

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Selecting a National Training and Technical Assistance Provider to Support
Pretrial Risk Assessment Implementation and Research



April 24, 2018



Dear Criminal Justice Partners,

It is with great pride and excitement that the Laura and John Arnold Foundation (LJAF) announces two Requests for Proposals (RFPs)—*To Select a National Provider of Training and Technical Assistance to Support Pretrial Risk Assessment Implementation and Research* and *To Conduct Research on the Public Safety Assessment, Risk Assessments, and Pretrial Detention*. The work we've laid out in these documents reflects LJAF's plans for the next generation of research and practice around the Public Safety Assessment (PSA), our signature contribution to the pretrial justice movement.

This is a momentous time to announce our deepening commitment to pretrial reform; specifically, to strengthening research on pretrial risk assessment and giving jurisdictions the resources they need to make fair and objective pretrial decisions—decisions that no longer revolve around how much money a defendant has.

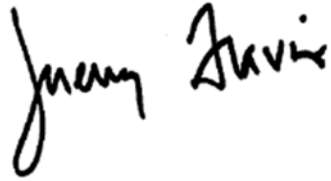
We are in the midst of a pretrial justice revolution. Lawmakers around the country, encouraged by calls for reform from judges, prosecutors, public defenders, law enforcement, and advocacy groups, are enacting new policies and practices that address many of the ills of the current system. Speedy trial provisions help ensure defendants aren't left to languish in jail; pretrial monitoring and supervision services help courts safely release low-risk defendants before trial; and pretrial risk assessments give judges access to neutral information about a defendant's current charge and criminal history that helps them determine whether to release or detain a defendant before trial. It is through system-wide reforms such as these, and broad local discussions about pretrial justice, that real change is achieved.

The development of the PSA was a landmark moment in the field—a step forward in the science of risk assessment and an answer to common implementation barriers. But now we are at a second landmark moment: It is time to evolve the PSA in response to new science and the valuable insights of the pretrial reform community.

Over the next five years, the national provider and research teams chosen through this RFP process will accomplish a robust research agenda that tackles questions of validation, implementation, system impact, and racial disparities for the PSA and pretrial risk assessment generally. The teams will work to better understand the impact of pretrial detention and develop the next generation of risk assessments, ultimately improving upon the PSA algorithm itself. Parallel to these research efforts, the national provider will offer resources to any jurisdiction that wants to implement the PSA and will connect communities so they may learn from one another.

We have an incredible window of opportunity to accomplish great progress. We look forward to meeting those of you eager to take up this exciting work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeremy Travis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jeremy Travis
Executive Vice President
Criminal Justice Initiative
Laura and John Arnold Foundation

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Request for Proposals: Selecting a National Training and Technical Assistance Provider to Support Pretrial Risk Assessment Implementation and Research

Background

The vast majority of the 750,000 people in our nation's jails are defendants awaiting trial, many of whom are charged with low-level, nonviolent crimes. Rigorous research has revealed the myriad financial and human costs associated with detaining these individuals. Taxpayers spend \$14 billion on pretrial incarceration each year, and studies have shown that even a short stay in jail can cause a person to lose his or her job, housing, health care, and child custody. Recognizing these negative consequences, numerous organizations have invested in efforts aimed at reducing unnecessary pretrial incarceration while increasing public safety. At the same time, a number of states, counties, and cities have adopted pretrial reforms designed to make their systems fairer and more effective.

One such reform is a shift away from judges making decisions based primarily on a defendant's charge, toward judges making decisions that prioritize an individual's level of risk. This risk-based approach builds on research by pretrial experts dating back to the 1950s, as well as the learnings of pretrial services practitioners, who for decades have been pioneers in the field. Some forward-looking jurisdictions have used a risk assessment to gauge the likelihood that a defendant will fail to return to court or commit a new crime if released before trial. However, although these risk assessments have been studied and validated for many years, until recently, they had not been widely implemented.

