

| POSTED MARCH 10, 2026

A Call for Applications for SRCD's Future of the U.S. Policy Fellowship Task Force

Applications are now open for The Society for Research in Child Development's (SRCD) newly launched Task Force dedicated to refreshing the U.S Policy Fellowship.



**SRCD U.S.
Policy
Fellowship**

The Task Force

SRCD is seeking individuals to join the Future of the U.S. Policy Fellowship Task Force to build on the existing legacy of the U.S Policy Fellowship and contribute to shaping its future. Terms last for up to one year and revolve around refreshing the Fellowship's programming, relationships and funding to meet external opportunities and challenges.

The Fellowship has nearly 50 years of success and is one of the longest-standing research-policy fellowships in the nation. It plays an essential bridging function between research and policy by: 1) expanding developmental science into systems that directly impact children's lives, 2) building a pipeline of public sector leaders, advocates, educators and researchers with deep expertise in early childhood development and family systems, and, 3) connecting child policy across states, Congress and, in the past, federal agencies.

In response to the recent federal decision to end long standing Fellowship support through the Department of Health and Human Services and a pause in funding from a major private funder, SRCD is seizing this opportunity to refresh and strengthen the Fellowship, positioning it for long-term impact and sustainability. SRCD's Governing Council established this Task Force to proactively shape the Fellowship's future. The vision is to unite members that care about the Fellowship, who are forward thinking, and who have expertise in strategic planning, to refresh the program through redesign, building new relationships, and strengthening funding partnerships.

Apply Today

Task Force Goals:

- Revisit the purpose of the Fellowship to align its history to today's context
- Become experts in the interests of key Fellowship stakeholders, including funders and host sites
- Recommend changes to program design
- Help set the goals for the 2027-2028 and 2028-2029 Fellowship year
- Support efforts to identify and secure new relationships and new funders for both core operations and fellow support
- Contribute to a plan to reassert the Fellowship's federal presence, in Congress and in the current federal Administration

- Refresh the public narrative and positioning of the Fellowship

Some of the questions the Task Force is likely to consider include:

Fellowship Structure

- Should we shift from a two-year model to a one-year model to increase flexibility and reduce financial exposure?
- Is there demand for shorter-term placements (e.g., 6–9 months, summer)?
- Could we pilot project-based fellowships tied to defined policy deliverables rather than full-time embedded roles?
- What is the right balance of the career advancement and policy impact goals of the fellowship?

Funding and Staffing Model

- Co-funding with states and other entities
- Resuming federal funding
- Hybrid funding (philanthropy + state + institutional partnerships)
- Staffing the model at SRCD with 1-2 in-house Fellows

Placements and Policy Scope

- While maintaining strength in early care and education, should we expand into adjacent areas of child policy, such as health, child welfare, and economic mobility?
- Should the policy focus of placements be determined by the host agencies, particularly if there is a cost-sharing agreement?
- Should we consider placements outside of government, such as philanthropies with a public policy focus, or advocacy networks?

Task Force Structure

The Task Force will be up to a yearlong commitment that includes monthly meetings, both group and independent work, and outreach efforts to build new partnerships. It will be made up of 10 members. We encourage all interested individuals to apply. We are especially interested in including Fellowship alumni, who can draw from their personal experience, in this process. Per SRCD bylaws, selected individuals will include 3 members from SRCD's Governing Council.

Key Background on the SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship Program

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) [U.S. Policy Fellowship](#) is a premier postdoctoral immersion experience placing doctoral-level child development experts into state agencies and U.S. Congressional offices to inform evidence-based policymaking that improves outcomes for children and families. Fellows spend one year (with an optional second year for state placements) working full time on issues affecting children 0–8 years — from policy design and implementation to legislative analysis and evaluation. Fellows receive a competitive stipend, health care, training, mentoring, career coaching and networking opportunities across peer fellows, alumni and broader research and policy communities.

Apply Today

This application closes at 11:59 PM E.T., on Friday, March 27th, 2026. Please email policy@srcd.org with any questions.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

[Why was the Task Force created?](#)

■

In response to the recent federal decision to end long standing fellowship support through the Department of Health and Human Services and a pause in funding from a major private funder, SRCD is seizing this opportunity to refresh and strengthen the Fellowship, positioning it for long-term impact and sustainability.

How long is the Task Force commitment?

■

The commitment is up to a year, which includes monthly meetings, both group and independent work, and outreach efforts to build new partnerships.

How big is the Task Force?

■

The task force will be made up of 10 individuals.

How do I apply for the Task Force?

■

Submit your application via the OpenWater [platform](#) link here

When does the application close?

The application closes at 11:59 PM E.T., on Friday, March 27th, 2026

Apply Today