



Communities
Transforming
Policing
Fund



FUNDERS FOR
JUSTICE

#FundSafeFutures TOOLKIT

Borealis Philanthropy is calling on its peer philanthropic organizations to partner with us to #FundSafeFutures.

We believe it's critical that philanthropy come into alignment with movements calling for investment in communities and divestment from carceral systems.

The goal of this toolkit is to provide a curated list of resources that we utilize in our work. **Please note it is not a comprehensive list. There are many extraordinary resources being developed every day. These resources are just a starting point** and were developed for and by incredible movement organizers and more than make the case for why it's critical that we #FundSafeFutures.

OUR CALL TO ACTION

WATCH NOW: [#FundSafeFutures Funders Call to Action Video](#)

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TODAY?

1

GET CONNECTED

- Join a [Funders for Justice Strategy Group](#)
- Sign up with Funders for Justice to learn more about their 2021 Invest/Divest Institute.
- Schedule a call with Borealis' Movement Building Fund Staff.

2

REVIEW AND ALIGN YOUR FUNDING STRATEGY BY ASKING YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

- Is my strategy putting more resources into policing, prosecution, jails, and prisons?
 - Are the people leading the work from the communities most impacted by policing and criminalization?
 - Does my strategy increase the power of system actors (i.e., prosecutors, police chiefs, judges, family regulation systems) or communities?
 - Does my strategy promote or hinder cross-movement solidarity among people impacted by carceral state violence?
- These questions are based on and inspired by Critical Resistance's [Reformist reforms vs. Abolitionist steps to end imprisonment](#) and [Reformist reforms vs. abolitionist steps in policing](#)*

Want to Learn More About Community-Based Safety Strategies?

- **Interrupting Criminalization** — [What's Next? Safer and More Just Communities Without Policing](#)
- **Project NIA & Interrupting Criminalization** — [One Million Experiments - A Virtual Zine](#) to explore community-based safety strategies.
- **Amistad Law Project** — [Practical Abolition: Violence Interrupters](#) — video (2:20)
- **Creative Interventions** — [Resources for Everyday People to End Violence Toolkit](#)
- **Community Alternatives to 911** — [Create Community Care Week](#) — video (24:21)
- **Don't Call the Police** — [Community-Based Alternatives to Police in Your City](#)
- **Barnard Center for Research on Women** — [Addressing Harm Panel](#) (1:05:43)
- **Vision Change Win** — [Get in Formation: A Community Safety Toolkit](#)

Want to Learn More About Why Organizers Are Calling to #DefundPolice?

- **Project NIA** — [Defund Police](#) — video (3:59)
- **Interrupting Criminalization** — [The Demand is Still Defund Toolkit](#)
- **Invest in Community Care** — [Defund the Police](#)
- **Amistad Law Project** — [Practical Abolition: Resources for Communities Not Cops](#) — video (2:10)

Want to Learn More About Grassroots Campaigns to Invest in Communities and Divest from the Carceral State?

- **Interrupting Criminalization** — [The Demand Is Still Defund Report](#)
- **Interrupting Criminalization** — [6 Ds Until She's Free](#) — video (9:53)
- **Black Visions Collective** — [Black Visions Collective: We Need to Abolish the Police & End Militarized Occupations of Our Cities](#) — video (15:24)
- **Marijuana Justice** — [Legalize It Right Campaign - Repair, Repeal, Reparations](#) — video (3:00)
- **Action St. Louis & Close the Workhouse** — [In 2020, We Close the Workhouse!](#)
- **Grassroots Leadership & Communities of Color United** — [What Happened after the Austin City Budget Vote?](#)
- **Amistad Law Project** — [Everyday Philadelphians Want to #DefundThePolice](#) — video (9:47)
- **BreakThrough News** — [Cops Out of the Schools: A Growing Demand](#)
- **The Anti-Police Terror Project** — [Mental Health First Program](#)

Check out these powerful website resources for more information about this work.

- [Community Resource Hub for Safety and Accountability](#)
- [Just Practice: Steps to End Prisons & Policing: A Mixtape on Transformative Justice](#)
- [Interrupting Criminalization](#)
- [Defund the Police](#)
- [Critical Resistance | Resources](#)
- [ACRE: Cost of Police Budget Breakdown](#)
- [Alternatives to Policing Based in Disability Justice](#)
- [8 to Abolition](#)
- [Anti-Police Terror Project's report on reimagining public safety in Oakland](#)

4

REVIEW THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF FUNDING WORK AROUND CRIMINALIZATION

(FROM THE REPORT *The Crisis of Criminalization: A Call for a Comprehensive Philanthropic Response*)



DOs:

- **CONSISTENTLY SET ASIDE funding to make sustained, long term investments** in efforts to challenge criminalization across sectors and program areas, and to facilitate crossissue and cross-community organizing in this field.
- **REDEFINE “wins”** to include building individual, organizational, and community power, as well as subtle shifts in criminalizing narratives that will yield long-term results in policy and practice. Develop innovative indicators of success, using transformational rather than transactional metrics. Recognize that what constitutes a “win” differs depending on context and communities – sometimes, just surviving is winning.
- **EXPAND support beyond campaigns targeting criminal laws,** policies or practices to long term movement building that develops knowledge, builds leadership, shifts culture, and generates the genuine solidarity across communities that is necessary to make policy campaigns successful, ensure effective implementation, and transform the political landscape.
- **INVEST in infrastructure, including centralized coordination,** to support nationally networked local and state organizing, while simultaneously funding network partners to ensure capacity to fully participate in network activities.
- **PRIORITIZE development of thought leadership from directly impacted communities.** Invest in fellowships for grassroots organizers, and support increased research and communications capacity among grassroots groups and think tanks led by people directly impacted by criminalization.
- **LOOK beyond current grantees.** The most effective work to challenge criminalization often happens on a local, grassroots level, and sometimes outside of traditional 501(c)(3) structures. Look for creative ways to support grassroots groups working on the frontlines without access to significant sources of support from major philanthropic partners.