When the Laura and John Arnold Foundation (LJAF) began working on criminal justice reform in 2011, we set out to determine where research, data, and innovation could make the greatest impact on the justice system. Leaders in the field repeatedly pointed to the pretrial phase and argued that the widespread use of risk assessments could produce significant improvements.

Our team partnered with leading criminal justice researchers to study why risk assessments had not been adopted on a broad scale. We learned that existing pretrial risk assessments were often costly and time-consuming to administer, relying on data that could only be gathered through defendant interviews. Further, most of the existing pretrial risk assessments were created using data from a single jurisdiction, and some states and counties were not comfortable adopting assessments that were based on case records from another locality. Existing assessments presented a single risk level for each defendant, combining—and assigning equal weight to—the risk that a defendant will fail to appear for a future court hearing and the risk that he or she will reoffend. In addition, we found that no existing assessments predicted an individual's risk of new violent criminal activity, which is perhaps judges' greatest concern.

Building on this research, the team created the Public Safety Assessment (PSA), a high-quality universal risk assessment that uses nine factors to produce two risk scores: one predicting the statistical likelihood that an individual will commit a new crime if released before trial, and another predicting the statistical likelihood that he or she will fail to return for a future court hearing. The assessment also flags defendants that it calculates present an elevated risk of committing a violent crime. Scores fall on a scale of one to

six, with higher scores indicating a greater level of risk. It is up to jurisdictions to establish a framework for how to use these scores in judicial decision-making about pretrial detention determinations and how to manage individuals at each level of risk. For more information on the data used to develop the PSA, please see [this](#) document, and for more information about the PSA risk factors and formula, please see [this](#) document.

The researchers piloted the PSA in 2013 and 2014 throughout the entire state of Kentucky; Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Santa Cruz County, California; and Gila, Mohave, Pinal, and Yuma Counties in Arizona. Preliminary data from pilot jurisdictions indicated the PSA had the potential to produce a positive impact. Jurisdictions reported decreases in jail populations or pretrial detention without reported increases in crime. Mecklenburg County, for instance, saw a 20 percent decrease in its jail population over the year it implemented the PSA.

Our team could not have anticipated the strong and immediate demand for pretrial policy change and the PSA. Since the pilot phase, we have received more than 600 inquiries regarding the PSA. To date, approximately 40 jurisdictions have launched, or are in the process of implementing, the PSA. It has played an important role in driving broader system reforms and promoting new pretrial research.

The Future of the PSA

LJAF is committed to evaluating the PSA and understanding its impacts. Projects currently underway include studies to measure jail populations, release rates, pretrial recidivism, and court appearances before and after PSA implementation; validation studies to test for predictive accuracy and predictive bias; and qualitative studies to assess stakeholder perception and use. Researchers are also conducting at least one randomized controlled trial to find out whether use of the PSA leads to reductions in rates of failure to appear in court, new criminal activity, and new violent criminal activity, as well as length of stay in jail.

Additionally, LJAF has awarded several grants to examine predictive bias and the PSA's predictive power, as well as to develop and test new PSA algorithms.

As we proceed to build upon findings from the field, LJAF is answering the call for greater PSA accessibility. In the coming months, we will make the assessment widely available, along with a suite of web-based instructional materials. Jurisdictions and training and technical assistance (TTA) providers will be able to use these resources to implement and iterate upon the PSA at their own pace.

Today, we are releasing two Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to step into the next generation of PSA research and practice. The first RFP seeks a national provider to support PSA improvement, implementation, evaluation, and knowledge dissemination. The second, complementary RFP seeks proposals to execute a comprehensive pretrial research agenda. Both solicitations are intended to support a thriving national movement seeking answers about evidence and pretrial decision-making.

