

Equality, Equity, and Opportunity

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Executive Summary:

Inequality is the defining issue of our time – one that has global, national, statewide, and local dimensions. It is at the root of the populist movements from the political left and right that have opposed democracy in many countries and challenged liberal international institutions. It affects democratic participation, and limits access to education, health, and wellbeing. Economic inequality and its social consequences can damage the functioning of a democratic society, undermining support for the very democratic institutions and government policies required to address it. Yet inequality is not inevitable. Redressing it will require research, analysis, education, and action on multiple fronts.

Evidence is mounting that inequality leads to a broad set of societal consequences. Nations with high inequality also have high indications of obesity, drug abuse, mental illness, anxiety, crime, teen pregnancies, and other dynamics that diminish the well-being of those on both sides of the income gap. As opportunities and incomes increase for the most advantaged in society without similar expansion for others, most people face diminished incentives to invest in goals that quickly become unattainable. They experience losses in financial well-being due to technological change and automation and challenges to mental and emotional well-being borne from the expanding gap between their own condition and those of others.

Additionally, children's destinies are our future yet are heavily influenced by the structures and processes that discriminate against their race or ethnicity, their parent's economic circumstances, their disability, and/or their sexual or gender identity. Racial inequality, caused by discriminatory systems and processes, often seems to be intractable. Efforts including social movements, the Civil Rights Movement, and the "War on Poverty" were instrumental in interrupting historic patterns of inequality and helped to reduce the opportunity gaps but fully realizing these mid-century efforts largely remains an unfinished agenda. We desire solutions wherein economics, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, and other factors no longer predicts access to equitable and quality education, fair housing and neighborhood quality, economic opportunities, or equal justice.

Berkeley is well positioned to lead the way to demonstrate how inequalities can be remedied to produce greater opportunity. This Signature Initiative focuses on two major themes: (A) Designing Society for Inclusive Growth and (B) Race, Opportunity, and Transformative Justice. Childhood wellbeing was identified as a third theme that will be addressed as part of the "*Charting a New Course to Health and Wellbeing*" Signature Initiative. As a world leader in studying the multiple dimensions of inequality, Berkeley's faculty, departments, centers, and student body are uniquely equipped to develop policies to diminish inequality and broaden opportunity.

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A. DESIGNING SOCIETY FOR INCLUSIVE GROWTH

1. What is the significant societal challenge that this solution will address?

Economic inequality and its social consequences can damage the functioning of a democratic society. It can galvanize political extremists and exacerbate political polarization. It can generate enormous popular unrest, but that does not necessarily translate into pressure for effective policy solutions to the underlying problems. It can undermine support for the very democratic institutions and government policies required to address it.

Berkeley is a leader in research on the causes and consequences of inequality, and on the policy research that assesses how to reduce inequality. Berkeley scholars have played a central role in advancing our knowledge to date. They have documented how inequality has increased while social mobility has stagnated since the 1980s. They have demonstrated how specific tax and government policies affect inequality. And they have challenged the assumption of an inexorable tradeoff between growth and equity. Berkeley is poised to build on this strength to move the needle in research, policy, and outcomes.

Yet the research to date leaves some big questions unanswered. For example: 1) How do the specific rules that govern the modern economy – such as corporate governance, labor regulation, and antitrust policy – affect inequality? 2) How do inequality of opportunity and inequality of income/wealth affect each other? That is, how far could improvements in opportunity go to moderate inequalities of wealth? And to what extent are tax, labor market policies and social safety net policies that reduce inequalities in wealth preconditions for greater equality of opportunity? 3) How do political and economic inequality interact? That is, to what extent does inequality of wealth create inequality of power? And to what extent do inequalities in power foster the policies that exacerbate inequalities of wealth? What are the underlying political dynamics that have driven the increase in inequality? 4) To what extent does automation in the modern workforce lead to increases in inequality, and what regulatory and/or redistributive response is optimal? How do changes in automation, productivity, and wages in rich countries interact with and percolate throughout the global economy?

We seek to study the sources of inequality in order to propose solutions that address root causes rather than symptoms. We do this by focusing on government policies that shape the allocation of wealth and power in the first place (sometimes referred to as “pre-distribution”) as well as those that redistribute them after the fact.

We have much to learn about the role that market rules affect the distribution of wealth, from antitrust policy to labor regulation to bankruptcy law. These rules vary considerably over time and across space, creating enormous potential for comparative research. The rules that govern markets are becoming even more important as the structure of the economy shifts from manufacturing toward services and information technology. After all, the core commodity of the current era, information, is itself the product of rules: intellectual property rights. And the digital platform economy poses profound challenges for market regulation, from antitrust enforcement to privacy regulation.

