



STRATEGIC DATA PROJECT

PARTNER WITH US

IMPACT AREAS

Data Governance and Management

Evidence-driven Strategic Planning

Analysis and Evaluation

Predictive Modeling

Data Visualization and Dashboard Design

Data Culture and Communication

EDUCATION NEEDS EVIDENCE

Education agencies have more data than ever. Yet having data is not enough to improve student outcomes.

We need:

- the **right people** to organize, analyze, and use that data to create evidence for better decision-making.
- the **right training** to ask and answer critical questions.
- the **right tools** and resources to make data change sustainable.

The Strategic Data Project (SDP) works with school systems and education organizations to find and develop talented people who will use data to make a difference in the lives of students.

BUILD YOUR DATA TEAM

Collaborating with SDP, a program of the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University (CEPR), allows partners to:

Increase Capacity

Partners hire data fellows recruited and screened by Harvard-affiliated researchers for the two-year program, or they enroll one or more of their own employees as agency fellows to receive tools and training to support the organization’s needs.

Advance a Critical Initiative

Advised by renowned faculty and mentors, fellows carry out a transformative data project specific to the partner’s strategic priorities. This work results in action-oriented insights to aid practitioners and policymakers in decision-making.

Join a Learning Community

At multiple in-person workshops, partners and fellows have access to a growing network of education leaders, data strategists, and researchers, who exchange best practices, rigorous findings, statistical code, and ideas with one common aim: help all students succeed.



SDP FELLOWS: COMMITTED TO MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Fellows come from diverse professional backgrounds but share an interest in effecting change in education organizations and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of students across the country.

Host a data fellow, recruited and matched for your organization

Data fellows are recruited by SDP via a competitive nationwide search. They are matched to an SDP partner organization where they serve as full-time, paid, agency employees for two years. They bring impressive credentials in statistics, data management, and research methods.

Enroll one of your own employees as an agency fellow

Agency fellows are current employees who have been identified as analytic leaders in their agency. They are the rising stars of their organization who, with additional training and attention, will take on leadership roles.



ALEX SPURRIER

SDP Fellow Impact
Kentucky Department of Education

Alex built new tools and implemented systems to develop and support more efficient and collaborative analysis. The Kentucky team now produces highly actionable research with greater speed, quality, and reproducibility. In his second year as a fellow, Alex was singled out for commendation by the Kentucky Board of Education.



JANELL CHERY

SDP Fellow Impact
Tulsa, OK

In 2015, only 47% of Tulsa area high school senior students were completing the FAFSA, an indicator of college enrollment. Janell implemented a two-year continuous improvement study using various interventions, resulting in a 12% increase in the number of FAFSA forms completed. Tulsa now has evidence these strategies work to help more students go to college.



DATA FELLOW RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS

To find the next generation of data leaders, SDP recruits people with:

- a vision for the future of data in education
- technical expertise in quantitative analyses
- excellent written and verbal communication skills
- experience and insight in the field of education
- the passion and drive to be a changemaker
- an advanced degree (master's level or higher)

Before being admitted, candidates must successfully complete multiple stages of a rigorous selection process, including:



SDP conducts a nationwide search for strong researchers and analysts with a passion for education.



Candidates who demonstrate promise prepare a memo in response to a challenging analytic problem for a phone case interview.



Successful candidates are invited to present findings to a room of Harvard researchers. They also participate in a live case challenge that tests their ability to solve problems.



Only following successful completion of the screening process do fellows interview with SDP partners.

PARTNER BENEFITS

Organizations that partner with the SDP Fellowship program receive the following benefits:

- Added capacity from data expert
- Two-year job commitment
- High selectivity (12% accepted)
- Limited recruitment effort, with power over final hiring
- Harvard-affiliated research advisor
- Technical and subject-matter expertise
- High-quality professional development for the fellow and your team



“Knowing what strategies make a difference through the use of data has taken us from 34% to 54% of our students being college and career ready just two years later.”

-Karen Dodd, Kentucky Department of Education

PARTNER ELIGIBILITY

To date, SDP has partnered with over 100 education agencies, including state and local education agencies, charter management organizations, funders, and nonprofit organizations. We have engaged ten cohorts of partners to date and typically work with 25 – 30 partners per year.

SDP is looking to partner with organizations who:

- are committed to the use of data to inform decisions and policy
- value the culture of data use
- have an ambitious data project in mind for an SDP Fellow

SDP welcomes education and nonprofit organizations committed to using evidence for change.

INVEST IN EVIDENCE: BECOME AN SDP PARTNER

By participating in the fellowship, partners will grow advanced analytic capacity, develop clear priorities and plans for data use and data systems, build organizational willingness to use data for decision making, and uncover valuable insight about performance.

Host a data fellow, recruited and matched for your organization.

In addition to the benefits above, partners will receive a top-notch data strategist, screened by experts at Harvard University, and specifically matched with your needs.

(Two-year partnership cost: \$59,000, plus \$70,000 base salary and benefits)

Enroll one of your own employees as an agency fellow.

Partners receive the partnership benefits above and enroll an existing analytic leader as a fellow.

(Two-year partnership cost: \$49,000, plus salary and benefits)

CONTACT US: sdp@gse.harvard.edu

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