RFP Overview

LJAF is selecting a national training and technical assistance provider to support jurisdictions pursuing pretrial risk assessment adoption and to accomplish a pretrial research agenda. Specifically, the national provider will assist practitioners implementing risk assessment in the context of national pretrial reform and support the expansion of research to understand and improve the PSA and pretrial risk assessment. The diverse scope of the work will require a collaborative community committed to pretrial justice. Core responsibilities will include three types of jurisdiction engagement:

- 1) **High-Touch Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) for 10 jurisdictions.** This engagement provides long-term, in-person TTA with exceptional fidelity monitoring and adherence to LJAF implementation standards in research sites selected by LJAF.
- 2) **Medium-Touch TTA for 200 jurisdictions.** This engagement provides twelve-month cycles of group-based learning with some individualized support for a web-based membership network.
- 3) **Low-Touch TTA for a national audience.** This engagement provides a web-based Learning Community and Resource Center offering knowledge and implementation guidance to the public.

Although the three models differ in method of delivery, the resources developed for each will serve the audiences of all three. The national provider will be tasked with managing all content, messaging, procedures, standards, and learning vehicles to achieve unity and consistency across all methods of delivery for the benefit of jurisdictions.

We know that a diverse coalition has developed in response to the national momentum in pretrial justice. It is therefore our hope that independent organizations dedicated to criminal justice reform will submit proposals that combine talent, skills, and resources in ways that can meaningfully improve pretrial decision-making. The national provider will oversee the project, serve as fiscal agent, and manage all subcontracts.

In the immediate future, the national provider's training and technical assistance will involve the current version of the PSA. That said, the Research RFP that we are simultaneously releasing involves the research and design of new risk assessment models, given LJAF's ongoing commitment to re-evaluate and learn from new data. The training and technical assistance for all three site categories should include new PSA algorithms when developed.

Below we explain the scope of work as well as the process for submitting a Letter of Interest (LOI) to LJAF. LOIs—the first step in the process—will be due on or before 11:59 p.m. EST on May 18, 2018. After reviewing the LOIs, LJAF will invite selected applicants to submit full proposals. A detailed award timeline is included below. We will answer all questions during an optional call at 1 p.m. EST on May 3, 2018. Please use the following conference line: (877) 594-8353, code 72093522#. To submit questions ahead of this call, please email PSARFP@arnoldfoundation.org with "PSA RFP Call" in the subject line.

Term

The project period will be two years in length with the expectation to extend to five years upon LJAF approval.

Scope of Work

High-Touch TTA

The high-touch TTA model provides intensive technical assistance to 10 jurisdictions selected by LJAF as research sites through a future RFP process. Jurisdiction selection will take into account case volume, data capacity, research viability, geographic diversity, and pretrial reform activities, among other criteria. Within these jurisdictions, the national provider will deploy teams of implementation and research experts who will provide training, data and technology support, and guidance on policy development. The national provider's teams will deliver in-person pre- and post-launch site support with exceptional fidelity monitoring alongside the independent research teams conducting evaluation and impact work for LJAF. The 10 jurisdictions will be launched at pre-determined intervals, rather than simultaneously, and the TTA offered by the national provider for each of these sites is expected to last up to five years, depending on renewed LJAF approval after the two-year mark, with the most intensive assistance occurring for the first 12 – 18 months.

Activities & Deliverables

- Apply LJAF's high-touch, in-person TTA model, including processes and training modules used by the PSA's original TTA providers.
- Maintain, improve, and update LJAF's existing high-touch TTA model.
- Promote operational standards recommended by LJAF, such as making the initial release or detention decision within 24 hours of booking and imposing the least restrictive conditions of release required to protect public safety and encourage court appearance during the pretrial period.
- Provide proactive, culturally competent, comprehensive, user-friendly site support through teleconferencing, in-person assistance, web-based assistance, and follow-up support as required.
- Follow best practices of implementation science.
- Assign TTA leaders to each site to monitor and report on site status and needs. This work will include providing a summary of the findings and recommendations to the national provider for improving program performance.
- Assist sites with collecting, monitoring, and reporting on quality assurance, inter-rater reliability, and performance measures.
- Maintain, improve, and update state criminal offense lists that meet the PSA's definition of "violent" and coordinate proper application of these lists nationally.

- Share any newly created TTA resources and findings through the Learning Community and Resource Center as appropriate.