To understand the root sources of inequality we also need to examine the broader research and policy agenda of tax policy, labor market policy, welfare, and education. We propose to integrate these various realms into an integrated examination of the modern economy. We might ask, for example: How do “tax expenditures” (tax breaks) affect inequality? How do certain types of welfare expenditures enhance

economic opportunity? How can public investment in education reshape labor markets? And how do court rulings on civil rights issues reorient market governance?

And of course we cannot probe the root causes of inequality without studying politics, which would include studying the dynamics of power, the role of social movements, and interventions that strengthen social bonds and foster collective action. Such research would include a focus on who influences the making of the rules that shape opportunity? Over the last half century, the United States has succumbed to a vicious cycle in which money has flooded the political system, buying rule changes that have enhanced the incomes and wealth of moneyed interests, while reducing the (relative and sometimes absolute) incomes and wealth of those without the capacity to buy such influence. And political polarization has produced gridlock, which makes it very difficult to develop collective solutions to big problems like inequality. A critical means of reversing widening income and wealth inequality, therefore, is to end this vicious cycle. Policies that could increase the countervailing power of those currently without it include labor laws, worker participation on corporate boards, workers' councils, community-based cooperatives, and community banks. Policies that could limit the ways wealth is channeled into political power include campaign finance rules, election reforms, and voting rights protections.

Investigating power imbalances means taking a deep dive into issues of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and socioeconomic status. How can we understand the rise of movements that promote exclusion rather than inclusion? How can diversity be reframed as a value rather than a problem? How can society incorporate and integrate differences to achieve greater equity? And how can we design policies to deliver both social justice and economic growth?

2. How does the Working Group propose that UC Berkeley address this challenge?

- Develop multi-disciplinary research clusters that bridge the social sciences (Economics, Political Science, Sociology, Ethnic Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Psychology, etc.), the professional schools (Policy, Business, Law, Public Health, etc.), and interdisciplinary research units.
- Deploy data for the public good. Unique data, from governments and private sector high-tech firms, are increasingly enabling breakthroughs in research on inequality and opportunity. By generating granular, high-frequency data, technological tools have the potential to answer important questions about human behavior and affect positive social change. This can build on the work already going on at Berkeley, for example at the World Inequality Database, Berkeley Opportunity Lab, the California Policy Lab, and the Greater Good Science Center.
- Engage with policymakers (global, federal, state, local). Partner with government groups to facilitate research and translate research to practice. Engage directly in public discourse and policy implementation. Support faculty and student training around communications, media, and op-ed writing. The humanities have an important role to play in communication of these ideas. Fields like Philosophy, Media Studies, and Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies that specialize in representation, cultural critique, and interpretation, and artistic expression using new technologies and modalities can provide critical perspective. By investing in the humanities, we are also potentially developing more empathetic citizens and bridging cultural divides.
- Create an interdisciplinary minor on inequality and opportunity (*Major in a discipline Minor in a problem*). This topic area offers the perfect laboratory for rethinking the academic major to an interdisciplinary model aimed at understanding the complexity of pressing social problems. The existing interdisciplinary Political Economy major might provide a good home for this new initiative.

- Integrate this theme into study abroad programs. Take Berkeley’s ideas about equitable growth to the world; have the world inform Berkeley.
- Position inequality as a core theme in interdisciplinary graduate programs joining Public Policy with social science disciplines and professional schools (Political Science, Economics, History, Education, Social Welfare & Public Health).
- Engage with the community. Create sustained, reciprocal partnerships by which research and practice inform each other throughout the research and policy processes. Build infrastructure and “connective tissue” to nurture Research Practice Partnerships (RPPs) that include the foremost experts inside and outside the academy: scholars, students, government agencies, and community-based organizations.
- Support students interested in using their educational experiences to continue to address problems of equitable growth in the public and the private sectors after they graduate, and promote continued alumni engagement with the university.
- Develop a signature yearly event on *Designing Society for Inclusive Growth*. The event would not only provide an update on the state of inequality, but it would focus on new policies and programs that could expand opportunity and ameliorate inequality.

3. Why is UC Berkeley uniquely qualified to address this challenge?

Berkeley is already the leading university in the world in conducting research on questions of inequality and opportunity, proposing specific policy solutions, and working with partners locally, nationally, and internationally to implement those solutions. Our faculty are global leaders on these issues. Strengthening and integrating our research infrastructure would have a major impact.

Berkeley is the world leader in this area, with faculty working on these issues across multiple domains, including science, politics, policy, economics, health, history, race, sociology, psychology, immigration, and artistic expression. Berkeley has major strengths in all of the key areas required to transform the study of inequality as outlined above, including the macro-economics of inequality, social policy, education, market governance, and politics. For example, Emmanuel Saez (Economics) led the groundbreaking work on documenting historical trends in inequality placing these issues on the mainstream intellectual agenda. Gabriel Zucman (Economics) is the leading scholar on wealth taxation and global tax avoidance. Paul Pierson (Political Science) is a leader on the political economy of inequality who has advanced our understanding of how the politics and economics of inequality interact. Robert Reich (Goldman School) has expressed concerns about income inequality in America since he was Secretary of Labor in the Clinton Administration in the mid-1990s, and he has been a leading figure in bringing the issue to the attention of Americans through his writing, lecturing, media appearances, and movies. David Card (Economics) is the world’s leading labor economist whose work speaks to the issues around the bargaining power of workers. Hilary Hoynes has shown how well-designed safety-net programs actually invest in people’s long-term well-being. Rucker Johnson has demonstrated how school desegregation increased the welfare of African Americans. Michael Reich has shown that minimum wages as high as \$15 can reduce inequality and poverty without negative effects on employment.

