Professional Development and Affinity Groups

Affinity groups are an integral component of the Science and Technology Policy Fellowships (STPF) professional development experience. These networks are self-directed and self-defined and provide a forum to meet and discuss targeted areas of interest, including various areas of science, policy, and specific topical issues. Affinity group activities range from presentations and discussions with distinguished guest speakers to monthly meetings, workshops, and full day symposia. Through this experiential component, fellows have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in science policy outside of their host agency/office placements.

2019-20 STPF Affinity Groups

1. Agriculture and Nutrition (AgriNut): focus on domestic and international agriculture issues and ensuring proper access to nutrition.

2. Biodiversity: fosters networking opportunities and promotes professional development and outreach within the conservation community.


5. Entrepreneurship and Innovation: learn about skills/experiences related to managing and scaling enterprises.

6. Fellows over F--ty (FoF): provides support, resources and peer-mentoring both for current and incoming mid-senior career fellows.

7. Gathering of Scholars and Doers (GSD): provides research support and peer-mentoring for current STPF fellows.

8. Global/One Health: fostering collaboration across disciplines and work environments to promote global health policies.

9. Mentoring: connecting STPF fellows with volunteer mentors in scientific and policy fields to enhance professional and personal development.

10. NeuroPolicy: learning about the intersection of neuroscience with policy, law, ethics, media and society.


12. Science and Technology Studies (STS): a theoretical and applied field that explores the coproduction of science, technology, and society.

13. Science Diplomacy: explores how science and technology cooperation can be used as a tool for diplomacy both between governments and between non-state actors.

14. Scientists with Improv Skills (SWIS): teaches scientists improvisational comedy skills to improve their ability to communicate with diverse stakeholder groups.

15. Social Science: fellows who are applying social science research in their host office to exchange knowledge, resources, and ideas.


17. Water: focuses on different aspects of water use from inland waters to the ocean, and water related issues like food security, climate change, and environmental justice.

18. Sci on the Fly: a collaborative blog and podcast managed by fellows that promotes public dialogue about science and science policy.