

Policing Program Director - NYC

Who we are

At the Vera Institute of Justice, we envision a society that respects the dignity of every person and safeguards justice for all. At this critical moment for justice reform, we are standing up and driving change on a variety of fronts—by eliminating money bail, ending mass incarceration, shrinking the footprint of policing, ensuring that immigrants get due process, and centering our work on principles of racial equity.

Importantly, our work occurs in the context of a dynamic, rapidly changing, and increasingly high-profile organization and field. Vera has more than 250 staff members who work across four offices—in Brooklyn, New Orleans, Washington, DC, and Los Angeles—as well as remotely. Each year, we are launching new and more complex initiatives, cultivating new constituents, and deploying new tools and tactics to create a justice system that lives up to its name.

We drive change by:

Studying problems that impede human dignity and justice.

Piloting solutions that are at once transformative and achievable.

Engaging diverse communities in informed debate.

Harnessing the power of evidence to drive effective policy and practice.

Vera has a staff of over 250 people and offices in New York City, Washington, DC, Los Angeles, and New Orleans. We are an equal opportunity employer with a commitment to diversity in the workplace. We expect our staff to embody respect, independence, collaboration, commitment, anti-racism, and equity—

both in our outward-facing work and the internal culture of our workplace. We value a range of experiences in people's educational backgrounds and encourage people who have been directly impacted by the criminal justice system to apply.

Our goal

The goal of the Policing Program is to shrink the footprint of American policing and further racial equity by providing data and tools around police enforcement that empower communities and by blueprinting and piloting alternatives to police enforcement. This work builds upon Vera's position as a national justice reform organization and our capacity to marshal and analyze data, communicate with diverse audiences, and engage both government stakeholders and grassroots organizations. The Policing Program's current portfolio is organized around two key objectives:

- (1) Leveraging data to build community power and drive reform; and
- (2) Blueprinting and piloting alternatives to enforcement that build community capacity.

Within these objectives, current and recent projects include: Arrest Trends, research on 911 calls and police responses, a study of misdemeanor arrests among people with serious mental illness, and Serving Safely.

Where you come in

While most issues concerning community-wellbeing don't require a police response, police officers have become de facto first responders for a myriad of social problems. Recent cases of police brutality and abuses of power have underlined the urgent need for systemic reform. This is an opportunity to join a team at Vera that is committed to addressing the racial inequities that erode police legitimacy and undercut justice for many Americans, while shaping the future direction and growth of this important portfolio of work. The Policing Program is well-positioned to leverage its current work to center and

empower community voices, advance racial justice, fairness and equity in police-community interactions, and work directly with communities to develop critical alternatives to enforcement. We are looking for a senior leader to serve as Vera's primary expert on policing, direct the Program and lead the team to bring our work to scale.

The Program Director will be responsible for the overall direction and management of the Policing Program and work directly with Program staff on all projects. As a senior leader within the organization, you will have significant responsibility and latitude for shaping the vision of policing-related work and collaborating with staff and other senior leaders in the organization to drive change at scale. You are someone with a high level of self-awareness, a track record of building relationships with community partners, advocacy groups and other stakeholders, and extensive experience working on policing related initiatives, with a focus on the policing reform and/or oversight space. Your professional training may be in evidence-based policy making, applied research, public advocacy, litigation, organizing, or police oversight and accountability. You have a solid understanding of race equity and inclusion, as well as the impact of structural racism and biases, and are committed to centering this in the vision and projects the Program undertakes. You also have a passion for the implementation of social justice, and/or professional or lived-experience in the criminal justice field.

Qualifications and experience

Practical experience of working and building coalitions with community-based and advocacy organizations
A demonstrated commitment to advancing a just, fair and equitable society, particularly through racial justice

Experience working to develop or implement alternatives to enforcement and applying appropriate responses to community health and social needs, including mental health and substance use issues is a plus

Experience and competency leading strategic planning, developing program design and bringing programs to scale

Experience developing and managing multiple program budgets with several funding streams

Strong fundraising skills as demonstrated through relationships with a variety of funders, and experience developing proposals

Experience communicating and translating quantitative and qualitative data and research findings to drive policy and practice change

Responsibility for developing and implementing research-based policy solutions within practical and politically accountable contexts

Strong collaboration skills, to guide and empower the team as well as experience managing staff—both those who are newer to the work world and those who have more years of experience—and enjoy working with both sets of employees

Ability to work effectively with a diverse array of internal and external people and positions, including advocates, government officials, criminal justice system personnel, practitioners, and people who are directly impacted by the criminal system

Strong Project Management, problem solving and task delegation skills

At least 10 years of demonstrated leadership and professional work experience on police reform issues

Excellent oral and written communication skills and experience developing communications for a variety of settings and among diverse audiences

A bachelor's degree is required and an advanced degree in a relevant field is preferred

To apply

Please submit a cover letter, writing sample, and resume. The cover letter must outline your minimum and additional qualifications and address how you will use those qualifications to excel in the policing program director role. The writing sample must be single-spaced and pertain to some aspect of policing and criminal justice. Your submission package must also include details of your experience with advocacy and community-based work that aligns with public safety, particularly in underserved communities and communities of color.

Submission online through Vera's website is preferred. However, if necessary, materials may be mailed or faxed to:

ATTN: Human Resources / Program Director, Policing Program

34 35th St, Suite 4-2A, Brooklyn, NY 11232

Fax: (212) 941-9407

Please use only one method (online, mail or fax) of submission.

No phone calls or emails, please. Only applicants selected for interviews will be contacted.

Vera is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. All qualified applicants will be considered for employment without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin, sex, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military status, prior record of arrest or conviction, citizenship status, current employment status, or caregiver status.

Vera works to advance justice, particularly racial justice, in an increasingly multicultural country and globally connected world. We value diverse experiences, including with regard to educational background and justice system contact, and depend on a diverse staff to carry out our mission.

For more information about Vera, please visit www.vera.org

Location

Brooklyn, NY

Department

Policing Program

Type

Full Time

APPLY