Strategic Data Project: Partnership Opportunities

Make Measurable Improvements for Students

The Strategic Data Project (SDP) at Harvard University partners with education organizations to accelerate their use of data in service of student success. We find and develop accomplished individuals who will lead work to make data more accessible and actionable. Since 2009, SDP has trained more than 500 fellows across 270+ school systems, state agencies, institutions of higher education and nonprofit organizations to use analytics to make a difference with data.

> **Build a data dream team.** Hire talented SDP fellows with carefully vetted skills, or nominate talented data leaders to receive intensive training and support.

> **Produce actionable insights.** Advised by renowned faculty members and industry experts, SDP fellows carry out a transformative data project commissioned by your organization.

> **Join a community of experts.** Become part of an extensive network of Harvard-affiliated researchers and experienced education data leaders who are committed to sharing insights, best practices and lessons learned.

Invest in your Organization's Data Talent

Education agencies have more data than ever, but improving student outcomes requires more than data — it requires talented people to use those data to generate important insights. The Strategic Data Project selects partners who have a vision for using data for good. Partners can hire SDP-recruited Fellows and/or enroll employees as Fellows, and SDP will train them to organize, analyze and communicate data and to bring insights to bear on strategic decisions. Partner organizations will have access to training and a network of data and research leaders eager to share their expertise over the course of the two-year program.

Nominated Fellows

Your organization can choose to nominate an existing employee — who works with data as a core function of their role — as an SDP Fellow. The ideal Nominated Fellow candidate is a rising star with analytic chops, high-quality written and verbal communication skills, and the passion and drive to be a changemaker within education. Nominated Fellows should be positioned to move critical initiatives forward and share their learnings across the organization.

Placed Fellows

Placed Fellows are recruited by SDP via a competitive nationwide search. They are matched to partner organizations where they are hired as full-time, paid employees for a minimum of two years. Placed Fellows bring impressive credentials in statistics, research methods, and policy analysis to the projects commissioned by your organization.

> **Let's work together!** If your organization is interested in enrolling a Nominated Fellow or hiring a Placed Fellow, reach out to **sdprecruitment@gse.harvard.edu** to speak to a member of our team.

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Program Structure

The 2-year fellowship aims to accelerate efforts to achieve performance improvements through data-informed decision making. Fellows receive an expert advisor, peer coaching, and project support to realize their organization's project vision. Fellows and supervisors convene for in-person and virtual sessions six times over the course of two years. They are trained to develop both technical and leadership skills and apply those skills to workplace initiatives. Fellows and supervisors convene annually to meet with an extended network of diverse data leaders who share a commitment to providing an excellent education for all students.

YEAR 1: STANDING UP THE STRATEGIC DATA PROJECT	YEAR 2: MAKING SUSTAINABLE SYSTEM CHANGE
Workshop 1: Foundations of Strategic Data Use Workshop 2: Strategic Analytic Planning SDP Annual Convening	Workshop 3: Data Work is People Work Workshop 4: Sustaining Data-Driven Change SDP Annual Convening

Through SDP's carefully designed curriculum, fellows assess the strategic use of data in their organizations, set goals for improvement against common benchmarks, learn to engage a diverse set of stakeholders, and make a plan for sustaining improvements made during the program.

Partner Impact

Current and former partners include local and state education agencies, charter management organizations, education-focused non-profit organizations, and institutions of higher education.

In 2017, Chicago Public Schools hired a Placed Fellow to understand substitute fill rates, analyze teacher hiring patterns, and develop Educator Preparation Scorecards. The Fellow developed a stipend program to incentivize substitutes to work in schools with higher populations of historically disadvantaged students.

In 2020, the California Department of Education hired a Placed Fellow to map internet connectivity data to learn which students did not have access in order for the state to provide broadband support. The Fellow's work informed 30 bills during the 2020-21 legislative session to address the digital divide.

In 2021, Roane State Community College enrolled a Nominated Fellow to analyze 5 years of student enrollment and outcomes data for students enrolled in coursework at both Roane State and Tennessee College of Applied Technology. The Fellow identified pathways for students to stack credentials and meet workforce needs between the technical and community colleges in the state.

In 2021, the Oregon Department of Early Learning and Care hired a Placed Fellow to implement an early childhood data system that integrates information across agencies over time to provide insight into the state's youngest children and the publicly funded programs that serve them.

Join the Strategic Data Project

Prospective partners should schedule an informational call upon starting the online application. Once the application is completed, subsequent steps include submitting additional information about the Placed or Nominated Fellow(s), and joining an in-depth call to review your organization's goals for partnering with SDP. An MOU between Harvard and your organization must be fully executed prior to interviewing Placed Fellow candidates or officially enrolling a Nominated Fellow candidate.

Informational Call with SDP → Online Partnership Application → Hiring Profile or Nominee Application → Partner Review Call → MOU + Next Steps