

## **Concurrent Research Projects of AIR Pilot Project**

Arnold Ventures is funding three complementary research projects to determine

- how often program data are used by police, how useful they are, and how effectively the program increases clearance rates and reduces crime (grantee: RAND);
- community perception of the technology, the police department, and the intersection of the two (grantee: University of Baltimore);
- the potential civil right rights and civil liberties concerns (grantee: New York University School of Law).

Detailed descriptions of the research are as follows:

### **RAND Corporation**

Grantee RAND will conduct a mixed-method evaluation of the Aerial Investigative Research (AIR) pilot project being implemented by the Baltimore Police Department, to understand how often the project is accessed and used by criminal investigators, how often the information provided by the project provides evidence that is useful to the investigators, and how the project affects crime rates, clearance rates, and prosecution success in Baltimore. The evaluation is designed to answer three primary questions:

- What did the project consist of, and how was it implemented in practice?
- How often were data available and useful for target crimes that occurred during coverage periods?
- Does the technology produce improved policing outcomes as measured by increased clearance rates and reduced crime rates for targeted crimes?

Outputs include an audit of the frequency of usable data; a survey of BPD detectives regarding the perceived value of the technology and possible improvements; and an interim (shortly after the pilot ends) and final report assessing the project's effect on crime and clearance rates (publicly released in the spring of 2022).

### **University of Baltimore - Schaefer Center for Public Policy**

Grantee Schaefer Center for Public Policy will conduct a study to understand community perceptions of the AIR pilot project being implemented by the BPD. The study will ask a sample of Baltimore residents about their perceptions of the program and its effectiveness, their neighborhood conditions, and police-community relations. Researchers will also document questions raised by community members during the BPD's planned meetings with residents regarding the technology and its implementation across the city. The study is designed to answer these questions:

- What are residents' perceptions of their neighborhood conditions, police and police legitimacy, and the effectiveness of the program over a period of sustained implementation of the pilot program?

- How do attitudes about police legitimacy and effectiveness relate to perceptions of the technology?
- What are residents' concerns about the technology and were those concerns addressed by the police department?

Activities and outputs include two waves of surveys to uncover to what extent the AIR pilot project affects perceptions, conducted with a sample of Baltimore residents living in neighborhoods most expected to benefit from the pilot program (i.e. residents in neighborhoods with high concentrations of crime and poverty) and a smaller sample of residents from other parts of Baltimore; an interim and a final report to be publicly disseminated on the study findings to inform BPD's assessment of whether and how to continue using the technology after the pilot period.

### **New York University, Policing Project at NYU School of Law**

Grantee Policing Project at NYU School of Law will conduct a civil rights and civil liberties audit of the AIR pilot project being implemented by the BPD in partnership with its technology vendor, Persistence Surveillance Systems, Inc. The audit will review the technology and its operations in order to answer these questions:

- How is BPD using data from the technology?
- How is BPD integrating the data into operations?
- What are the potential civil rights and civil liberties concerns, such as disparate racial impacts, privacy concerns, and constitutional risks.

Information will be collected through a review of documents provided by BPD and PSS, interviews with BPD and PSS, onsite review of BPD operations related to the technology, and interviews with selected civil liberties and civil rights leaders in Baltimore. Output will initially include recommendations to BPD and PSS for possible improvements to the technology and its operations, based on the audit. A final report will be produced to help law enforcement, public officials, and the broader public make an informed decision about whether and how to use aerial investigative technology in the future.