The Berkeley Opportunity Lab has a substantial track record of deploying data-driven research to address inequality. The Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society brings together scholars, community leaders, and policy makers to identify and eliminate barriers to a more just and inclusive society. The Center for the Study of Race and Gender supports critical and engaged research on race, gender, and the inter-relationships between the two. The Center for Equity, Gender, and Leadership collaborates with

business to identify pathways to greater parity. The campus strength in Data Science and Computer Science presents a unique opportunity to link the social sciences with engineering to harness information from newly available data sources for the public good. The California Policy Lab, the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment and the Institute of Governmental Studies promote policy-oriented research. The Center for Effective Global Action connects researchers across campus with expertise in evaluating policies that impact inequality at a global scale. Berkeley also has the infrastructure for outward-facing programming, such as the Journalism School, Cal Performances, and the various arts departments. These units can communicate with multiple publics to share information, galvanize support, and invite community participation in the solution-building process.

Berkeley's professional schools have a distinguished record of exploring and researching various aspects of structural inequality. The Haas Business School is a leader in creating socially sustainable business models, which has integrated concerns about business's role in perpetuating or widening inequality into its curriculum. The Goldman School of Public Policy features courses in its core curriculum on the political economy of inequality. Berkeley Law School has a number of courses that delve into the relationships between inequality and the law, and how the law affects and magnifies inequality. The examination of cause and consequences, and also interventions to prevent and ameliorate harm of social inequalities is at the core of the research and teaching mission of the School of Social Welfare and the School of Public Health. Moreover, a substantial number of students in our professional schools who are specifically interested in all these aspects of inequality take courses in our other professional schools about it, and develop for themselves an integrated curriculum. Finally, the faculty of our professional schools are undertaking a wide variety of interdisciplinary research projects on inequality, its consequences, and possible remedies.

Additionally, Berkeley itself is an engine of social mobility for its students. Our diverse student body can contribute deep understanding of these issues based on both their lived experiences and their scholarship.

Finally, California has become a major laboratory of innovative policy ideas and is poised to continue this role in the coming decade. Berkeley faculty are well-integrated with policy makers in Sacramento as well as in Washington. We are called upon on a regular basis to provide input into policy design and to assess existing innovation policies.

4. If UC Berkeley is successful in addressing this challenge, what will the impact be in 5 years? 10 years? Who will be impacted, and how?

We are confident that a strong investment in research and programs in this critical area will generate three key outcomes over the next 5-10 years. 1) Berkeley will play an even greater role in reframing the issues of inequality and opportunity and proposing novel policy solutions. 2) Berkeley will directly influence policy debates in California, the United States, and the world, and it will innovate directly through local experiments and Research Practice Partnerships. 3) Berkeley will emerge with a much more powerful and integrated infrastructure to support the study of this issue at all levels, from undergraduate courses to graduate training and faculty research.

Currently, individual faculty spend considerable time applying for and administering research grants, time that could be allocated to the research itself. Moreover, social science and humanities-oriented research funders provide grants on a much smaller scale than is the case in the sciences, engineering and health, adding to the proposal-writing and administrative burdens. Additional support will allow us to dramatically increase our research productivity.

In 5-10 years, we will have reframed inequality and opportunity as issues rooted in the broader governance of our economic and political institutions. We will have moved the debate from one that either rejects capitalism, on the one hand, or embraces it with a few piecemeal adjustments, on the other. We will have shifted the debate toward one of promoting equity and opportunity, both economically and politically.

This reconceptualization will inform specific policy recommendations. Berkeley scholars are well placed to engage in these policy debates at both the state and national levels. But we also recognize that we need to further augment this capacity through training programs for graduate students and faculty and by strengthening the outreach capabilities of our research institutes.

In 5-10 years, we will have established broader and sustained research partnerships with government, industry, and the nonprofit sector around the world that demonstrate progress on inequities in key sectors such as educational, health, economic, housing, and justice.

Berkeley will be sought after by students at all levels as the place to come to be trained in rigorous interdisciplinary scholarship with real-world relevance and impact. It will be a national and international model as the top research university that supports deep mutual learning with experts outside of the university to amplify the scientific and social impact of our research.

