



# Society for Research in Child Development

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1909 K Street, NW, Suite 320 • Washington, DC 20006 USA  
Tel: 202-800-0677 • Web: [www.srcd.org](http://www.srcd.org) • X: [@SRCDtweets](https://twitter.com/SRCDtweets)

## STATE AGENCY FAQs

The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) is seeking placement agencies for its **State 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 State Policy Fellowship Program?***

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 Executive Branch and Congressional policy fellows, in 2017 SRCD began placing developmental scientists in state executive branch agencies. To date, SRCD has posted state fellows in 21 states in all regions of the country. Among the alumni of the federal fellowship are 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

Postdoctoral researchers reach out to state agencies in the fall to see if they have a placement opportunity. They 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. They



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will receive a stipend from SRCD, funded by the Heising-Simons grant. SRCD manages the grant and grant reporting.

SRCD supports a dedicated placement for a specific state if there are philanthropic or other funders interested in supporting that placement. If you 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](mailto:policy@srcd.org). We would be happy to work with that organization to support 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. In addition, SRCD can develop a dedicated placement in an agency if there is a philanthropic partner that would be willing to support the fellow. If your agency is interested in a dedicated placement opportunity and knows of a funder that might be interested, please contact SRCD at [policy@srcd.org](mailto:policy@srcd.org).



## ***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. Reach out to the SRCD policy staff at [Policy@SRCD.ORG](mailto: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.
2. Reach out to colleagues in universities to see if they have any doctoral students that are close to graduating or recent postdoctoral students 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:



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- Coordinating a successful onboarding process for 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.
- Developing cost analysis to support increased billing rates for home visiting programs.

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](mailto: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](#).