

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
Prosecution Research RFP
Question & Answer
June 10, 2021**

Q: Can you provide any more detail on the types of studies that might fall under each of the three topics, as well as specific outcomes of interest? Is cost an outcome of interest?

A: The three topics include assessing prosecutorial process or practices, examining how prosecutors use their discretion, and documenting or analyzing racial disparities. While Arnold Ventures (AV) does not have particular studies in mind, the aim is to provide a wide reach. AV is actively seeking new partnerships with offices and encourages studies that showcase a variety of policies and practices across different offices. Regarding the outcomes of interest, cost is certainly an outcome of interest. On page 3 of the RFP, you will find a [hyperlink](#) to the research agenda. In terms of outcomes generally, AV is seeking a broad set of metrics to understand how decisions and policies impact individuals, families, communities, and the system. AV will prioritize funding research that explores how discretionary decision-making and changes to it can reduce racial disparities in outcomes and reduce the use of and harms associated with pretrial detention and community supervision.

Q: To what extent is AV interested in the implementation of the policy(ies) or practice(s) studied?

A: AV is very interested in understanding and evaluating the implementation of policies and practices. Arnold Ventures has a particular interest in understanding how new and effective policies and practices can be scaled up and modeled in other jurisdictions.

Q: Does AV expect experimental or quasi-experimental designs, or will non-experimental designs also be considered? Is AV looking for descriptive analyses, impact analyses, or both?

A: We welcome all methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, experimental, descriptive, etc.). AV encourages prospective grantees to think about the methodologies that would best answer the research and policy questions the project intends to focus on.

Q: We noted that AV will consider making multiple awards per decision-making point. Is there a maximum number of awards that you plan to make?

A: No, there is not a maximum number. AV is seeking as many partnerships as necessary to adequately research each of the decision-making points outlined in the RFP. If there are 5 grants within a particular decision-making point, AV will work to bring grantees together in partnership and lift up the work collectively.

Q: Given the commitment to racial disparities, is AV interested/looking for an analysis of other marginalized persons such as women/mothers/juveniles? Are you open to studies of juvenile justice policies and programs?

A: Yes. AV will prioritize research related to addressing racial disparities in prosecutorial decisions. But AV is also interested in projects that analyze the impact of prosecutor decision-making and policies to other subpopulations.

Q: Would an application of an evaluation of a diversion program be given less consideration since it will not really include what influences a prosecutor's decision to divert?

A: While AV is very interested in how prosecutors make decisions about diversion, at this time we will only consider a proposal in the nature of program evaluation *if* there is a significant focus on the prosecutor's role as a gatekeeper, for example, a prosecutor's decision-making process for allowing or recommending an individual for a diversion program.

Q: How many grants do you anticipate handing out?

A: AV has no preset number of awards for any of the five decision-making points. AV is seeking strong proposals that align with the RFP's criteria. AV will not limit funding to one project per decision-making point and we hope to have multiple projects examining similar decision-making points.

Q: How many small and large offices will you consider?

A: AV does not have a limit on the number of small and large offices that will be considered for grants. Further, AV will not limit offices based on size. AV would like to work with offices that have a large number of cases, but also recognizes the importance of working with small and rural offices. AV is open to supporting differently sized offices across the United States.

Q: Of the three categories of studies you identified in the RFP, is there a preference for a proposal that encompasses all three (referring to pages 2-3 in the RFP)?

A: Yes, AV will consider proposals that incorporate in any of the categories described on p. 2 of the RFP; our preference is for studies that are as broad and generalizable as possible.

Q: When you say decision-making points you mean those points at which prosecutors use their decision across various parts of their interaction with the system?

A: Yes, as described on pp. 3-4 of the RFP.

Q: If you are working with multiple offices is that sub-award total or for each office? (Example: 3 offices = \$75,000 award or just \$25,000)

A: AV would certainly consider making separate awards to each office and separate sub-awards to each office (totaling more than \$25,000) based on capacity. AV will consider budgets that include multiple \$25,000 office sub-awards. Sub-awards can also be split if that is appropriate based on the project.

Q: For those of us interested in projects working with multiple prosecutor offices, is there a preference for multiple offices that are within the same state, in different states, or no real preference? Because of substantive law issues, does AV have a preference for studies that look at offices within one state or multi-state offices?

A: AV does not have a preference. Let's say a project would be studying a similar policy or practice across multiple offices in the same state, the advantage of doing this would be to expand the policy and practice to other offices in that state that had not considered adopting that policy or it could possibly result in statutory or legislative policy changes. There is value in a project that aims to do that. Second, in terms of similar policies and practices, assessing the impact across multiple offices in different states would go to generalizability and looking at different demographics and populations. It would also showcase the different ways offices think about these policies given their differences substantively in law across states. The justification for sites, especially as it relates to the goals of the project, should be included in the letter of interest (LOI).

Q: Offices may need to repurpose their case management system to do this kind of analysis and may want to look at historical differences of policies and practices. Is a technology-intensive proposal for the purposes of understanding policy and practice something AV is open to, and would AV be interested in historical or retrospective evaluations?

A: It depends on what intensive means. If improving upon a case management overwhelms the budget, it may be difficult to fund this project. If a component of the budget can exceed the \$25,000 sub-grant so that the office can support the work, AV would consider that (i.e., a tech consultant, a modest program or technological fix, etc.). AV will not fund a major revamp of the case management software or any other major data infrastructure. AV is open to retrospective studies to inform future policies or compare old practices to new practices.

Q: Will there be a preference for new offices or new people submitting, and at the LOI stage, does a community partner need to be identified?

A: Yes, AV wants to open up this opportunity to new people and organizations, and AV welcomes and encourages our current and past partners.. New partners to AV that may or may not include newly-elected office leaders that are new to participating in research, in general, are also welcome. AV would not require

that a community partner be identified in the LOI; however, it is beneficial to mention or raise that your team wants to bring in a community partner to be engaged in this work.