B. RACE, OPPORTUNITY, AND TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE

The asymmetric concentration of wealth and poverty by race profoundly affects access to opportunity and the ability for equal democratic participation. Economic stability has eluded the majority of Americans, but especially been elusive for African American and Latinx people, who often live in racially and socioeconomically segregated neighborhoods where their children attend racially isolated and under resourced schools, and where they are more likely to experience policing through arrests and imprisonment. These patterns begin early in children's lives, but our public policy responses to them occur very late. Wealth (or lack of) plays an important role in the intergenerational transmission of economic success and contributes to the vicious cycle of poverty. Parental wealth may have just as much impact on children's education attainment as education does, via higher-paying jobs, on wealth generation (Darity, 2018). Crippling college debt saddles young adults and grounds their aspirations before they even take flight. **These factors play a role in the erosion of the middle class, and the failure to move Black and Latinx families into the middle class.**

Racial inequality, which is caused by discriminatory systems and processes, often seems to be intractable, especially because the problems inequality create extends to multiple sectors and aspects of everyday life. Remedying racial inequality can seem like an impossible challenge to take on comprehensively. Yet Berkeley experts conduct research studies, interventions, and policy experiments that indicate how systemic racial inequality can be remedied to produce greater opportunity. **In order to address the persistence of inequality, we need to examine and disrupt existing segregation, and to provide a more equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across domains.** An ecology of related social institutions hold great promise to realize a society in which race no longer predicts access to (1) **equitable and quality education**, (2) **fair housing and healthy neighborhoods** and (3) **transformative justice**.

This initiative positions Berkeley to:

1. strengthen existing and facilitate new interdisciplinary scholarship and experiments so as to demonstrate the extent to which implemented reforms are actually reducing inequality and creating opportunity in intersectional ways,
2. amplify the innovations taking place in our local and statewide communities in the areas of education, and housing in particular,
3. spur new research on justice reforms and racial inequality,
4. support research-policy-practice partnerships that implement or imagine race and opportunity.

There have been impactful efforts to broaden opportunity structures. Social movements and legislative efforts have worked before their recommended interventions could realize their potential at scale. For example, the Civil Rights Movement, the “War on Poverty” initiatives, and landmark policy reforms were instrumental in interrupting historic patterns of inequality, and helped to reduce the opportunity gaps in schooling through segregation and targeted investments, but fully realizing these mid-century advances largely remains an unfinished agenda. To improve access to opportunity, we need a clearer understanding of how exclusionary zoning, among other factors, has constructed low-poverty and segregated **neighborhoods**, and how **policing and carceral policies** have interacted with public **schooling** to disproportionately affect Black and Latinx communities. We need to consider a multimodal, multidisciplinary approach to to desegregate neighborhoods and disrupt the hypersegregation of public schools and racial disproportionality in incarceration rates.

1. What is the significant societal challenge that this solution/topic area will address?

Differential access to **fair housing and healthy neighborhoods** and **school quality** explains many of the racial differences in rates of upward mobility and democratic participation. We have relied on the **criminal justice system** to address inequitable childhood public investments in education, housing, and health, rather than make the longer-term, sustained public investments in education or the development of equitable neighborhoods that could alleviate growing deficits of opportunity in the lives of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Education

All children are able to learn provided they have access to well-resourced, diverse schools, qualified and well-supported teachers, and high-quality and culturally relevant curriculum (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Yet U.S. schools are too often separate and unequal, and California’s schools are especially characterized by racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic segregation. Consider these statistics ([Johnson \(2019\)](#)): Black children are, on average, two grade levels behind white children in terms of performance on standardized assessments; and children in the poorest districts are, on average, four grade levels behind those in the wealthiest districts. At the same time, education researchers have identified the overuse of standardized assessments to draw high-stakes conclusions about school closures or student placement in academic programs as reinforcing existing segregation patterns.

Resegregation patterns prohibit students from attending the same well-resourced schools and from learning in the same classrooms. **Opportunity-rich communities where children thrive in well-funded, highly-resourced schools are geographically close but socioeconomically worlds apart from the concentrated poverty schools within the same metropolitan area.** Research has shown that half of the “achievement gap” observed in third graders already existed on the first day of kindergarten. While black children comprise about 18 percent of pre-school children, they represent roughly half of those suspended or expelled at these tender ages, and their schools are more likely to be subjected to closures and

consolidation. Education leaders have often invested more resources in school police officers than academic counselors or for mental health supports. **But studies have shown that racial disparities in school suspensions and expulsions at various ages have less to do with student behaviors than adult perceptions of Black and Latinx children.**

In the education realm, the solutions to these challenges emphasize “school choice” as a panacea, but without sufficient attention to the realities that parental wealth determines one’s ability to exercise that choice. Moreover, school choice policies are layered upon decades of unequal housing and social opportunities (Scott & Holme, 2016), and can often exacerbate these existing issues absent sufficient regulation over enrollment and expulsion policies. Often the “choices” facing lower-income families are in fact confinement to underfunded and low-performing schools, crime-ridden and over-policed neighborhoods, lead-infected environmental conditions, with a dearth of job opportunities paying a living wage for less-educated workers. And there is increasing evidence, much of it produced by Berkeley researchers, including Rucker Johnson, Prudence Carter, Tina Trujillo, Emily Ozer, and Janelle Scott, that these approaches decoupled from broader approaches and investments often exacerbate existing inequality. Meanwhile, other researchers, including Alan Schoenfeld, Thomas Phillip, Kris Gutierrez, and Glynda Hull have identified promising development of teachers, and school and system leaders to ensure culturally relevant, and pedagogically sound teaching and leadership practice.