→ **MAKE** resources available for healing, supporting individual and collective leadership, and ensuring individual and organizational sustainability.

Criminalization, and efforts to combat it, are deeply traumatizing, and ongoing. Recognize that organizations may need to set aside time and resources to focus on a campaign to support a member or leader who is currently being criminalized, to address internal conflict fueled by trauma, or to recover from a grueling campaign or intense period of threat or organizing.

→ **INVEST** in meeting immediate needs of criminalized people by supporting pre-arrest diversion programs, bail funds, and funds to provide legal services to people targeted for criminalization and deportation while simultaneously supporting efforts to end criminalization.

DON'Ts:

→ **DON'T** invest in police, prisons, detention centers or other systems that contribute to increased criminalization or harm to communities. Do support organizations working to reduce the harm of these institutions through training, policy change, and individual and systemic advocacy.

→ **DON'T** create rapid response funds that require groups to identify “new” or “urgent” problems. Instead, create easily accessible pools of funding that groups can tap into as needed to deepen their work, act on a strategic opportunity, come together to strategize collectively, build their capacity, or secure healing resources.

→ **DON'T** support campaigns that contribute to increased criminalization by advancing criminalizing narratives of “good” vs. “bad” people, or “deserving” vs. “undeserving” communities (or victims, drug users, immigrants, etc.).

→ **DON'T** support campaigns that call for increased or expanded policing and punishment.

→ **DON'T** support campaigns that tokenize or silence the participation of people directly impacted by criminalization.

→ **DON'T** set unrealistic standards of “success” for criminalized individuals or communities – not everyone will be able to successfully avoid subsequent criminal charges, set backs, or the effects of ongoing trauma of criminalization given the structural obstacles faced by criminalized individuals and communities.

5

UNDERSTAND THE KEY QUESTIONS & TALKING POINTS

FROM *The Demand is Still Defund*
AND *What's Next? Safer and More Justice Communities Without Policing.*

What Have Organizers Accomplished Since the 2020 Uprisings?

From the Summer of 2020 to early 2021, organizers have:

- Extracted over \$840 million dollars from police departments
- Secured investments of at least \$160 million dollars in communities.
- Removed cops from schools in 25 cities saving an additional \$34 million.

What Does Police Abolition Mean?

Police abolition is a process of reallocating resources, funding, and responsibility away from police and toward community-based models of safety, support, and prevention. It is a long-term project that requires shifting our emergency response procedures and putting actual safety-creating systems in place. Our many efforts at reform, which stretch back over a century, have failed. These have typically addressed only a few parts of the larger system or required the police to assume responsibility for social service delivery.

So Are They Going to Get Rid of Police Departments Tomorrow?

No. Police abolition is not about snapping our fingers and instantly defunding every department in the world, leaving communities without strategies to create and sustain safety. Instead, we must replace the police with systems that support real wellness and safety. To do so, we focus on reallocating resources from policing toward human needs like housing, child care, and health care.

What Would Take the Place of Police?

Police abolition is not about making police officers suddenly vanish, either. Instead, we actively shift responsibility for community safety to the people who

are best equipped to deal with those crises. Mental health service providers, social workers, violence interventionists, victim/survivor advocates, religious leaders, neighbors, family members and friends—all of the people who really make up the fabric of a community—are better equipped to respond to crises than armed strangers who are statistically unlikely to live in the neighborhoods they patrol.

But Without Police, Who Will Protect Us from Robbers & Murderers?

In this transition process, we may need a small, specialized class of public servants whose job it is to respond to violent crimes. We also know that some of our community members building restorative justice and transformative justice models have already been addressing “violent crimes.” But we can do more to prevent crime by taking care of one another than by funding more police. Crime isn’t random. Most of the time, crime happens when someone has been unable to meet their basic needs through other means. So to really “fight crime,” we don’t need more cops; we need more jobs, more educational opportunities, more arts programs, more community centers, more mental health resources, and more of a say in how our own communities function.

What About White Supremacist Violence and “Hate Crimes”?

Hate crime statutes offer no protection against violence and no material change to the conditions that produced it after the fact. To address the violence of domination we must work to end reliance on the PIC and other structures that perpetuate white supremacist violence. We must invest in strategies and structures that protect and sustain our communities. Instead of looking to the police, we can look to examples of community self-defense and amend historical models that have been community-based, but worked in collaboration with police. We can also build on the models developed by feminists of color to address gender-based violence and intimate partner and sexual violence without policing and imprisonment.



VIDEO RECAPS FROM OUR MAY 18TH CONVERSATION



WATCH: [Julia Beatty and Jeree Thomas Share Lessons from Black-Led Grantees + 3 Key Takeaways for Funders](#)



WATCH: [Miski Noor Shares Opportunities and Challenges in Building Lasting Safety in Minneapolis](#)



WATCH: [Rachel Herzing on How Funders Should Resource and Support the Ecosystem of Movements](#)



WATCH: [Kayla Reed on How the Movement is Sharpening Strategies — Opportunities in St. Louis](#)



WATCH: [Karissa Lewis Makes the Case for Resourcing at the Scale of Change You Want to See](#)