Medium-Touch TTA

The medium-touch network model will offer 200 jurisdictions a set period of enhanced group-based learning and individualized support for pretrial risk assessment adoption in the context of pretrial reform. Network support will be structured by cohorts. Each cohort, a maximum of 50 jurisdictions, will participate in a 12-month cycle of live online programming and site support. Jurisdictions must apply, meet criteria, and commit to certain requirements to be selected by the national provider. Once jurisdictions complete the requirements, they will remain in the network for peer-learning support. Engagement will primarily take place online via the Learning Community and Resource Center platform.

Cohorts will have access to specific group learning and remote and on-site interactive support. At least 12 webinars per year will be hosted with content tailored to site demand. To supplement group learning and instructional materials, each site will receive one site visit and 60 hours of one-on-one, remote support with a relevant expert. Remote support will be limited to options pre-approved by the national provider. A portion of remote time will be dedicated to monthly one-on-one status calls with sites to gauge successes, challenges, and training needs.

Additionally, the national provider will host regular trainings for TTA providers to become authorized providers of PSA site support.

Activities & Deliverables

- Develop eligibility and accountability parameters for network members.
- Create a strategic plan for member updates, curricula, ongoing communications, and peer learning.
- Create a 12-month online learning curriculum with interactive content and expert speakers.
- Assign site leaders to oversee network members, hold monthly status calls, and coordinate on-site and remote TTA for discrete needs based on pre-approved issue areas such as IT integration or quality assurance.
- Establish and manage an as-needed technical assistance team proficient in specific issue areas for targeted audiences—a cadre of experts whose skills and experience can best meet members' needs. Assign consultants to assist members and report on and monitor the assistance provided. Assistance should include short-term, in-person technical assistance and short-term phone assistance.
- Set standards and processes for regularly training independent TTA providers and designating them as authorized providers of PSA site support.
- Coordinate and deliver two trainings per year for TTA providers.
- Publicly disseminate a running list of authorized TTA providers who are trained and available for contractual services independent of LJAF and the national provider.

- Share any newly created TTA resources and findings through the Learning Community and Resource Center as appropriate.

Low-Touch TTA

The low-touch model serves a national audience through the Learning Community and Resource Center, a web-based hub of knowledge, training and implementation guidance for jurisdictions and TTA providers interested in the PSA and pretrial risk assessment generally. The Learning Community and Resource center serves three primary audiences:

- 1) A general audience of people who are not directly implementing the PSA but want to learn about it. This audience includes citizens, journalists, advocates, researchers, and government actors such as judges and public defenders.
- 2) Local champions of pretrial reform who seek background on the value and functionality of pretrial risk assessment as well as the PSA's development, use, and impact. This audience seeks to assess local readiness, share key information with peers, and make decisions about the selection and use of pretrial risk assessment.
- 3) Implementers who directly implement and study the PSA, preparing for and coordinating PSA implementation and research locally. This audience is the primary user of learning resources (guides, videos, webinars, etc.)

LJAF is releasing a website of foundational written learning materials for these core audiences in 2018. The national provider will be tasked with maintaining and improving these written materials as well as building upon them by incorporating advanced delivery methods such as webinars and online group learning.

Resources developed through all types of jurisdiction engagement, high, medium, and low, will be continuously refined and shared through the Learning Community and Resource Center to benefit a national audience.

Qualifications & Activities

- Develop an expert understanding of the pretrial phase of the criminal justice system, particularly with regard to the pretrial release or detention decision-making process.
- Become proficient in the state of the science of risk assessment and pretrial decision-making practice.
- Field research and implementation inquiries from the public.
- Manage a communications staff or consultants responsible for developing a national communications strategy and assisting jurisdictions with communications matters.
- Present PSA research and implementation efforts at convenings for governments, academics, and national and state associations. Create publicly available materials for external stakeholders and policymakers to present and disseminate.

