

# SRCD Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship: Call for Letters of Intent

---

**Call for Letters of Intent:  
Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship in Early Learning  
Sponsored by the Society for Research in Child Development  
in Collaboration with the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium**

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) is seeking letters of intent for its Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship in Early Learning for 2018-2019. Pre-doctoral students participating in the program will have a part-time placement in a state executive branch agency for a firsthand experience in state policymaking, program implementation, and program evaluation. Letters of intent are welcome from professors and researchers interested in serving as academic research mentors for a Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow placed in a state executive branch agency or may be submitted jointly by a pre-doctoral student and an academic mentor.

Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellows will be placed in state executive branch agencies that oversee state pre-kindergarten programs for a firsthand experience in state policymaking, program implementation, and program evaluation. Pre-doctoral fellows should have a background in early learning and development. The specific project within the agency does not need to be developed ahead of time.

This Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship is for candidates who:

- Have completed at least 2 years of coursework and are in good academic standing;
- Have a background in early learning and education;
- Can commit to a 12-month part-time placement in a state executive branch office that averages 20 hours per week over the course of a year;
- Are interested in an immersion experience working in a state executive branch office focusing on the implementation of a state funded pre-kindergarten program;
- Are U.S. citizens, and
- Are members of SRCD.

SRCD is offering this Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship so that graduate students will build skills in policy research and program implementation, state executive branch offices will benefit from the expertise of a child development researcher, and academic mentors will benefit from a greater understanding of the research and program issues salient to the office with the possibility of developing closer ties with the office. Academic mentors are not asked to design a project with the fellow in advance, but to support the fellow as the immersion experience proceeds and the potential for bringing research and developmental expertise to the placement is clarified.

Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellows will be provided with a \$25,000 stipend provided directly to the pre-doctoral student. Up to \$15,000 to defray the costs of tuition and health insurance will be provided to the fellow or university as appropriate. Academic mentors will receive an honorarium of \$5,000, provided directly to the mentor. The SRCD Policy and Communications staff in Washington D.C. will be available as a resource to support the professional development of the fellows throughout the year. Policy fellows will begin their pre-doctoral placement with training on child and family policy in Washington D.C. and will participate remotely in monthly seminars focusing on child and family policy issues. Funding is also available for academic mentors, state policy mentors and fellows to attend a national conference focusing on early childhood development, and for the fellow to receive further training if desired (for example, on the use of state early childhood administrative data).

***Staff in state executive branch agencies with interest in providing a placement are encouraged***

SRCD Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship Call for Letter of Intent  
***to reach out to research colleagues at universities to share information about this program and encourage them to consider submitting letters of intent as noted below.***

### **Application Procedure and Requirements**

#### **Letters of Intent: Due by December 22, 2017**

A brief letter of intent of not more than three pages single spaced is required as a first step. A letter of intent may be submitted jointly by a graduate student and an interested professor or university-based researcher, or may be submitted by a professor or university-based researcher interested in serving as the academic mentor for a Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow. If submitted by an interested professor or university-based researcher alone, a specific pre- doctoral candidate does not need yet to be identified in the letter of intent.

The letter of intent must include:

#### *Section on policy research interests*

- A description of the ongoing or planned policy research of the professor or researcher in a university-based center.

#### *Section on current/planned working relationship with state executive branch office*

- A description of 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 Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow in Early Learning.
- Confirmation 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 state pre-kindergarten, indicating that a placement with the agency will be feasible.
- A description of the types of work potentially available for the Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow in the executive branch agency focusing on pre-kindergarten, with the understanding that specific projects and responsibilities will be determined together with the agency at a later time.

#### *Section on selecting and providing input and mentoring for the Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow*

- A description of the background of the pre-doctoral candidate if identified, or a description of the process by which the professor will identify a specific candidate. Candidates will need to be enrolled in a doctoral-level degree program with a focus on child development research, to have completed at least 2 years of coursework, be in good academic standing, demonstrate exceptional competence in child development research, and have an interest in early learning and policy research.
- A description of the professional support the professor or university-based researcher would provide to the Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow throughout the year, including plans for frequency of meetings, and whether these would be one-on-one or part of ongoing meetings with a group of graduate students or a research team.

Letters of intent should be sent via email to [policyfellowships@srcd.org](mailto:policyfellowships@srcd.org) with the subject line "2018-2019 Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship Letter Of Intent."

A Selection Committee will review the letters of intent and invite strong applicants to submit a full application. Instructions on how to access the application website will be provided at that time.

**Full applications if requested by SRCD: Due by February 16, 2018**

SRCD Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellowship Call for Letter of Intent  
If invited by SRCD, full applications will require:

*Section from the pre-doctoral candidate for the Pre-Doctoral State Policy Fellowship*

The pre-doctoral candidate will be asked to enter background information on the application website and will then be asked to upload the following materials:

- Current CV.
- Statement of interest of no more than 1000 words addressing professional background and qualifications for the program (including background in the research on early education), basis for interest in the program (including policy areas or issues of interest and skills to be acquired), and career goals (including how the program would support those goals).

*Letters of reference*

The pre-doctoral candidate will be asked to enter email addresses for two individuals providing letters of reference. One of the individuals should be the academic mentor of the candidate. A message will be sent automatically by the application website to each individual, including a link for uploading the letter of reference.

*Section from the professor/university-based researcher who would serve as academic mentor:*

The pre-doctoral candidate will be asked to provide the email address for the academic mentor. An email will then be sent automatically to the academic mentor, providing a link for uploading as a single pdf document:

- Current CV.
- Statement of interest of no more than 750 words addressing the ways in which the mentor will support the pre-doctoral student and how mentoring a Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow will add to or extend ongoing work.

If the academic mentor is not the graduate student's program advisor, instructions will also be provided for requesting a brief letter from the program chair indicating that the graduate student's participation in the program will be in keeping with requirements and progress towards the doctorate.

*Section from the state executive branch agency:*

The pre-doctoral candidate will be asked to provide the email address (or email addresses) for staff members from the state executive branch agency focusing on the state pre-kindergarten program. A message will then be sent automatically to the staff member(s), providing a link for uploading:

- A letter of commitment from a representative of the state executive branch agency with appropriate authority confirming that the agency welcomes the possibility to host a Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow with background in child development research; that such a placement would be in keeping with agency rules and regulations and state laws; naming the specific agency supervisor; and confirming that an appropriate workspace would be made available, including use of a computer and telephone (following agency guidelines for such use). An alternative approach to placement location would be considered if it is made clear how an immersion experience would be achieved.
- A statement of interest of no more than 500 words from a state executive branch agency employee in a leadership position with the state pre-kindergarten program who would supervise the Pre-doctoral State Policy Fellow in the agency, providing a description of professional background, a description of possible projects the fellow might undertake, and confirmation of interest and time for providing supervision to the fellow. The statement of interest and letter of commitment may be from the same person, if appropriate.