California is primed to learn from the research and interventions of Berkeley researchers. At the pre-K-12 level, in recent years California has been a leader in launching three innovative, large-scale efforts to reduce academic achievement gaps between socioeconomically disadvantaged children and their more advantaged counterparts: (1) the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF); (2) Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and expansions of public pre-K investments; and (3) the state’s new System of Support (SOS). Each of these interventions addresses a distinct educational challenge: inequalities in district funding, disparities in student preparation for kindergarten, and the need for targeted supports for district improvement efforts, respectively. **UC-Berkeley scholars have evaluated these multiple interventions and provided evidence of positive synergies whereby their combined impacts on student outcomes are over and above the sum of their individual effects** (*Getting Down to Facts*, 2018).

But persistently high levels of segregation and the affordable housing crisis make it more difficult to develop a diverse, high-quality teaching force and threatens some of that progress in California. Once housing costs are taken into account, California has the highest poverty rate in the country, with 20% in poverty. With the growing prevalence of gerrymandered school district boundaries, racial inequality in school funding continues to be a pressing issue (Johnson, 2019). Nationwide, on average, predominantly white school districts receive \$23 billion more in education funding than districts that are predominantly made up of students of color, despite serving the same number of students (EdBuild, 2019). Furthermore, affluent white districts receive 19 percent more per student than poor nonwhite districts; and even among similarly poor districts, predominantly white districts currently receive 11 percent more funding per student than nonwhite districts. Therefore, while Berkeley researchers have valuable contributions to redressing educational inequality, this initiative will connect this educational expertise to the research on fair housing and healthy neighborhoods.

Fair Housing and Healthy Neighborhoods

Popular policy approaches detach education and justice reform, and separate both from neighborhood context. But the symptoms of achievement gaps, concentrated poverty schools, segregated neighborhoods, and inferior access to living wage jobs, are a product of larger structural common roots. These can be reversed with intentional, sustained evidence-based public investments in children and families, as well as deliberate disruption of how our cities have historically been built to enable exclusion.

Housing equity has long been the primary vehicle through which to accumulate wealth in this country, but the rates of appreciation differ dramatically across neighborhoods defined along race and class lines. Modern-day redlining is represented in the predatory lending practices of some banks targeting minority communities for balloon payment mortgages, which fueled the home foreclosure crisis that accompanied the Great Recession that began in 2008. This resulted in a devastating loss of wealth in minority communities and a further disinvestment in public education. While wealth of the median white family has increased since the early 1980s, over the same time period the wealth of the median black family declined 75 percent and the median Latinx family declined 50 percent. Research has shown that housing costs play an important role in determining the extent to which parental resources determine children's access to educational opportunities and subsequent upward mobility. The cost of access to high-quality public schools with good neighborhood amenities is capitalized into housing prices, wherein race and socioeconomic divides ensue.

In many ways, housing prices have come to represent as much about the price of buying higher chances of upward mobility for one's children, as the size and characteristics of the house itself. These are inseparably linked due to the historical heavy reliance on the local property tax base to fund public schools, coupled with housing policies and zoning codes that incentivize segregation.

Many different efforts to integrate low-poverty neighborhoods, either by building housing for different income levels or by enforcing fair housing law in cases of discrimination by race, have fallen short: Progress towards integration has been slow. Some have questioned the premise of deliberate integration via public policy, suggesting that breaking up concentrations of poverty may dismantle political power, community cohesion, or social networks (powell; Chapple), or even reproduce principles of white supremacy by dispersing minorities to majority white suburbs (Goetz 2018). Ironically, the most diverse neighborhoods in U.S. metropolitan regions now tend to be either the inner-ring suburbs or the gentrifying core. These areas tend to experience an array of other challenges, from fiscal distress to social conflict.

In order to address opportunity at the neighborhood level, we need to understand how our cities reflect past racist federal policies that determined where people could live. Zoning regulations, racial covenants, and redlining shaped the flow of people and capital into older urban neighborhoods, as well as the exodus of people and capital to affluent enclaves at the urban fringe. These patterns of positive social disinvestment left behind neighborhoods that would become "million dollar blocks" -- blocks in which the criminal justice system spends millions to police, surveill, and incarcerate residents.

