

Columbia Justice Lab Organizational Strategy Consultancy

Contact: Julie Manoharan, Lab Director, j.manoharan@columbia.edu

The Columbia Justice Lab seeks a strategy consultant to evaluate and hone our organizational strategy as a Lab, and to support the development of Justice Lab project-specific strategies.

About the Justice Lab

The Justice Lab is an interdisciplinary initiative housed at Columbia University and led by co-directors Bruce Western and Vincent Schiraldi. Our current mission is to “foundationally reconceive justice policy through actionable research, community-centered policy development, and the sustained engagement of diverse constituencies.” You can find our complete strategic articulation [here](#).

Chair and Professor of Sociology Bruce Western leads a range of projects focused on research, policy development, and narrative change – most notably the [Square One Project](#) and the [Reentry Studies](#). From the Columbia School of Social Work, Vincent Schiraldi leads a range of advocacy, policy, and communications work, comprised of three primary projects: [Youth Justice Initiatives](#), [Probation and Parole Reform](#), and [Emerging Adult Justice](#). 30 full-time staff, 9 consultants, 16 students, and 3 fellows support the Lab’s projects.

The Justice Lab’s Strategic Process

In 2019 and early 2020, we developed our current Justice Lab strategy with robust input from all members of the Justice Lab staff. Since finalizing that strategy in February 2020, the world in general – and the world of justice reform specifically – has shifted dramatically. The Justice Lab converted to a 100% virtual work environment, requiring significant changes in work plans and deliverable formats for all projects. Staff and leadership came together to problem-solve and prioritize around our work, and to provide the professional and personal support needed to meet staff and project needs. We are grateful that we have successfully sustained and even increased Lab funding and capacity throughout this challenging time.

As we move into 2021, we feel it is important to continue our strategic development process to align with a renewed national vision for what justice, health, and safety in the United States can look like. Furthermore, we hope to evaluate alignment of our strategy with the real outputs of our work, and to develop clear implementation plans for how the Lab as a whole, and each project individually, can contribute to our strategic vision.

Our central questions are:

- As currently articulated, do our mission/vision accurately reflect the goals and work of the Justice Lab?
- If our work and strategy are misaligned, how can we align them? Is this something that is done through organizational strategy, or programmatic work? Is there room for compromise?
 - If we can work with jurisdictions to achieve partial, but a significant part, of our goals, how do we evaluate/deal with that?
- If our work and strategy are aligned (or once they are), we need to identify and develop project-specific strategies that flow from and are coherent with the organizational strategy, and specific to each project's work. How can we accurately articulate each project's strategy, while maintaining cohesion with the Justice Lab's organizational strategy?
- What are the metrics by which we can measure the success of the programs and the Lab as a whole towards achieving our stated objectives?
- As we think about our work over the next five years, what are our near-term goals for development to ensure we have the core capacity to successfully pursue our mission?

Project Deliverables

- 1) Evaluate the [Justice Lab strategy](#) – vision, mission, values, key strategies – in order to create updated strategic articulations of each.
 - Work with Justice Lab (JL) leadership and project leads to hone our current strategy and propose updates/changes needed to ensure alignment with goals and outcomes of the work, including facilitated discussions and brainstorming sessions
 - Develop a presentation for all staff to introduce revised strategic articulation, create buy-in, and solicit feedback
 - In collaboration with JL Directors and project leads, finalize updated JL strategy
- 2) Develop project-specific strategy articulations that flow from the updated organizational strategy
 - Work with project teams to identify how that project fits into the JL organizational strategy. These teams include Youth Justice, Probation and Parole, and Emerging Adult Justice.
 - Develop/revisit project-specific articulations of their mission and goals. Each should directly relate to and grow from the broader JL strategy.
 - Note: JL projects are at different stages of strategy development. Some strategies and work plans are quite robust, while others are just emerging. Stages of development will determine how to prioritize project strategy development, and this is something we can discuss in detail during the interview stage of the selection process.

During the course of work with the JL, your primary point of contact will be Julie Manoharan, the Justice Lab Director. Additionally, you will work closely with Justice Lab leadership throughout the course of this work.

Desired Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience developing organizational strategies, ideally with some experience in university environments and in criminal legal system organizations
- Demonstrated ability to identify difficult questions and to find alignment among multiple team members
- High emotional intelligence, and the ability to work well with multiple teams, including leadership
- Experience and/or knowledge of the social and racial justice space

Timeline

We request that interested consultants **submit an application by Tuesday, March 9, 2021**. We anticipate selecting a consultant no later than Thursday, March 18, 2021; with work to begin upon completion of the Columbia contracting process. We expect the duration of the project to last 3-5 months.

Application Process/Submission Requirements

Please send the following to j.manoharan@columbia.edu

- Brief proposal for this work, including recommended timeline and proposed budget
- References

If selected as a potential candidate, we will hold phone interviews (1-2) to select a finalist.