop and implement local action plans for reforms to achieve measurable reductions in the number of people in the local jail and racial and ethnic disparities in arrests and jail bookings;
- Links to resources, peer learning and national experts through virtual and in-person convenings and shared materials;
- At least one site visit to which the YEF Institute will bring staff, and national experts if appropriate, to engage with a full range of stakeholders in the participating city; and
- Training and support on how to engage affected communities authentically and key stakeholders in a structured and sustainable way.

### **Selection Criteria**

The YEF Institute will select cities to participate in the project based on the following criteria:

1. Capacity of a core team to engage consistently in the technical assistance and peer learning activities, to include one of each of the following:
  - a. A team lead with direct access to the mayor, such as an elected official or senior city policy advisor or administrator;
  - b. A key leader of a relevant city agency or equivalent; and
  - c. A leader from a community partner or neighborhood with high incarceration rates.
2. Commitment of the mayor to participate in the Mayors' Institute (required).
3. Strength and clarity of the application, including an early, abbreviated case statement and application form.
4. Demonstrated capacity to collect relevant data and explore policies and practices related to increasing pre-arrest diversion, developing a system of robust community-based alternatives to the criminal justice system, and reducing racial and ethnic disparities in arrests and jail bookings.
5. Demonstrated need and potential to benefit from technical assistance.

## Proposal Instructions

To be considered for participation in this project, cities must submit a proposal that includes the three segments described below, completed and saved in PDF format.

- I. *Early Case Statement:* In preparation for the Mayors' Institute, each participating city will work with key local stakeholders and NLC staff to prepare a detailed Case Statement. To get a head start on this process, we ask that you draft a brief "early stage" case statement to provide a summary of a potential jail-use reduction challenge the city wants to address, and related policy reform(s), that the mayor could present at the Mayors' Institute. This early case statement draft should run no more than three pages in length and include a summary of the following:
  - a. The **problem or challenge** facing the City related to the overuse of jails, including data demonstrating the scope of the problem.
  - b. **Existing assets** that the City can muster to make progress on the overuse of jails, such as policy reforms already under consideration, existing collaborative agreements or structures, and resources the city could devote to bringing about procedural changes in police practice.
  - c. Connections between this issue and the **mayor's broader agenda and priorities** for the city.
- II. *Application Form:* To help the YEF Institute assess the city's capacity for data collection and commitment to jail reduction system development, please complete the two-page application form included at the end of this RFP.
- III. *Demonstrated Commitment:* Evidence of commitment from the mayor should include a support letter signed by the mayor with an expression of intent to attend the Mayors' Institute and a description of the city's ability to benefit from technical assistance.

## Application Process

The YEF Institute will host an **informational webinar** with an opportunity to receive guidance on completing the application and for applicants to ask questions. The YEF Institute *strongly encourages* but does not require cities to participate in the webinar. The webinar will take place at 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on Thursday, June 29, 2017. [Register](#)

**All proposals must be submitted via email to [furr@nlc.org](mailto:furr@nlc.org) by 5:00 p.m. EDT on Friday, July 21, 2017.**

The YEF Institute may contact cities following application submission for additional information and will inform cities of final selections by close of business Monday, August 14, 2017.

*If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Laura Furr, Program Manager for Justice Reform and Youth Engagement, at [furr@nlc.org](mailto:furr@nlc.org) or 202-626-3072.*

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### APPLICATION FORM

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#### City Information

City Name, State: \_\_\_\_\_

Population: \_\_\_\_\_

Data reflecting the current problem								
<i>Adjust categories as needed to reflect local data collection practices.</i>								
Arrests by race/ethnicity	Total # of Arrests	White/ not Hispanic	Black/not Hispanic	Hispanic	Asian	Native American /Alaskan Native	Native Hawaiian /Pacific Islander	Other/ Multiple/ Unknown
Year of data:								
Result of police encounters	Stopped, No Further Action	Diverted Pre-arrest	Citation/ Paper Summons	Arrested and Released	Booked into Jail	Total # of Encounters		
Year of data:								

Some cities contribute directly to jail operation costs, potentially by operating their own jails or paying a fee per bed night or per booking to a county-run jail. If your city does one of these, please explain the cost that the city incurs.

City Costs for Jail Operation		
Annual operating costs for city-run jail		
Per bed night fee	Total annual number of bed nights	Total contribution in bed fees
Per booking fee	Total annual number of bookings	Total contribution in booking fees

What goals and related policies and practices would the city like to explore during the technical assistance? *See page 3 of application materials for examples of policies and practices.*

Technical Assistance Focus	Potential Goal	Policy or Practice to Explore
Increasing pre-arrest diversion <b>OR</b> Developing a system of robust community-based alternatives to the criminal justice system		
Reducing racial and ethnic disparities		

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**APPLICATION FORM**

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**Core Team**

*See Selection Criteria for guidance on core team members.*

City Name, State: \_\_\_\_\_

**Team Lead**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Office/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of the lead staff member’s ability to lead the city’s work in connection with this technical assistance initiative and commitment of time to coordinate the effort (*1 paragraph*):

**City Agency Team Member:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of this agency’s relevance to the city’s effort to reduce the overuse of jails (*1 paragraph*):

**Community Leader Team Member:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence of this organization’s role as a complement to city efforts or neighborhood’s direct impact from high jailing rates (*1 paragraph or graphical representation of data*):