

The Vera Institute and CUNY Graduate Center invites applications for four Summer Fellows who will be based in Vera's New York City offices. These **\$4000** fellowships will be offered to Graduate Center Ph.D. students from any program with primary research interests in criminal or immigration justice and the work of the Vera Institute. The primary responsibilities of the award winners will be to collaborate with researchers in one of Vera's 5 centers or programs on research relating to a specific project, including but not limited to data collection, analysis, fieldwork, report writing, stakeholder engagement, and dissemination.

While Vera's centers, programs, and demonstration projects span the criminal justice system, it is offering CUNY Fellows projects in select areas. Please see the attached list of potential projects below, and indicate in your application which project or projects are most relevant to your experience and interest.

Fellowship recipients will be required to be in residence for **120 hours** over the summer of 2018 at the Vera Institute working for scheduled times from 9:30 to 4pm on Monday through Friday. In addition, recipients will be required to attend a welcome reception during the week of May 30, to do a brief presentation on their work during the week of August 20, and write a blog post about their experiences before the end of the Fall 2018 semester.

To apply please send a letter of interest describing your research interests and related experience with specific reference to one of the projects described below, a c.v., a current Graduate Center transcript (Students may submit the unofficial student copy that can be printed from banner), and a letter of support from your primary advisor.

Instructions for submitting your application:

1) Please combine the above materials (except for the letter of recommendation) into a SINGLE file (saved as either as a pdf document or a word document).

Use the following format when naming your document: Last Name, First Name, Program

2) Email your file directly to **lhenderson@vera.org**

Please use your graduate center email address when sending the file.

Instructions for Faculty Recommenders

1) Prepare your reference letter as a regular word or pdf document.

2) Please use the following format when naming your document:

Student Last Name, First Name

3) Email your file directly to **lhenderson@vera.org**

Application Deadline: January 29, 2017

**CUNY Graduate Center / Vera Institute of Justice PhD Student Fellowships
Available projects, Summer 2018**

1) Substance Use and Mental Health Program

The Substance Use and Mental Health program is currently pursuing a variety of projects at the intersection of criminal justice and public health. A summer fellow would have the opportunity to collaborate on one or two of these projects depending on their interest and the needs of the Program, including projects related to: information sharing across criminal justice and public health agencies in Washington, D.C.; developing a sentinel events approach to jail suicide and self-harm; reducing violence in intake and clinic areas in the New York City jail system; and mapping health and justice indicators relevant to the opioid epidemic. Work may include, but not necessarily be limited to, helping: draft literature reviews, analyze data, draft tables, figures and reports, and administer surveys.

2) Policing Program

The Policing Program is the Vera Institute of Justice's newest program and is entering this space at a critical time. A summer fellow would have the opportunity to help Vera refine the program's strategy and action plan around national police reform. This work may include, but not necessarily be limited to, helping: conduct surveys of current practice and opportunities; identify police departments and law enforcement partners that are interested in implementing reform strategies; design research methodologies; and analyze results.

3) Center on Youth Justice

Vera's Center on Youth Justice is conducting a national scan of best practices for working with young adults in jail. A summer fellow would conduct a similar scan of adult prisons. This will build off the work Vera conducted a couple of summers ago, updating it with new information, and drafting a publication.

4) Center on Immigration and Justice - *Researching the Impact of Legal Representation on Immigrants Facing Deportation*

The Vera Institute recently launched the SAFE (Safety and Fairness for Everyone) Cities Network, a group of geographically and politically diverse local jurisdictions from around the country that are committed to keeping communities safe and strong by protecting due process and providing legal representation to immigrants facing deportation. As part of this project, the research team in the Center on Immigration and Justice will be conducting a multi-year study of the varied impacts of legal representation for individuals, families, and communities across the United States. This includes ethnographic work with individuals and their families to understand the range of ways legal representation may contribute to family unity, thus offsetting the negative effects of detention and deportation; analysis of how legal representation for immigrants may contribute to a climate of public and personal safety; and measurement of the economic impacts of legal representation for individuals, households, and the broader state and local economy. This research will also contribute to the Center on Immigration and Justice's ongoing work to develop a blueprint for universal

representation for immigrants facing deportation and inform broader efforts to expand access to due process for all immigrants.

A CUNY Fellow dedicated to research in this area could participate in a wide range of possible activities, including ethnographic research with families, survey design and administration to assess public and personal safety, or measurement of economic impacts.

5) Center on Sentencing and Corrections – *Incarceration Trends Project*

The Incarceration Trends Project (ITP) seeks to advance research on the prevalence and impact of incarceration at the local-level. Vera's ITP dataset merges 45 years of county-level jail population data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) Census of Jails and Annual Survey of Jails, county-level prison population data from state departments of correction statistical reports, and resident population demographic data from the U.S. Census Bureau. For more information, see the ITP data tool at trends.vera.org and complete details on the ITP dataset in [*Incarceration Trends: Data and Methods for Historical Jail Populations in U.S. Counties, 1970-2014* \(Kang-Brown, 2015\).](#)

Vera is seeking a Summer Fellow that will use this dataset to explore the factors that drive the wide variation in prison and jail incarceration rates observed in the more than 3,000 U.S. counties. The Summer Fellow will also contribute to the research activities of the ITP team and help shape the future direction of the project.

6) Center on Sentencing and Corrections - *Solitary Confinement in U.S. Prisons and Jails*

Incarcerated people placed in segregation (commonly 'solitary confinement') are held in heavily isolating conditions, often restricted to a small cell for a minimum of 23 hours per day. Citing the potentially devastating psychological and physiological impacts of this practice, a diverse range of international and national bodies, advocates, policymakers, the U.S. Department of Justice, and corrections practitioners have called for prisons and jails to reform their use of segregation. However, there are still significant gaps in our knowledge relating to how segregation is used across the country.

Vera is embarking on a new set of research activities to (1) document and describe the various policies governing segregation across the United States, (2) analyze administrative data from eight state departments of corrections to identify the characteristics of people placed in segregation, the reasons they are placed there, and patterns and biases in its use, and (3) evaluate the impact of working in these conditions on the physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of corrections officers in two states.

Vera is seeking a Summer Fellow that will leverage the project's multi-site administrative records to explore the similarities and differences among states' use of restrictive housing. The Summer Fellow will also contribute to the work of Vera's research team, which will include the development a national survey on the use of solitary confinement, in prisons and jails, during the summer.