Cities and states are beginning to recognize that single family zoning, rooted in racism and perpetuated by fear of contagion by the lower classes, is hindering both growth and opportunity. With large swaths of low-density urban areas, many with high-quality schools, services, and amenities, essentially off-limits to new development, the choices for where to site new housing are disastrous: on the suburban fringe, with poor accessibility and heightened greenhouse gas emissions, or in low-income neighborhoods in the urban core, potentially displacing vulnerable communities from their location near jobs and services. In both instances, building new housing may well lead to more inequality, not less. The alternative is to reform exclusionary single family zoning – which is exactly what Minneapolis has just done in its [new comprehensive plan](#), and others from the city of [Seattle](#) to the state of [Oregon](#) are attempting. The reforms range from enabling denser housing development to ending single-family zoning altogether. But progress is slow, requiring not just coalition-building but research to help the public make the connection between zoning and opportunity.

Transformative Justice

Over the past three decades, US incarceration rates have more than tripled, driven primarily by state and federal policy choices — punitive sentencing policies for non-violent drug-related offenses and increased sanctions for some violent offenses — not increases in criminal offending. As a state, California spends more on criminal justice expenditures than education, and there is evidence that fiscal pressures from skyrocketing incarceration costs have crowded out some public childhood investments in education and health over the past 10-15 years.

While the US places 70,000 juveniles in detention each day, research has shown that such a penalty does not only fail to deter future crime, but it instead disrupts social and human capital development and leads to increases in the likelihood of future criminal involvement in adulthood.

Recent criminal justice reforms would have been unimaginable for some just ten years ago. The midterm elections saw support for the dismantling of laws designed to restrict the participation of newly emancipated Black Americans in civic life. Voters in Florida repealed bans on voting for felons and Louisiana citizens struck down a Jim Crow era law designed to contravene new constitutional requirements for Black participation on juries. At the national level, and in a pivot from the tough-on-crime politics of the recent past, we witnessed a bipartisan victory in the passing of legislation to mitigate the damage done by the nation's shift to mass incarceration. We are witnessing innovative reforms in criminal justice policies and practices across the country: the elimination of cash bail, prosecutorial turns away from punishment first when it comes to drug offenses, and repeals of laws that allowed young offenders to be treated and punished as adults.

As is often the case, California is a leader in these youth and adult reform efforts. Over the first decade of the 21st century the state of California reduced the number of youth in the secure detention from 10,000 to 800. The state prison system underwent a historical transformation through Realignment -- reducing its population by restricting the types of offenses that can land a person in prison to only the most serious crimes. San Francisco's District Attorney championed amnesty for marijuana arrests and voters recently supported the strongest transparency requirements when it comes to police accountability. This landscape would have been hard to imagine thirty years ago, as the law-and-order approach took hold. *Yet, these victories are not guaranteed. There is a responsibility to now ensure that these reforms take root and that they are actually reducing inequality and creating opportunity. Berkeley faculty, students, and staff have been central in redirecting policy and regulatory efforts, but there is much more work to do to push past simplistic approaches to the signature challenge of race and opportunity.*

2. How does the Working Group propose that UC Berkeley address this challenge?

The strengths of Berkeley could support an initiative focused on four key areas: **Research, Creative Expression, Reporting, and Evaluation**. The integration of reporting with the other three would help to distinguish the Berkeley effort from its peer institutions.

- **Research:** The initiative could support cutting-edge, multidisciplinary research among faculty and graduate students in the area of racial inequality and justice, with an emphasis on research-practice partnerships that engage with communities who are most affected by inequality in housing, education, and justice. This research would also involve the study of politics and how to advance evidence-based policies that promote racial justice in Sacramento, and in localities across California. Our undergraduate and graduate students, connecting to our Public Service Center and Local Government and Community Relations offices, will help to develop the infrastructure to provide technical support to local communities and elected officials seeking to design and implement reforms. In a set of

capstone projects and internships supervised by faculty and staff, UC Berkeley will work closely with communities to train them in the intricacies of zoning, education, and justice research, and on the use of our tools, and communication strategies with the public.

