

State Policy Fellowship FAQs

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General Questions

What is the duration of the SRCD State Policy Fellowship?

The SRCD State Policy Fellowship is a 12-month immersion experience beginning in early September and ending in late August. Individuals participating in the program must sign an agreement acknowledging this year-long commitment. The commitment is full-time for post-doctoral fellows.

Is there any flexibility with the dates of the fellowship?

No. A commitment to participating for the full 12-months (beginning in early September and ending in late August) is critical.

What is the relationship between the SRCD State Policy Fellowship Program and the longstanding SRCD Federal Policy Fellowship Program?

SRCD is continuing its strong commitment to the SRCD Federal Policy Fellowship Program. SRCD State Policy Fellows will have multiple opportunities to meet with the SRCD Federal Policy Fellows who have placements in federal executive branch agencies or in Congress.

Does this program involve learning advocacy?

No. The intent of this program is to learn how to bridge research and policy. It involves learning at the placement about the research questions the state agency needs addressed and attempting to address them through empirical research. It involves learning at the placement about program implementation, policymaking, and the role of research in the state agency. If learning and participating in advocacy is a major goal for the graduate student or post-doctoral candidate, this program is not a good fit.

Will there be any reporting requirements to SRCD?

SRCD State Policy Fellows will be asked to complete a log weekly providing a brief summary of activities and hours at the placement. They will have monthly calls with SRCD staff. They will be asked to write a brief spotlight column to highlight their experiences at their placement. Towards the end of the fellowship year, fellows will also be required to create a final Professional Portfolio providing examples of their contributions at the placement. State placement supervisors will be asked to review the materials prepared for the final Portfolio before they are shared with SRCD to assure that nothing that is considered confidential by the agency is included. The Portfolio will also involve an introduction and reflections on what the fellow has learned through the fellowship about bridging between research and policy. Towards the end of the fellowship year, fellows will be asked to participate in a Capstone Meeting at the SRCD headquarters in Washington, D.C. to share presentations based on their Portfolios. Fellows will also complete an end-of-year survey to report on their experience.

What kinds of support will the SRCD office provide?

SRCD staff support the SRCD State Policy Fellows in a number of ways, including:

- Setting-up an individualized state-specific training day for each fellow. In addition, SRCD will provide a training in Washington, D.C. focusing on federal child and family policy,
- Organizing monthly seminars hosted in Washington, D.C., in which SRCD State Policy Fellows will be invited to participate remotely, and
- Having monthly check-in calls with the fellows.

SRCD State Policy Post-Doctoral Fellows will be supported in the development of professional development plans to set goals for the fellowship year and for building on the fellowship in further career steps.

What should applicants do if they have further questions?

Please email policyfellowships@srcd.org or call 202-800-0666.

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Application Requirements

May I apply if I am not a U.S. citizen?

No. SRCD State Policy Fellows are required to be U.S. citizens.

Do I need to be a SRCD member in order to apply?

Yes. In order to be eligible for the SRCD State Policy Fellowships, graduate students and post-doctoral scholars must be SRCD members. However, the academic mentor and state placement supervisor who will work with the fellow do not need to be members.

What kind of support will the academic mentor be expected to provide to the fellow?

Academic mentors will be expected to support the fellow's placement experience by meeting on a regular basis (at least once a month) and through providing guidance and sharing resources relevant to placement projects (within guidelines set by the agency regarding confidentiality and disclosure about projects the fellow is assisting with). Support might include, for example, directing the fellow to research literature relevant to a project; serving as a sounding board in the formulation of a research question, evaluation plan, or plan for monitoring aspects of program implementation; or addressing issues with data analyses. The academic mentor will be asked to participate with the fellow, their state placement supervisor, and SRCD staff in a kick-off call to start the fellowship year. The academic mentor, fellow, and state placement supervisor will be asked to develop their own plan for periodic contact as a "triad" during the course of the fellowship year. The academic mentor will also be asked to discuss a professional development plan with the fellow; review the fellows' Professional Portfolio at the end of the year; and complete an end-of-year evaluation of the fellowship.

What role is the state placement supervisor expected to play in the fellowship?

The state placement supervisor should be prepared to utilize the background of the fellow in developmental science in the work of the state agency related to early childhood programs and policies, such that the fellow has opportunities to meaningfully contribute to the work of the agency. In addition, they should be prepared to support the fellow in developing a greater understanding of state policy development, implementation and evaluation through encouraging participation in appropriate meetings and providing opportunities for discussion of questions and reflections. While there should be an idea of projects appropriate for the fellow to assist with initially, it is expected that projects will evolve, and new projects and opportunities will emerge during the course of the year. The state placement supervisor will be asked to participate with the fellow, the fellow's academic mentor, and SRCD staff in a kick-off call to start the fellowship year. In addition, the fellow, state placement supervisor, and academic

mentor will be asked to develop their own plan for periodic contact as a “triad” during the course of the fellowship years. The state placement supervisor will be asked to provide input on and review all fellowship products, including the fellow’s Spotlight column, Professional Portfolio, and professional development plan. They will also be asked to attend semi-annual meetings with SRCD fellowship staff to ensure the fellow and the state placement office has a successful fellowship experience.

Can I reapply for an SRCD State Policy Fellowship?

Yes. SRCD does not impose limits on the number of times a candidate may apply.