- Build a web-based Learning Community and Resource Center to share knowledge, training and implementation guidance with core audiences through multiple delivery methods.
- Maintain and improve LJAF's foundational low-touch model website of static and interactive learning materials (*e.g.*, guides, templates, case scenarios, and multimedia presentations) that translate LJAF's existing high-touch TTA model into a self-guided implementation process. Incorporate this content as appropriate with the new structure and delivery methods of the Learning Community and Resource Center.
- Building upon LJAF's foundational low-touch model website help desk, manage an advanced help desk to answer general inquiries and refer individuals to appropriate resources.
- Develop, maintain, and update web-based static and interactive learning materials for jurisdictions and TTA providers.
- Develop live and recorded web-based learning opportunities such as webinars and classes for interested general audiences, including jurisdictions interested in pretrial research, PSA adoption, and pretrial risk assessment validation.
- Develop live and recorded web-based learning opportunities such as webinars, classes, and implementation modules to provide staff/user training on how to administer the PSA.
- Develop learning materials tailored to the diverse entities that champion pretrial reform, such as supreme courts, county courts, municipal courts, probation departments, sheriff's offices, the executive branch, policymakers and others.

Research Support

The national provider will develop nationally relevant, specialized TTA materials to facilitate a strong relationship between the 10 jurisdictions selected by LJAF and the independent research teams studying the PSA and pretrial risk assessment use in each site.

Activities & Deliverables

- Pave the way for research to occur in the 10 jurisdictions by assessing stakeholder support, data capacity, and general viability.
- Act as a liaison, as appropriate, between practitioners and independent research teams.
- Promote best practices in risk assessment calibration. This includes promoting norming and validation practices, as well as practitioner education and awareness about the role of actuarial risk assessment in risk-based pretrial decision-making.
- Build and disseminate TTA materials to guide jurisdictions in sustaining high-fidelity implementation, including universally-applicable materials specific to:
 - Norming and validating the PSA locally.
 - Quality assurance and inter-rater agreement processes.
 - Performance metrics tools, templates, and guides.
 - Tracking processes for ongoing operational decision making about pretrial release and jail populations.

Data Support

The national provider will develop nationally relevant, specialized TTA materials to support the 10 jurisdictions selected by LJAF with data collection, data coding, data merging, and data analyses.

Activities & Deliverables

- Assist jurisdictions with IT integration of the PSA into existing case management systems.
- Assist jurisdictions with coding, merging, and analyzing criminal justice data for ongoing quality assurance, performance measurement, and data-driven policymaking.
- Develop materials to guide jurisdictions in partially and fully automating the answers to PSA risk factors within local applications.
- Develop resources to help jurisdictions decipher the statutes of 50 states' criminal offense codes by type (*i.e.*, misdemeanor, felony, etc.) to answer the assessment risk factors efficiently with national data.
- Manage and maintain any existing standalone software developed by LJAF as a user-friendly solution to local PSA integration and results reporting. Leveraging the Learning Community and Resource Center, evaluate user experience and impact for a minimum of one year and, as appropriate, initiate a process to identify alternative or additional technology solutions to improve the resource.

Core Competencies

Implementation

Competitive respondents will have a strong background in:

- Coalition building and culturally competent customer service.
- Local and state government system implementation, with balanced proficiencies in the science and practice of change management.
- Developing effective policy with government stakeholders.
- Preparing jurisdictions to sustain operational and policy changes independent of technical assistance.
- Ensuring criminal justice data systems can adequately collect the data required to use risk assessment.
- Fidelity monitoring, with expertise in collecting, tracking, and interpreting validation results, performance metrics, and quality assurance and inter-rater reliability.
- Using data to generate reports and drive local system policy changes.
- Developing and delivering training curricula that incorporates best practices in instructional design.
- Developing and overseeing online learning communities while achieving audience engagement and retention.

- Overseeing and maintaining website design, content, and writing.

Research

Competitive respondents will have a strong background in:

- Setting processes, standards, and oversight of field research.
- Securing support from stakeholders for complex research designs.
- Managing research projects within government systems.
- Translating research and research implications effectively—verbally and in writing—for practitioners and policymakers.
- Collaborating with data firms, researchers, and academic entities.