- **Creative Expression:** To paraphrase Toni Cade Bambara, the role of the writer and the artist is to make the reform movement irresistible. The arts and humanities have played a central role in excavating various aspects of inequality, and have been critical forces in social movements. Music, literature, poetry, and the visual arts, for example, can be tapped to examine how inequality is lived, and how it might be transformed. UC Berkeley's Departments of African American Studies, Ethnic Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Theater, Dance and Performance Studies, are key areas of strength that must be central to this signature initiative.
- **Reporting:** Disrupting racial inequality in education, housing, and criminal justice is simultaneously a research and communication task. Research will be necessary to establish how zoning, race, and opportunity intersect, and indeed how zoning shapes opportunity by other factors such as age and household structure as well. We will need to disseminate results in ways that speak to a broad audience, from politicians to academics to residents of all backgrounds. Communication also means training and engagement; we will work closely with local government and community-based organizations to ensure that they have both the tools and the strategies to move forward. Translational research is important. Also, when it comes to support for reforms, (popular) media has played an important role in this cultural shift. We have also seen an increase in independent sites dedicated to criminal justice reporting over the last several years. Examples include The Marshall Project (led by Bill Keller; <https://www.themarshallproject.org/>); Injustice Watch (<https://www.injusticewatch.org/>); and Ear Hustle (<https://www.earhustlesq.com/about>). **The Berkeley School of Journalism** would be an ideal partner in a cluster focused on in-depth reporting and storytelling. Such an initiative could build on strengths in Digital Humanities and Visual Culture more broadly.
- **Evaluation:** A new system will require a close look at the ways that current education, zoning, and policing reforms address or exacerbate racial inequality. For example, a years-long effort supported by the MacArthur Foundation dramatically reduced the number of youth in detention in sites across the country, but these victories were unevenly distributed as racial disparities became even more acute. Just a few years out from stop-question-and-frisk being ruled unconstitutional, there still remain gross disparities in the number of people who are cited for marijuana possession in New York City. Proactive policing is slowly being replaced by predictive policing and other algorithm based approaches to surveillance and punishment. Yet, predictive policing, imagined as a way to address accusations of racism in policing, holds the potential to reinscribe racial lines in seemingly color-blind ways. In addition, the William T. Grant Foundation's initiative on inequality is supporting multidisciplinary and mixed-methods research on the causes of inequality, but also on promising interventions to it.
- **New Initiative:** Faculty, researchers, and students from across campus will work together in the new Urban and Spatial Data Commons in the Division of Data Science and Information. Faculty from African American Studies, education, economics, planning, public policy, sociology, and geography, among others, will come together with data scientists and statisticians to develop innovative approaches to analysis. In collaboration with the D-Lab, we will develop a repository of zoning data linked to other spatial data resources and a set of tools that are easily accessible, such as interactive maps. The Urban and Spatial Data Commons could also be a site in which people come together to **examine the ways that policing and punishment, and educational opportunity, are organized**

spatially. Instead of operating as siloed concerns -- the Commons would provide a site in which spatial analysis, archival data, oral history, and innovation approaches intersect, for example.

- **Undergraduate and Graduate Engagement:** Our undergraduate and graduate students are already working with our Public Service Center and Local Government and Community Relations offices, to help develop the infrastructure to provide technical support to local communities and elected officials seeking to design and implement zoning reforms. Yet there is much work to be done to fortify these efforts. In a set of capstone projects and internships supervised by faculty and staff, we will work closely with communities to train them in the intricacies of zoning, the use of our tools, and communication strategies with the public.

3. Why is UC Berkeley uniquely qualified to address this challenge?

Berkeley's record of critical inquiry positions it well to be at the forefront of interrogating the potential of new reforms and imagining justice and cities for the 21st Century. In addition to leaders in the fields of racial inequality, education, policing and criminal justice policy, Berkeley has a number of faculty and ongoing research projects that intersect with **equitable education, fair housing and healthy neighborhoods, and transformative justice.** There is a critical mass of organizations and potential stakeholders located in the Bay Area that are leaders who are visionaries in these domains and with whom we can strengthen collaboration.

UC Berkeley faculty, staff, and partners have commitments and expertise across disciplines and sectors that position us for transformational impact in this area:

- Multiple departments and colleges (e.g. African American Studies, Data Sciences, Economics, Environmental Design, Ethnic Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology) combined with our schools (e.g. Business, Education, Law, Public Health, Public Policy, and Social Welfare) offer expertise and partnerships that uniquely position us for this work.
- Organized Research Units (ORU's), Centers (e.g. Center for Cities and Schools, Innovations for Youth (I4Y), California Policy Lab, Center for the Developing Adolescent) and public facing organizations (e.g. Lawrence Hall of Science, Cal Performances, BAMPFA) offer unique lenses and approaches to research and intervention within and across the sectors in this initiative.
- Across campus, existing community partnerships focus on discrete aspects of interconnected challenges related to inequality, with the opportunity to create powerful synergies.

Berkeley is also uniquely qualified to bring a critical lens to these discussions, with faculty experts in areas of critical feminisms, intersectionality, disability, Queer theory, and anti-Blackness studies - to evaluate and predict the transformative potential of new reforms. New imaginings of justice will require that historically marginalized faculty and intellectual traditions be brought to the center of these conversations. There exists deep and broad expertise at UC Berkeley, as well as an interest and commitment to working across silos.

