State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship Application Process

The deadline to submit letters of intent for the 2020-2021 State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship Program has passed (January 3, 2020).

Application Timeline

2. Notification of Status & Invitation to Submit Full Application: **End of January 2020**
3. Deadline for Finalist Full Application: **End of February 2020**
4. Notification of Fellowship Offers: **End of April 2020**

Application Submission Instructions

Applying to the SRCD State Policy Fellowship is a two-step process.

1. Submit a letter of intent (max 3 single-spaced pages) to an online portal.

   A joint letter of intent should be submitted by the fellowship candidate and interested professor or senior researcher, from a university center or research organization (referred to as academic mentor).

2. A selection committee will invite full applications from a subset of those who have submitted letters of intent. The full applications will be submitted through an online portal.
Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must receive a doctoral-level degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D.) relevant to child development prior to the start of the fellowship. Applications are especially sought from researchers with backgrounds in the development of early mathematics skills, of young dual language learners, and in family engagement in the early years.
- This fellowship is for early-career scholars. Applicants must have received their doctoral work within two years prior to the start of the fellowship year.
- Applicants to the SRCD State Policy Fellowship Program must be a member of SRCD and be a U.S. citizen.
- The potential state executive branch agency office must focus on early childhood.

What should be included in a State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship letter of intent?

- Post-doctoral candidates must include the following in the letter of intent:
  - Demonstrate background in child development research, including expertise in early childhood. When possible, demonstrates specific background in early math skills, the development of dual language learners, or family engagement.
  - Describe their interest in the Post-doctoral State Policy Fellowship, their career goals, and how the fellowship aligns with these goals.
  - Demonstrate how they will leverage their background to bridge between research and policy.

- Academic mentors must include the following in the letter of intent:
  - Describe their research interests and how these align with the goals of the fellowship.
  - Describe the professional supports they will provide to the fellow throughout the year.
  - Describe an ongoing working relationship with a state executive branch office, plans
for development of such a working relationship, or previous policy research that would provide background for serving as an academic mentor to a Post-doctoral State Policy Fellow.

- Confirm that (should a full application be invited) it will be possible to obtain a letter of commitment from a state executive branch office focusing on early childhood, indicating that a placement at the agency will be feasible.
- Describe the types of work potentially available for the fellow in the state executive branch agency focusing on early childhood, with the understanding that the specific projects and responsibilities will be determined by the agency when the fellowship begins and that projects will evolve during the course of the year.

*The letter of intent must not exceed three single-spaced pages.*

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### How do I submit the letter of intent?

Letters of intent should be submitted through an online portal. See “Application Submission Instructions” above.

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### What is required of the State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship full application?

**A. Five items from the post-doctoral candidate:**

1. **Statement of interest** (1,000 word limit) describing:
   - The candidate’s background and qualifications for the fellowship
   - Current areas of research, primary questions of interest, and methodologies used to address the questions
Basis for interest in the fellowship, including policy areas or issues of interest and skills to be acquired
Career goals, including how the fellowship would support those goals

Candidates should confirm their understanding that the fellowship is a full-time, on-site immersion experience at the state placement agency.

Further questions to consider when writing the statement of interest:
- Why are you interested in the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship? Why are you interested in working in policy?
- What are your professional goals and how does the fellowship align with these goals?
- What are your interests and passions? How do these interests match with the purposes of the SRCD State Policy Fellowship program?
- How will you leverage your background to bridge between research and policy?

2. Current C.V.

3. Three letters of recommendation for the post-doctoral candidate, addressing the following:
- How does the post-doctoral candidate’s expertise, skill set, and interest prepare the candidate for a successful fellowship experience?
- What is the post-doctoral candidate’s knowledge base and how does the candidate’s expertise relate to policy?
- To the best of your knowledge, what drives or motivates the post-doctoral candidate to pursue this fellowship?

B. Two items from the academic mentor:

1. Statement of interest (750 word limit) that indicates why the academic mentor is recommending the applicant for this fellowship, addresses areas of research, and the ways in which the academic mentor would provide individualized support to the post-
doctoral fellow. Support for a post-doctoral fellow might include:

- access to libraries, statistical software, and/or training
- regular meetings with the fellow to reflect on: (1) the placement experience and connect the placement experience with potential future career plans, and (2) applications and connections between relevant research, policy, and practice

*The academic mentor can include sections from the letter of intent, where appropriate extending the initial letter. The statement from the academic mentor must be signed and on letterhead.*

2. **Current C.V.**

C. **Two items from staff at state executive branch agency:**

1. **Statement of interest** (600 word limit)

   The statement of interest should be written by an employee in a leadership position working on early childhood policy at the state executive branch agency and who would provide the placement opportunity to the SRCD State Policy Post-doctoral Fellow:

   - Description of professional background and role in the organization
   - Description of possible projects the fellow might assist with
   - Confirmation of interest and description of supervisory plan. This would include a description of the individual(s) who will supervise the fellow and provide guidance and feedback on specific placement projects, regularly scheduled discussions with the supervisor(s) during which the fellow could ask questions and reflect on what they are learning, and identify opportunities for the fellow to learn about policy development and implementation in a state agency.
   - Description of onboarding plan to orient the fellow to the agency's structure and functions

2. **Letter of commitment**

   The letter should be written by a representative of the state executive branch agency with appropriate authority

   - Confirm that the agency would host a post-doctoral fellow for a year-long
placement and that such a placement would be in keeping with agency rules and regulations and state laws

- Name the specific supervisor
- Confirm that an appropriate workspace would be made available including use of a computer and telephone (used only according to agency guidelines).

_The statement of interest noted above and letter of commitment may be from the same individual, if appropriate. The statement of interest and the letter of commitment must be signed and on letterhead._

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**How do I submit a full application?**

Full applications will be due by the **end of February 2020** through an online portal. See “Application Submission Instructions” above for more information.

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**How are State Policy Post-doctoral Fellowship full applications evaluated?**

Post-doctoral candidates will be evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria:

- Demonstrates relevant academic background in development science (e.g., topically relevant graduate coursework)
- Demonstrates strong research skills (e.g., research methods coursework, methodologies used in publications)
- Previous professional experiences related to the application of research to practice (e.g., clinical)
- Record of publications, presentations, and professional activities commensurate with experience and appropriate to discipline
• Demonstrates strong communication skills
• Alignment of interests and career aspirations with the fellowship program

**Tips & Tricks**

Watch the webinar on tips and tricks for applying to the SRCD U.S. State Policy Fellowship presented by Dr. Kelly Fisher, SRCD’s Director for Policy, and Dr. Ruth Friedman, Co-lead for the SRCD U.S. State Policy Fellowship.