

# SRCD State Policy Fellowship Program

SRCD is currently offering a U.S. state policy **post-doctoral** fellowship which places developmental scientists in state executive branch agency offices focusing on programs and policies that support children's learning and well-being. The fellowship is an immersion experience in policy development, implementation, and evaluation.

## About the State Fellowship Program

The SRCD State Policy Fellowship runs from September 1st to August 31st. During the fellowship year, fellows are supported by a placement supervisor within their state executive branch agency and by SRCD.

SRCD expects the state fellowships to provide fellows with opportunities to:

- Gain further understanding of state level early childhood policies and programs
- Understand the linkages between research and policy through an immersion experience
- Engage in the policymaking process
- Learn how developmental science can be utilized to improve policy development, implementation, and evaluation
- Contribute to the planning and implementation of key state programs and initiatives that serve diverse youth and families
- Learn how to communicate effectively with policymakers and other stakeholders
- Formulate more informed and useful questions for policy-related research
- Further expand your career opportunities and network
- Strengthen your skill sets with professional development opportunities

The SRCD policy team works to facilitate the fellows' experience and are available as a resource throughout

the year.

The State Fellowship Program aims to:

1. Provide fellows with firsthand experience in state policymaking, program implementation, and evaluation.
2. Provide state executive branch agencies greater access to research expertise on a diverse range of child development topics to enhance evidence-based policy development, implementation, and evaluation.
3. Build a network of experts that bridge developmental science, state policymaking, and practice.

### **Examples of State Policy Fellow Responsibilities**

State fellows can be involved in bridging developmental science research and policy through a variety of responsibilities. Depending on the specific placement, responsibilities might involve, for example:

- informing the design of a new state pre-kindergarten program or working to strengthen an existing program.
- assisting in the planning or implementation of policy initiatives to improve program quality.
- supporting the design, implementation, or analysis work for a program evaluation.
- participating in taskforces or workgroups to support data-driven decision-making, program improvement, or strategic planning with policy stakeholders.
- conducting needs assessments and focus groups to identify stakeholder needs and to inform programming.
- contributing to research or policy briefs or reports to the legislature.
- assessing a program's impact on diverse communities.

One of the main positive experiences that I had involved going to meetings with [my state supervisor] and meeting politicians and advocates throughout the state...I would recommend [the state fellowship]—especially for students of color because I feel like I had opportunities that I wouldn't have gotten otherwise.

— Former SRCD State Policy Fellow

[Read about selected contributions from past SRCD State Policy Fellows](#)



### **SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship**

The SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship places early career developmental scientists in state-level executive branch agencies that oversee the *implementation* of programs and services that support children's learning and well-being (from birth to 8 years old) for a full-time, immersive experience. Examples of areas of focus for agencies include, but are not limited to, those that oversee: education, child care, income security, early childhood mental health, family engagement, and child abuse prevention. Recent placement offices include: Indiana Family and Social Services Administration in the Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning and the Oregon Department of Education in the Early Learning Division.

Fellows are supported by a placement supervisor, who ensures the fellowship experience. Supervisor responsibilities include:

- Coordinating a successful onboarding process for the fellow to acclimate to the office, including workstation setup

- Supervising the fellow's placement work and fellowship experience through regular meetings and by providing policy learning opportunities
- Reviewing fellowship products, including the fellow's professional development plan
- Attending semi-annual meetings with SRCD fellowship staff to ensure the fellow and the state placement office has a successful fellowship experience

## **Who should apply?**

The SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship is designed for scholars from a variety of backgrounds and scientific disciplines and who have an interest in policy. Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Earn a doctoral-level degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D.) relevant to child development prior to the start of the fellowship\*
- Citizenship Eligibility Requirement (varies by state): Fellows work as independent contractors during the fellowship at their state placement. State governments may vary in their citizenship requirements for contract employment. For instance, individuals who are U.S. citizens or DACA recipients are typically eligible. Applicants must confirm with the potential placement that they meet the state's eligibility requirements prior to submitting the application.
- Applicants must be members of SRCD

SRCD embraces a commitment to, and support for, diversity in the child development field. This includes training and engaging a workforce that is representative of diversity in all its forms. We encourage fellowship applications from scholars of color, scholars from underrepresented cultural and ethnic backgrounds, scholars from low-income backgrounds, first-generation college graduates, scholars with disabilities, and scholars from the LGBTQIA+ community.