UC-Berkeley has demonstrated success in identifying and eliminating barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society through, for example the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society. Moreover, there exists notable hubs of research expertise within departments and centers. Scholars such as Nikki Jones (AAS), Jonathan Simon (Law), Jack Glaser (GSPP) and Amy Lerman (GSPP), for example, consider how justice, race, and other social institutions interact, and also make recommendations for

policy and practice. In addition, the Underground Scholars program, affiliated with Stiles Hall, provides peer mentoring and support for Berkeley students who were formerly incarcerated.

Berkeley is a leader in rethinking neighborhoods marked by racial and socioeconomic segregation. Our researchers understand that housing policy is *also* education policy. Disrupting exclusionary single-family zoning is both a formidable research and communication challenge. Research will be necessary to establish how zoning, race, and opportunity intersect, and indeed how zoning shapes opportunity by other factors such as age and household structure as well. We will need to disseminate results in ways that speak to a broad audience, from politicians to academics to residents of all backgrounds. Communication also means training and engagement; we will work closely with local government and community-based organizations to ensure that they have both the tools and the strategies to move forward.

An interdisciplinary group of UC-Berkeley faculty are already working to dismantle structures of segregation, whether through the lens of institutions, governance, economics, or the humanities. Research centers on campus who share a mission to address neighborhood disparities include the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, the Turner Center for Housing Innovation, the Center for Community Innovation and its Urban Displacement Project, and the Fisher Center for Real Estate and Urban Economics. Faculty across these centers may disagree on the specifics of housing policy, but they all support the need for zoning reform. Supporting this work, with a deep and abiding interest in addressing exclusion and its role in the affordable housing crisis, are a number of local and national foundations.

4. If UC Berkeley is successful in addressing this challenge, what will the impact be in 5 years? 10 years?

In 10 years, as a result of these efforts to address this challenge, we will realize a number of important accomplishments that will reduce racial inequality. These include:

- The development of a public awareness of the impacts of exclusion on opportunity
- Elimination of single-family zoning codes in cities across the country
- Significant new construction of different housing types in formerly exclusive areas
- Increased neighborhood diversity
- Improved educational, health, and economic outcomes for disadvantaged groups
- Development of an infrastructure to analyze and promote inclusive urban environments
- Development of new analytic and communication tools to empower local communities
- New research expertise in segregation and the built environment

Our dedication to lead the research effort, and partnership with policymakers and organizations that advance evidence-based advocacy will aim together to realize this vision.

C. RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

We require support for collaborative and rigorous teaching, research, and engagement. We envision a more interconnected approach to undergraduate and graduate education at UC Berkeley in which we encourage students to pursue multidisciplinary courses of study through new or more vibrant joint degree programs, internships in local community organizations or in policy settings, and more opportunities to engage directly with community partners. We note that major foundations have reoriented their giving priorities to address inequality. This includes the Hewlett Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the William T. Grant Foundation, and the Gates Foundation. Given UC Berkeley's deep and broad expertise in research on and interventions to redress inequality, we are primed to tap into these funding initiatives. To accomplish these goals, support and resources are needed for:

1. Tools, technologies, infrastructure, support and related resources for data collection, cleaning, and storage.
2. Faculty and researcher release time to facilitate collaboration, and physical space in which scholars interested in each theme can engage.
3. Research Innovation Grants: seed grants to Berkeley faculty through a competitive application process.
4. Curriculum Innovation Grants and Service release to incentivize new curricula, new interdisciplinary majors/minors, or expand the reach of existing courses.
5. Policy Innovation Grants: to Berkeley faculty for collaborative partnerships with policy partners.
6. Outreach and engagement on a multi-year basis:
 - Support for academic, policy, and public forums, exhibitions, and conferences.
 - Creating a network of sustained “two-way streets” of meaningful reciprocal relationships enabled by research-practice-policy partnerships (RPP’s).
 - Providing adequate support and infrastructure for faculty and students engaged in community- and practice-engaged research that addresses issues of inequality and opportunity.
 - Support for infrastructure to implement the *Berkeley Engaged* approach to formalize and provide ongoing support to research-practice partnerships to work sustainably with our surrounding communities to transform opportunity structures and ensure youth engagement with new pathways towards upward social mobility.
7. New Faculty FTE: We estimate: 6-10 additional faculty positions in strategic areas such as urban data science, race and housing, education policy, and transformative justice. Such growth is aligned with campus plans to add 100 new faculty to the University and would allow us to meet student demand across departments and programs. We have the opportunity to create faculty clusters across departments and to create joint positions in diverse subjects, such as Social Welfare, Law, Environmental Design and Data Science. Such new positions would support the cross-cutting and interconnected research, teaching, and societal impact we seek to enable through this initiative.
8. Graduate Student, Postdoc, and Visiting Scholar Fellowships
9. Funding for a discovery fellowship program for undergraduates to support their scholarship, and for mentorship programs such as Berkeley Connect to support the undergraduates.
10. The commitment and resources from UC Berkeley leadership to facilitate change regarding our own campus practices so that we may transform opportunities and experiences for undergraduates and transfer students.