



Society for Research in Child Development

1909 K Street N.W., Suite 320 • Washington, DC 20006

Tel: 202.800.2997 • Email: membership@srcd.org • Website: www.srcd.org

SRCD U.S. Policy Fellowship STATE PLACEMENT FAQs

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) is seeking state placement agencies for its **U.S. Policy Fellowship Program**. This fellowship sponsors postdoctoral researchers with expertise in early childhood development, who spend one to two years in a state agency working on child and family policy.

What is the U.S. Policy Fellowship Program State Agency Placement?

Experienced child development researchers spend 1-2 years in state agencies. SRCD supports them with professional development and mentorship, and they support states to create evidence-based child and family policy.

The fellowship aims to improve the connection between research and policy in child and family policy by:

- Increasing evidence-based policymaking on policy issues impacting children and families.
- Growing the number of trained researchers with policy skills.
- Building a network of experts who can bridge developmental science, state policymaking, and practice.

Building on more than 30 years of success with its federal agency and Congressional policy placements, in 2017 SRCD began placing developmental scientists in state agencies. To date, SRCD has posted state fellows in 20 states in all regions of the country. Fellowship alumni include some of the most influential researchers in early childhood, senior staff at federal and state agencies, and philanthropic leaders.

How Does the State Policy Fellowship Program Work?

The Fellowship runs from September 1st to August 31st of each year. Fellows are hired as contractors with SRCD and placed full-time in a state agency working on issues relevant to young children birth to age 8. State agencies provide a placement supervisor to oversee them in their placement, and SRCD supervises their professional growth and development. A second year is available to fellows and agencies that are interested.

Are you a state agency representative interested in being considered for a placement by prospective applicants?

Complete this short interest survey by October 31, 2025





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Postdoctoral researchers reach out to state agencies in the fall to see if they would like to host a fellow. The researchers then submit an application for the Fellowship, providing a letter of interest from the agency. The applications are due in early winter (typically in January) and a competitive process is used to determine which applicants will be awarded the fellowship. Notifications of acceptance to the fellowship take place in spring.

How is the Fellowship funded?

The SRCD State Policy Fellowship is generously supported by the Heising-Simons Foundation. Typically, two new state fellows start each year. The state agency is not responsible for paying the fellow. Fellows receive a stipend from SRCD, funded by the Heising-Simons grant. SRCD manages the grant and grant reporting.

SRCD can support dedicated placements for a specific state if there are philanthropic or other funders interested in supporting that placement. If you are a funder interested in supporting a specific state, or know of a philanthropic organization that might be willing to support a fellow in your state, please reach out to us at policy@srcd.org. We would be happy to work with you to plan for a dedicated placement in your state.

Are we guaranteed a fellow if we apply?

Because the number of slots for new fellows is limited, no applicant (or placement agency) is guaranteed to receive a fellow if they apply. If your applicant is not selected for the fellowship, we encourage agencies to work with applicants to apply again in future years. Alternatively, agencies can explore hosting a dedicated placement if they -- or a philanthropic partner - have the resources to do so. If your agency is interested in a dedicated placement opportunity and knows of a funder that might be interested, or you are an interested in funding a dedicated placement, please contact SRCD at policy@SRCD.org.





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How Can a State Apply for an SRCD State Policy Fellow?

Agencies cannot apply for the fellowship. However, agencies can proactively search for a potential fellow in the following ways:

1. Complete the interest survey (QR code included on page 1 of this flyer.)
2. Reach out to the SRCD policy staff at Policy@SRCD.ORG to express your interest in the fellowship. Your information can be included on the SRCD webpage for applicants looking for potential placements.
3. Reach out to colleagues in universities to see if they have any doctoral students that are close to graduating, recent postdoctoral students, or even faculty that might be interested in the fellowship.

What Does My Agency Have to Do to Participate in the Fellowship?

State agencies assign the fellow a placement supervisor, who will oversee the fellow's experience in this immersive program. The state placement supervisor's responsibilities include:

- Coordinating a successful onboarding process or 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
- Completing a year-end survey that helps SRCD improve the program and report to our funder

The agency is expected to provide the fellow with a computer, software, email, and other technology and support needed to work with the agency.

What Do the State Policy Fellows Work On?

Fellows have worked on a wide range of projects on children's well-being and learning. Examples include:

- Developing evidence-informed quality rubrics for early care and education programs.
- Analyzing agency data to understand disparities in the child welfare system.
- Analyzing and sharing district-level and state-level data from kindergarten entry assessments.
- Coordinating state data across multiple funding streams.
- Conducting cost analysis to support increased billing rates for home visiting programs.



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Fellows address topics that are determined jointly based on the agency's needs and the fellow's skill set. In past years, funders have dedicated resources to specified areas of focus, such as early care and education.

What support do SRCD fellows receive?

Fellows participate in a monthly webinar with the other state and federal fellows where they learn from experts in the field about key issues related to child and family policy and its connection with research. Fellows also participate in career activities and individualized professional development planning with support from their SRCD supervisor. SRCD hosts regular social activities and networking events for fellows and alumni.

Fellows are paid a competitive wage and given stipends to cover moving expenses, monthly health insurance costs, and professional development activities.

How Can I Get More Information?

For more information about the fellowship, please contact the **SRCD policy team** at policy@srcd.org. You can find more about the state policy fellowship – including information about the fellowship benefits and application process, as well as FAQs -- on our [website](http://www.srcd.org).

