

PayPal Newsroom

*Leading payments platform and academic institutions come together for research improving law enforcement's understanding of illegal firearms trafficking*

SAN JOSE, Calif., Feb. 11, 2020 /[PRNewswire](#)/ -- PayPal Holdings, Inc. (NASDAQ: PYPL), along with the [Center on Crime and Community Resilience](#) at Northeastern University, in partnership with the [University of Chicago Crime Lab](#), today announced the formation of a research initiative designed to better understand illegal firearm trafficking and financing in the United States.

The research initiative, with funding support from PayPal, is designed to generate actionable insights and guide efforts to monitor and respond to illegal firearm distribution, with the goal of combating the illegal sale of firearms. The specific research proposal further seeks to understand what types of payment methods are used to finance these illegally-sourced firearms.

"We are working to combat illegal gun trafficking, which will help to reduce and eliminate firearm-related violence," said Dan Schulman, president and CEO of PayPal. "All of us at PayPal are proud of the work we do with law enforcement officials around the world to assist in efforts to identify and stop illegal activity from occurring. This research is an extension of these efforts, and will help law enforcement and all payment platforms to better understand and address the issue of illegal firearms trafficking."

The initiative will be led by Dr. Anthony Braga, director of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Northeastern University and director of the Center on Crime and Community Resilience. Dr. Braga is an internationally-recognized expert on the subject of gun violence and reducing illegal access to firearms, and has worked with city and state governments across the country to combat unauthorized gun sales to dangerous individuals and criminal networks.

"The United States has a significant problem with illegal acquisition of guns by individuals at elevated risk of becoming involved with gun violence. It is these guns that end up in the wrong hands that lead to serious violence," said Dr. Braga. "Through this cutting-edge research enterprise, we hope to advance innovative collaborations between law enforcement and private industry to understand the evolving landscape and to generate actionable solutions."

Dr. Braga and his Northeastern team are joined by experts from the University of Chicago Crime Lab, the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California, Davis, led by Garen J. Wintemute, a professor of emergency medicine, and Philip J. Cook, a professor of public policy at Duke University and co-director of the NBER Working Group on the Economics of Crime, to address this complicated and important issue. Together, these organizations have experience working on numerous projects related to illegal and underground firearm markets. PayPal, which has prohibited firearms sales on all of its platforms and is invested in finding ways to prevent illegal firearm transactions, is supporting the research.

"Preventing illegal firearms trafficking and violent gun crime has always been the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) top priority," said ATF Management. "It is clear from crime guns recovered on the streets every day that we need to better understand emerging firearms trafficking techniques that utilize the internet, and disrupt the illegal financing behind them. To mitigate this threat, ATF welcomes the opportunity to collaborate with our partners to identify how we can enhance the security of private businesses and promote public safety."

More information about the research initiative can be found [here](#).

### **About PayPal**

PayPal has remained at the forefront of the digital payment revolution for more than 20 years. By leveraging technology to make financial services and commerce more convenient, affordable, and secure, the PayPal platform is empowering more than 300 million consumers and merchants in more than 200 markets to join and thrive in the global economy. For more information, visit [paypal.com](https://paypal.com).

### **About Northeastern University Center on Crime and Community Resilience**

The Center on Crime and Community Resilience at Northeastern University partners with governments and non-profits to find research-based solutions to crime and other complex social problems. Our projects range from helping community partners address gang violence, to studying body cameras worn by police, to working to prevent gun violence through programs that reclaim firearms from people prohibited from carrying them. Through these projects and others we focus on the needs and priorities of the partners and communities we work with, with the goal of bringing resilience to vulnerable communities. To learn more about the Center on Crime and Community Resilience, visit [ccresilience.org](https://ccresilience.org).

### **About University of Chicago Crime Lab**

The University of Chicago Crime Lab partners with policymakers and practitioners to help cities design and test the most promising ways to reduce crime and improve human lives at scale. We focus on the most important criminal justice challenges of our time, including efforts to help Chicago and other cities prevent crime and violence from happening in the first place, improve schooling and income opportunities for those living in communities most impacted by violence, and reduce the harms associated with the criminal justice system. To learn more about the Crime Lab, visit [urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime](https://urbanlabs.uchicago.edu/labs/crime).

### **Media Contacts:**

#### **PayPal**

Justin Higgs, 408-219-8118

Bernadette Green, 404-210-3322

Tiffany Peng, 669-287-6845

**Northeastern University**


Mike Woeste, 617-373-5471

**University of Chicago**

Kim Smith, 773-834-0518

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