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The Application Process

What will a complete online application include?

A complete application includes several items from the post-doctoral candidate, the proposed academic mentor, and the proposed state executive branch agency in which the candidate would be placed, if they were awarded the fellowship. The online application requirements are described in further detail on the [SRCD State Policy Fellowship page](#).

Will there be an interview?

No, there will not be an interview for this application process.

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State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship Program

General Questions

Who should apply for an SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship?

The SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship is designed for early-career post-doctoral scholars whose background is in child development. Post-doctoral candidates must have received a doctorate-level degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D.) by August 31st, 2022 and no more than two years before the start of the fellowship.

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.

Is this fellowship program designed for early-career fellows?

Yes. Candidates for the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship must have received their doctorates in child development no more than two years prior to the start of the fellowship. However, mid-career and distinguished scholars are welcome to apply for the ongoing SRCD Federal Policy Fellowship Program.

Where are the post-doctoral fellowships located?

The SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship involves a full-time placement in a U.S. state-level executive branch agency that oversees the implementation of programs and services that support children's learning and well-being (from birth to 8 years old) . Examples of areas of focus for agencies include, but are not limited to: education, child care income security, early childhood mental health, family engagement, and child abuse prevention. State executive branch agencies include those under the direct authority of the governor, as long as they met the requirements above. Placements can be in any state. Funding to relocate is not provided through this program. Recent placements include: Indiana Family and Social Services Administration; Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Early Intervention; and Oregon Department of Education, Early Learning Division.

What do fellows work on at their placements?

Fellows work on a wide range of projects at their placements to support the work and mission of the agency. We recommend you read Spotlight columns and Professional Portfolio abstracts from prior fellows [here](#). 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.

Who funds the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship?

The SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship is funded by the Heising-Simons Foundation.

How is the salary of a fellow decided?

Stipends for fellows will be parallel to the federal government general schedule (GS) pay scale, taking into consideration previous experience. Stipend (and benefit) levels reflect the fact that the fellowship offers substantial educational value over employment, so may or may not be competitive with those for employment. Please note that fellows may not negotiate stipends and benefits directly with agencies or placements. Fellows will receive a stipend aligned with

the federal GS, Grade 12 level associated with their locality of residence. SRCD will provide fellows with an allowance to purchase health insurance if needed. Fellows will also receive \$2,800 for professional development expenses such as travel to research meetings. Please note that academic mentors will receive an honorarium of \$2,500 for the year in recognition of the guidance they provide to the fellow.

Is there an allocation to pay for a move?

SRCD provides fellows with an allowance of up to \$1,300 for moving expenses if they moved 50 or more miles.

Can a post-doctoral candidate apply for both the SRCD Federal and State Policy Fellowship Programs?

Yes. However, applicants should provide a strong statement of interest specific to each program and follow the specific guidelines for each fellowship application process.

Can a current or former SRCD Federal Policy Fellow be a candidate for the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship?

Yes, as long as they fulfill all of the requirements and the timelines align.

Will it be possible for SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellows to continue work on research projects during the fellowship year?

Similar to programs like the Fulbright Scholars Program, the SRCD State Policy Fellowships are immersion experiences, and fellows will not have time during the workday for their own projects. Fellows sometimes find they are able to work on their own writing projects in the evenings and on weekends. Fellows need to adhere to ethics rules in the state executive branch agency. Fellows must request permission from their host office or agency to continue active work on grants, contracts, or consulting so as to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest or an actual conflict of interest. SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellows must receive approval to work on non-federal as well as federal research collaborations or appointments during the fellowship.

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Application Requirements

Can the proposed academic mentor for an SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellow be someone other than the post-doctoral candidate's prior academic advisor?

Yes. The academic mentor can be any professor or a senior researcher from a university center or research organization and who has a background in research on state early childhood policies and programs. We highly recommend that the academic mentor be from a university center or research organization in the same state as the fellowship placement agency. If the proposed

academic mentor will be in a different state, your application must include confirmation from the academic mentor that they will be able to provide you access to university resources such as libraries, statistical software, and/or training.

What level of degree is needed for those applying to be fellows in the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship?

To be eligible for the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship Program, candidates must have completed a doctoral-level degree by the start of the fellowship in September 2022 (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., or M.D.). A candidate with a J.D. alone is not eligible without any of the aforementioned degrees.

Can applications involve a post-doctoral scholar who will complete the doctorate after the application deadline but before the fellowship year starts?

Yes, as long as the dissertation defense will take place by July 1st and the degree will be awarded by August 31st. A letter from the dissertation committee chair will be requested to confirm this timeline if a full application is invited. There will be no exceptions to this timing.

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The Application Process

What does a complete online application include?

From the post-doctoral candidate:

1. Candidate data including education and demographics, and certification of accuracy
2. Statement of Interest
3. Current C.V.
4. Three letters of recommendation

From the academic mentor:

1. Academic Mentor Form
2. Current C.V.

From staff at state executive branch agency:

1. Statement of Support

Note: The Selection Committee will only read three (3) letters of recommendation for each applicant. If an applicant submits additional letters of recommendation, SRCD will randomly select which three (3) letters of recommendation the Selection Committee will review for that applicant.

For further information, visit the [SRCD State Policy Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Process page](#).