Previous fellows found it helpful to speak with former fellows about the application process and/or their fellowship experiences. We recommend you reach out to former fellows that you may know in your own extended network. If you'd like to reach out to a former fellow outside your network, you can also view [list of previous SRCD Policy Fellows](#). Alternatively, you can contact [policyfellowships@srcd.org](mailto:policyfellowships@srcd.org) to set up a connection with a former fellow.

*\*Note: In previous years, applicants could not be more than two years post-doctoral level degree. For the 2023-2024 fellowship, this requirement has been lifted, however it may return in future years.*

## How to Apply

The learning and the growth was just incredible...I got an in-depth understanding of how decision-making is done at the state agency...I think you only get that when you have an immersion experience.

— Former SRCD State Policy Fellow

This experience has given me the additional perspective of how state policies and systems influence the programs that directly serve children and families and that help improve outcomes for children; we need research to support efforts at all levels of the system.

— Former SRCD State Policy Fellow

## Benefits of Being a State Policy Fellow

**Be immersed in policy work at the state level.**

**Gain policy training as an early-career professional.**

- One-day state-specific training on the state's child and family policy landscape, organized by SRCD.
- Two and a half day training focused on federal child and family policy in October, hosted at the SRCD office in Washington, D.C. Fellows will be reimbursed for all travel expenses.
- Monthly topical seminars for fellows with topics focusing on child and family policy, evidence-based policymaking, and career development.
- Two-day Capstone Meeting at the end of the fellowship year in August, hosted at the SRCD office. Fellows will be reimbursed for all travel expenses.
- Individualized professional development planning to support the fellow's unique learning goals over the course of the fellowship program.
- Development of a professional portfolio that showcases the fellow's experiences and contributions to the placement throughout the fellowship year.

## **Receive a stipend and health insurance or tuition allocation.**

- Stipends for fellows follow the federal government GS level 12 pay scale, taking into consideration post-Ph.D. experience and their respective locality.
- An allocation for purchase of health insurance is provided with the amount depending upon number of family members covered.
- SRCD provides fellows with an allowance of up to \$1,300 for moving expenses if they moved 50 or more miles.

## **Receive a professional development fund.**

- Fellows receive an allowance of up to \$2,800 to use towards professional development opportunities during their fellowship year.

## **Join an extensive network of fellowship alumni.**

- The SRCD Federal Policy Fellowship began in 1978 with congressional placements. In 1991, the fellowship program added placements in federal executive branch agencies. The SRCD State Policy Fellowship began recently in 2017.
- To date, there is a network of approximately 200 fellowship alumni.

Learn about the structure of the post-doctoral state fellowship, examples of past placement activities, and the benefits of becoming a fellow in this informational webinar.



**Why Apply to the  
SRCD U.S. State Policy  
Fellowship Program?**

SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

srcd.org

[view the full transcript here](#)

I am immensely grateful for this fellowship experience. My understanding of early learning systems and the work that is done to support the well-being of children has expanded beyond the realm of academia. I feel more prepared to incorporate policy perspectives into my research, from the questions I ask to the methods and implications. Furthermore, I am confident that the fellowship has helped me develop the skills to meaningfully collaborate and partner with early learning policy-makers.

— Former SRCD State Policy Fellow

### **Questions?**

Contact us via email at [policyfellowships@srcd.org](mailto:policyfellowships@srcd.org) or call 202-800-0666.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)