



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

Contact:  
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## 1. What is the National Initiative?

**The National Initiative for Building Community Trust & Justice** is a multi-faceted approach to enhance community trust and help repair and strengthen the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The National Initiative will highlight three areas that hold great promise for concrete, rapid progress in building trust: **procedural justice, implicit bias, and racial reconciliation**. Procedural justice focuses on how the characteristics of law enforcement interactions with the public shape the public's views of the police, their willingness to obey the law, and actual crime rates. Implicit bias focuses on how largely unconscious psychological processes can shape authorities' actions and lead to racially disparate outcomes even where actual racism is not present. Racial reconciliation facilitates frank conversations between communities and law enforcement that allow them to address historic tensions, grievances, and misconceptions between them and reset relationships. The National Initiative will combine existing and newly developed interventions informed by these ideas in six pilot sites: Birmingham, Alabama; Ft. Worth, Texas; Gary, Indiana; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and Stockton, California. It will also develop and implement interventions for victims of domestic violence and other crimes, youth, and the LGBTQI community, as well as conduct research and evaluations.

## 2. Who is leading the National Initiative?

In September 2014, Attorney General Eric H. Holder announced that the Department of Justice has awarded the John Jay College of Criminal Justice a three-year, \$4.75 million grant to launch the National Initiative. The project is led by Professor David Kennedy of John Jay College, with Dr. Tracie Keese as project manager, Professor Tracey Meares and Dr. Tom Tyler of Yale Law School, Dr. Phillip Atiba Goff of UCLA, and Dr. Nancy La Vigne and Dr. Jocelyn Fontaine of the Urban Institute as principal partners. The National Initiative will be carried out in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Justice.

## 3. How was our city chosen to participate as a pilot site?

The National Initiative team considered a list of factors such as geographic diversity, jurisdiction size, ethnic and religious composition, and population density. The team also considered each site's willingness and capacity to engage in the three-pronged approach of the National Initiative, history of social tensions, level of violence, economic conditions, police department size, and historical strategies for addressing procedural fairness, implicit bias, and racial reconciliation at the local level. Finally, the team considered the sites' readiness and capacity to collect the data in order to demonstrate the effects of the interventions.

## 4. What will happen in our city as a result of participation?

The National Initiative team will develop a detailed, site-specific project plan outlining the activities to take place during the course of implementation. The plan for each pilot site may vary depending on whether and to what extent the site has previously addressed procedural justice, implicit bias, reconciliation, violence prevention, and goals around subpopulations such as high-risk youth, victims of crime, victims of domestic violence, and the LGBTQI community.

The National Initiative team will use existing practices and also develop new interventions to assess police departments for implicit bias; educate both police executives and rank-and-file officers in procedural justice; and guide both police and community actors in reconciliation processes. Activities may also include implementing methods for refining the police focus on the small number of people who drive serious violent crime, thus both reducing violence and unwanted police contact with the general public; mentoring high-risk youth; and enhancing the way the police engage with victims of crime, victims of domestic violence, and the LGBTQTI community.

**5. What commitments have the police department and other stakeholders made as part of National Initiative participation?**

The National Initiative team had requested and received formal commitment letters from the police department and city administrators for participation in the National Initiative for the three-year period. The National Initiative team has also received interest from community organizations and community members in each of the pilot sites. The National Initiative team will continue to work to ensure that the community is represented by a diverse constituency.

**6. What does the National Initiative need from the community in order to be successful?**

While the National Initiative team will rely most heavily on criminal justice and city government stakeholders to implement its interventions, building trust will require significant community support. Community support has two key components: willingness to recognize that the interventions are being implemented with the ultimate, mutually beneficial goal of building trust between law enforcement and the community; and participation through constructive feedback on the goals of the National Initiative. Such input is useful and necessary to the success of the Initiative and should be directed to Project Director Tracie Keese at [tracie@trustandjustice.org](mailto:tracie@trustandjustice.org).

**7. How will it be decided who represents the community in the National Initiative work?**

The goal of the National Initiative team is to represent the community through a diverse range of individuals and community groups, which could include but are not limited to clergy, nonprofit organizations, street outreach workers, academic institutions, city officials, advocacy organizations, victims of crime, and invested members of the public. There will be opportunities through the National Initiative interventions for participation by a wide range of groups and individuals.

**8. What role will the community have in shaping the strategies that the National Initiative will implement in this city?**

The community will help to inform the National Initiative team about the challenges and opportunities unique to the city, in part through surveys and other information gathering. This information will help the National Initiative team to tailor its interventions and research design. Throughout the life of the project, the National Initiative team will solicit constructive feedback to further inform and improve the interventions as they are implemented.

**9. How will the community be informed about what changes are being made in the city as part of the National Initiative's implementation efforts and what effect those changes are having?**

The National Initiative team will seek regular opportunities to engage the community directly through surveys and forum discussions of the kind being held this week during the site launch. The site team will have a communications plan for making information available about the progress of National Initiative activities. The National Initiative can also be followed at [www.trustandjustice.org](http://www.trustandjustice.org).

**10. How can community groups and individual community members contact the National Initiative team about the work being done in this city?**

Community groups and individual community members may raise issues for discussion with the National Initiative team by e-mailing the National Initiative's Project Director Tracie Keesee at [tracie@trustandjustice.org](mailto:tracie@trustandjustice.org).