

Incarceration

A Vera Institute of Justice Research Symposium
October 25 and 26, 2018

The Vera Institute of Justice invites the submission of papers to an interdisciplinary symposium exploring the use of incarceration in the United States.

The unprecedented scale of incarceration in the United States has many political, economic, and social effects. We hope that you will join us for a research symposium that explores changes in the carceral landscape and their impacts on American society.

This inaugural symposium leverages the uniquely detailed historical dataset of incarceration in local jails and state prisons that the Vera Institute of Justice developed to explore the use of incarceration at the county level. The Vera dataset is sourced from Bureau of Justice Statistics data collections: Jail admission and population data is sourced from the Annual Survey of Jails (1985-2015), Census of Jails (1970-2013), and Death in Custody Reporting Program (2000-2013). Prison admission and population data is sourced from the National Corrections Reporting Program (1983-2015) and National Prisoner Statistics Program (1970-2016), and supplemented with data from state departments of corrections, when available.

It is largely county officials—judges, prosecutors, people who manage jails—that decide how communities use incarceration (i.e., who is sent to jail and prison, and for how long). Thus, county-level variability makes for more robust, theoretically-grounded studies of the causes and impacts of high rates of incarceration seen across the United States. Furthermore, recent social dynamics and policy changes at various political scales have driven jail and prison populations down in some locales, and up in others, a phenomena that is masked in state-level data used in most studies of incarceration's impacts.

Participants in the symposium will be granted early access to the Vera dataset—which will be published later this year—if they agree not to distribute or publish prior to the symposium. Full terms are in the registration material.

We invite submissions from advanced graduate students, faculty, independent or policy researchers. We expect that a number of papers responsive to this call will provide new insights on the burden of high rates of incarceration, the health, social, and economic consequences for individuals and communities, and insight into emerging policy issues and problems. Papers are asked to engage with the data that is available, but not all papers need to be quantitative or empirical in nature. We welcome submissions from across the social sciences and humanities, economics and data science.

Submissions should include an abstract of 150-500 words and a brief biographical statement and CV. Please submit all materials by May 8, 2018.

We request that submissions be made through email to trends@vera.org.

To learn about the dataset and see instructions for accessing it please view:
<https://github.com/vera-institute/In-Our-Backyards-Symposium>.

If you have questions, please contact Vera at trends@vera.org or Jacob Kang-Brown by mail at 233 Broadway, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10279.

If selected, applicants will be notified by June 5, 2018.

Completed papers will be due on September 30, 2018.

Transportation to and from the conference, as well as room and board during the conference will be covered for each selected applicant.

The Vera Institute of Justice works to build and create justice systems that ensure fairness, promote safety, and strengthen communities.

The symposium and the development of the public-use county-level incarceration dataset is funded through the *In Our Backyards* project by Google.org as part of its Inclusion and Racial Justice work. *In Our Backyards* is a Vera's research and communications agenda to inform the public dialogue, advance research, and guide change to justice policy and practice on mass incarceration.

Submission deadline: Tuesday, May 8, 2018

Decision by: Tuesday, June 5, 2018

Location: New York City

Event dates: Thursday and Friday, October 25 and 26, 2018

Duration: 1.5 day symposium

Host: The Vera Institute of Justice