



Ministry  
of Justice



# Supporting organisations to undertake rigorous evaluations – the role of government administrative datasets

Social Research Association Annual Conference 2014

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# Agenda

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- Context
- What is the Justice Data Lab?
- How it has been used
- Findings to date
- Reception of reports
- Future direction of administrative data evaluation labs

# NPC's programme for developing administrative data evaluation labs

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## The need:

Funders increasingly require organisations to show their impact and deliver a specified outcome in return for payment or investment

Not-for-profit organisations themselves want to evidence the outcomes of their work

## Aim:

Support not-for-profits to access restricted (primarily government) data to assess the impact they have on their beneficiaries– **increasing supply** of useful data

Encourage not-for-profits to engage with data, increasing awareness and knowledge– **stimulating demand**

**Four year programme funded by the Oak Foundation- Housing and Homeless Programme. First milestone was the Justice Data Lab**

# Aim of the Justice Data Lab

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**Launched in April 2013**

..to improve the **evidence** base on successful rehabilitation..

..by giving organisations working with offenders secure and legal access to **aggregate re-offending** data

..enabling them to better assess the **impact** of their work on re-offending

# Overall schematic

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## Provider organisation

Individual level data  
sent to MoJ

Aggregate data return



**MoJ**

Analysis and  
Matching

# Specific report – Prisoners Education Trust

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Prisoners Education Trust submitted data relating to offenders who had a grant for a distance learning course, or Art and Hobby Materials between 2002 and 2010. About 50% of participants were known to have received one of four indicated grant types for (i) courses currently accredited<sup>1</sup> and (ii) unaccredited<sup>1</sup>, (iii) Open University courses and (iiii) Arts and Hobby grants.

We carried out one overall analysis and four sub-analyses, the results are in the table below.

	<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Significant</b>	<b>Estimate of impact</b>	<b>Reduction in frequency</b>
<b>Grant type</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Difference?</b>	<b>on re-offending</b>	<b>of re-offending?</b>
Open University	805	Y	2% to 8%	Y
Accredited	152	N	inconclusive	inconclusive
Unaccredited	76	Y	1.4% to 21%	Y
Arts Materials	173	Y	0.3% to 14%	Y
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3,085</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>5% to 8%</b>	<b>Y</b>

<sup>1</sup> Funded by PET through grants from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

# Cumulative findings to date

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Of the 119 reports completed so far:

- 26 reports indicated statistically significant reductions in re-offending on the one year proven re-offending rate
- 86 reports indicated insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion about the effect on the one year proven re-offending rate
- Of these 86, 10 reports detail statistically significant reductions in the frequency of re-offending
- 7 reports indicated a statistically significant increase in re-offending on the one year proven re-offending rate

# Reception of reports

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Survey issued to organisations whose data we published in the previous month has fed back that:

- The expectations around the Data Lab had been met, although our customer service could be variable
- That the Justice Data Lab is a useful service for the VCS, helping to provide information on re-offending and impact
- More information on outcomes (severity, re-incarceration rates, employment and benefits) would be helpful
- Results had been used to understand / demonstrate impact internally and externally – the majority of organisations that responded to this survey had plans to alert external organisations as to their results and impact



# Justice Data Lab challenges

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Awareness- good coverage through partnership with Clinks & NOMS improving evidence study, but work still needed

Technical:

1. Data collection & storage: full name, D.O.B, intervention & sentence start/end date
2. **Sample size and matching-** minimum of 60 users, reductions in sample size
3. **Applicability & Attribution e.g. sex offenders excluded, difficulties to create accurate comparison group for housing, SUBSTANCE MISUSERS**

Attitudinal

1. Measurement- binary and frequency provided, severity being developed. Wider discourse of desistance from crime and how useful are reconviction measures.
2. Transparency
3. Timeliness- JDL provides retrospective results

Resource:

1. Lack of time/staff

Legal:

1. A few charities concerned to use JDL without service user consent.

Funders:

1. Concern on how they will act on the results

# The drivers for increased use of administrative data are strong

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- Demand for good evidence of impact – From funders & What Works Centre



- Availability of data (80% of data globally created in last 2 yrs—IBM)