Data

Competitive respondents will have a demonstrated ability to:

- Conduct data extraction, data coding, and data merging across complex government data systems.
- Test IT infrastructure before risk assessment launch.
- Translate data issues and data use effectively—verbally and in writing—for practitioners and policymakers.
- Engage and manage web and software developers, as well as end-users, to ensure data and technology resources are user-driven.
- Advise on the technological and non-technological challenges of criminal justice field IT integration.

Oversight & Accountability

National Provider

The national provider, along with appropriate subcontractor representatives, will meet in-person quarterly with LJAF to discuss completed deliverables, upcoming deliverables (three and six months out), and major decisions for the coming quarter. The national provider will manage all subcontractors and serve as fiscal agent for all subcontracts.

At the end of the first two years of the project term, the national provider will present LJAF with a sustainability plan to define how the work will continue independently after five years of LJAF investment.

LJAF

LJAF will oversee the national provider and have final approval on appointments of executive leadership and research specialists. Oversight will be based upon the scope of work and agreed-upon metrics and

deliverables. LJAF will review and approve any major curricula, learning materials, communications, or other publications before they are released on the Learning Community and Resource Center platform.

LJAF will direct the PSA research agenda and generate updates to the PSA and TTA as appropriate based on research findings. LJAF will select, award, and oversee research projects and consultants working in the 10 high-touch jurisdictions. By the time the RFP is awarded, LJAF will have received formal applications and selected a pool of high-touch TTA jurisdictions to match with research consultants. Finalist high-touch TTA sites will be selected in consultation with the national provider.

National Provider and Research Teams Collaboration

The national provider is expected to work in partnership with LJAF and its grantees and consultants in the 10 research sites. Research teams will describe objectives and steps a jurisdiction must take to fulfill study goals. The national provider will update research teams and LJAF on implementation. Both the research teams and the national provider will participate in quarterly in-person meetings and regular conference calls with LJAF. Routine collaboration and communication between the national provider and research teams will be needed to clearly delineate roles and responsibilities and to ensure that the research teams are promptly notified of any challenges that may interfere with research objectives.

Project and Award Timeframe

April 24	RFP released
May 3	Optional conference call
May 18	Deadline to submit LOI
May 28	Distribution of invitations to submit full proposals
June 18	Deadline to submit full proposals
August 1	Notification of award

Letter of Interest (LOI) Submission

LOIs must be submitted to PSARFP@arnoldfoundation.org on or before 11:59 p.m. EST on May 18, 2018 using the subject line “National Provider RFP Letter of Interest.” Please adhere to the criteria below. Failure to meet any of these criteria within the specified timeframe may result in disqualification. LJAF may reach out to the project contact with questions following the LOI submission. On May 28, 2018, LJAF will notify those who are selected to submit full proposals. Note: organizations and individuals may be included as subcontractors in multiple LOI submissions.

LOI Guidelines

A. Organizational Structure and Commitment

Please list all collaborating subcontractors. Next to each organization or individual, please indicate all categories of work that apply.

Categories of Work:

- ✓ High-touch TTA
- ✓ Medium-touch TTA
- ✓ Fidelity monitoring
- ✓ Data support for TTA
- ✓ Research expertise
- ✓ Online learning community and resource platform
- ✓ Instructional design
- ✓ Curricula Development
- ✓ Curricula Delivery
- ✓ Writing
- ✓ Help Desk
- ✓ Administration
- ✓ Communications
- ✓ Other _____

For each organization, briefly summarize the group's role in the project. List titles of potential key staff members and describe their roles.

For each individual, briefly summarize the person's role in the project.

Submit a letter of commitment from each organization or individual as an attachment.

B. Success, Approach, and Accountability

In a maximum of five pages in 11-point font, please describe how you define success in response to this RFP and what approach you would take to achieve the stated goals. Describe the metrics and accountability practices that you would establish to meet milestones, measure outcomes, and monitor subcontractor performance.