

VITAL CITY

DIRECTOR, RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS

Overview

[Vital City](#) provides practical solutions, deeply rooted in research and evidence, to urban problems, particularly public safety. These ideas are presented in a policy journal, original research, public convenings and more. We seek to bring to life the best ideas about how New York and other cities can be healthy, vibrant and safe, aiming to make these solutions — and the facts behind them — accessible to all, as knowledge and debate are the cornerstones of a strong democracy. The ideas we publish come from a variety of sources, and reflect thinking across a broad political spectrum. What ties the ideas together is a commitment to the best of the liberal democratic tradition: belief in progress, a dedication to the collective work of changing society for the better and a commitment to humility, curiosity and empiricism.

Vital City is looking for a Director of Research and Analytics. As part of our leadership team, the Director will help launch into the public sphere ideas and evidence to improve civic life, and will help develop the ideas and data behind our regular publications. *We are seeking a curious, open-minded, creative, energetic, entrepreneurial and collegial person to develop this key piece of the venture.* The ideal candidate is someone who is familiar with crime and justice in New York City and other places, skilled in using data and research to improve urban life and attuned to the variations in the quality of evidence and data. Because Vital City is focused on providing timely and useful information to policy makers and the public, the candidate must be comfortable working in a fast-paced environment and using the best data available, which is often neither perfect nor complete.

Responsibilities

The Director will be responsible for developing three areas of activity:

- **Identify, analyze and communicate** key trends in public safety and specific policies through the preparation of regular reports on the overall trends and on particular topics. Some examples: the rise and fall in shootings during and after the pandemic; the operations of the New York State bail law and its impact on safety and fairness; how proposals to address subway safety align with the best evidence (or don't); the drivers of the size of the jail population and the conditions inside. This work may be communicated through white papers, fact sheets, convenings, op-eds or other approaches. Examples of some of this work can be found on our website. We value skills in building compelling data visualizations to represent those trends.
- **Translate and disseminate** the most promising ideas coming out of the worlds of research and practice into terms that public policy decision-makers can use: that is, communicate key ideas briefly and directly and, working with other partners, show the operations necessary to implement the idea, including the projected costs and benefits.
- **Oversee the building of a publicly available dataset** displaying key information related to the operation of the criminal justice system (e.g. crime complaints, arrests, arraignments, pretrial proceedings, jail admissions and demographics) and eventually datasets related to social distress (e.g. employment, health outcomes, physical conditions, school achievement). This includes working with web developers and designers in order to ensure a display that makes the information accessible to a broad audience.

Skills & Qualifications

Education

- An MS, MA or PhD in economics, sociology, criminology, data analytics or a related field that requires strong quantitative and analytic skills. *A PhD is strongly preferred.*
- At least four years of experience performing analysis of crime and justice trends in a government, non-profit or applied research setting or some other demonstration of a strong command of the real-world context within which crime, incarceration and other trends occur.

Technical skills

- Exceptional skills and experience in quantitative research.
- Experience working with municipal or state-level administrative data, and an ability to use an array of datasets for the direct and indirect measurement of social phenomena. Experience with criminal justice data, especially New York criminal justice databases, preferred.
- Ability to communicate complex statistical data and concepts to a variety of audiences in emails, memos, reports, slides and oral presentations.

Professional skills

- Demonstrated ability to work in a fast-paced environment while maintaining quality, adhering to deadlines and maintaining collegiality.
- Excellence in writing, editing and researching.
- Demonstrated project and staff management experience, delivering understandable research materials from design to publication in coordination with colleagues.

Vital City is a new enterprise in the process of developing its systems and infrastructure. We are looking for someone who will be comfortable (and good-humored) working in our dynamic environment.

To Apply *You are strongly encouraged to read Vital City's publications before applying.*

Please send the following to info@vitalcitynyc.org with "Research Director" in the subject line:

- Resume or CV.
- A piece of writing that you are proud of and that you believe aligns with Vital City's goals or that demonstrates a clear ability to contribute to the improvement of public policy.
- A short piece (not more than 300 words) describing why you believe you are a good fit for Vital City.

Application period will close on April 29, 2024.

Location: Remote, though residency in New York City is preferred

Salary range: \$120,000-160,000, commensurate with experience and location

Vital City is an equal-opportunity employer. It is operated as a project of the Fund for the City of New York, which serves as Vital City's fiscal sponsor.