- Technological capability to analyse data securely and safely



- Internal analytic capabilities of charities (mixed economy of charities + skills shortage)



- Cost of technology

# Benefits of the ADEL approach-

*Routine* production of high-quality low cost evaluations of social policies and interventions

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<b>For not-for-profit organisations...</b>	<b>For government data holders...</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clear route for accessing government data</li><li>• Understand the outcomes for clients</li><li>• Understand impact– comparison group</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing more accessible and tailored data</li><li>• Support provided to increase demand for impact evaluations (e.g JDL expert panel)</li></ul>
<b>For policy makers, researchers commissioners...</b>	<b>For service users...</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Supports evidence based commissioning</li><li>• As more organisations undertake robust impact measurement using a Data Lab, the body of evidence increases</li><li>• This can be used for meta-analyses to understand better what works</li><li>• Shift in evaluator role from (quantitative) data collection to data analysis, synthesis, interpretation, qualitative research</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alongside other forms of research– ultimately better outcomes for service users as the most effective interventions are provided</li></ul>

# **NPC's programme for developing administrative data evaluation labs (ADEL)**

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Progress:

**Justice:** Year 2 of Justice Data Lab

**Health (impact on hospital services):** supporting HSCIC & Cabinet Office to write a business plan for an ADEL

**Education (attainment):** early stage discussions with a third party to develop and pilot an ADEL

**Employment/Benefits:** discussions with DWP

**Substance misuse:** data sharing and senior level buy in needed

**Demand:** Ongoing communication with the sector- blogs, news articles, papers, events, conferences, newsletter, meetings.

# Contact Details

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Any questions?

## Ministry of Justice

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0203 334 4396

Websites:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/justice-data-lab>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/justice-data-lab-pilot-statistics>

## New Philanthropy Capital

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# Project timeline

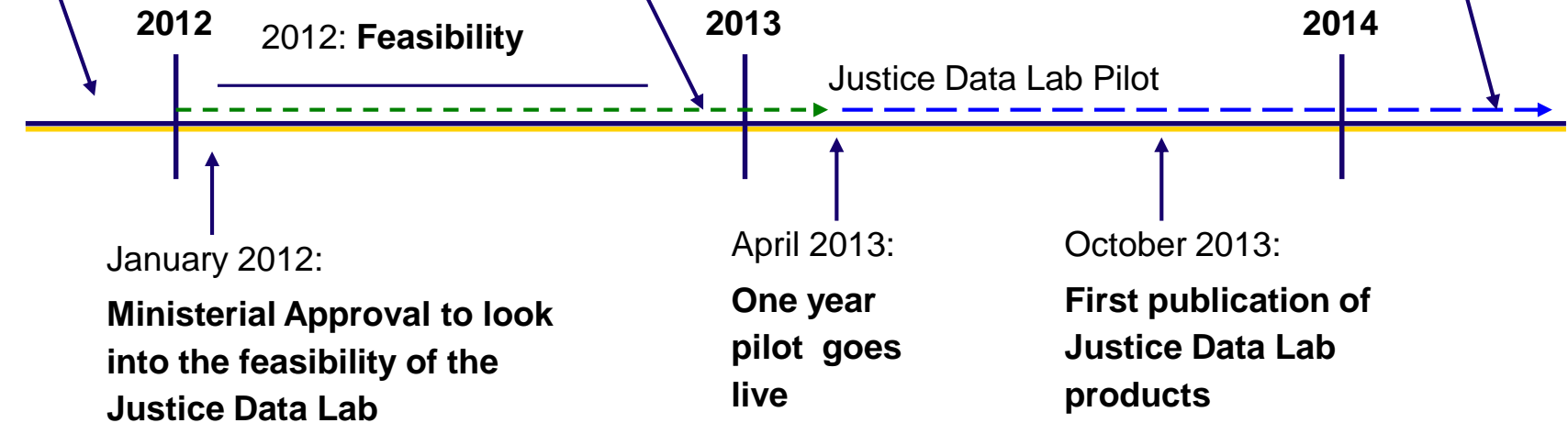
December 2011:

**NPC approach MoJ about Data Lab idea**

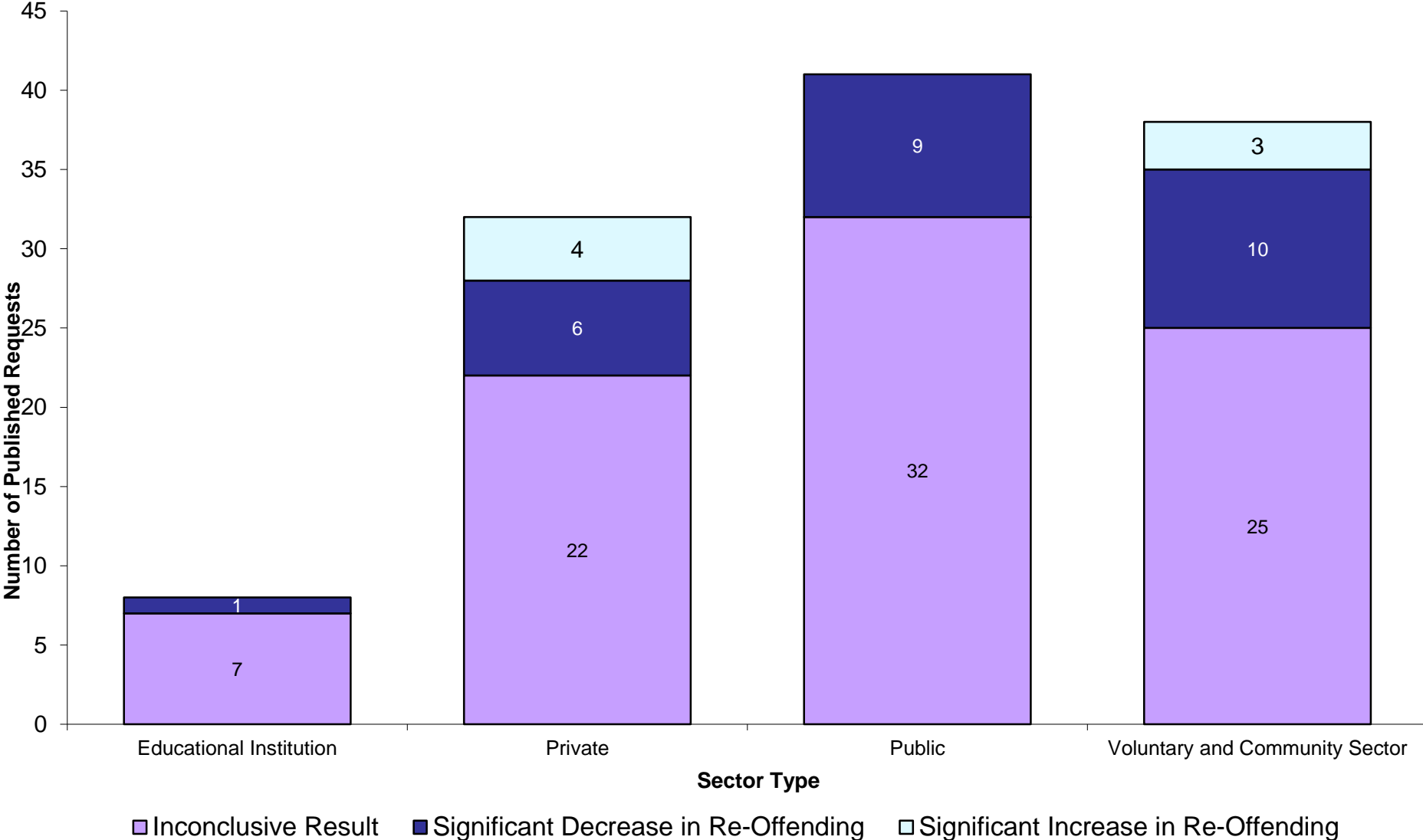
December 2012:  
**Announcement that Justice Data Lab would be piloted**

Spring 2014:

**Pilot extended for further year and announcement of improvements to the service**



# Justice Data Lab results by sector type, published to date



# Justice Data Lab results by intervention type, published to date

