

North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships 2023 Government Research Partnerships Learning Forum

April 13, 2023

Relevant Resources

The [NC Office of Strategic Partnerships \(OSP\)](#) compiled these resources for government research partnerships and evidence-based decision making as a follow-up to the 2023 Government Research Partnerships [Learning Forum](#). Speakers, participants, and other Learning Forum attendees shared the resources. Descriptions are paraphrased from the corresponding web links.

The resources and information may be useful to individuals and organizations across a wide range of policy, budget, research, and practice disciplines and issues. *It is not intended to be comprehensive and inclusion of an item in this list does not mean endorsement.*

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Welcome

Jenni Owen, Director, NC Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP), welcomed attendees to the 2023 Learning Forum, gave an overview of the day, shared an overview of OSP, and provided context for the cross-sector convening. ([recording](#))

- [NC Office of Strategic Partnerships \(OSP\)](#): OSP enhances partnerships between state government and NC's renowned research and philanthropic sectors. This includes elevating the State's internal capacity to use and generate evidence in its policy and programmatic functions. We do this in part by building and enhancing collaborative networks of public officials, research partners, and others. We prioritize partnerships that are scalable, sustainable, and develop public, open-source resources.

Secretary Reid Wilson, NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR), gave remarks that featured DNCR's diverse array of roles and responsibilities and highlighted the importance of cross-sector partnerships to accomplish the agency's mission. ([recording](#))

- [NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources \(DNCR\)](#): DNCR manages, promotes, and enhances the state's arts, culture, history, and natural areas including [aquariums](#), [Museum of Natural Sciences](#), [Museum of Art](#), [trails](#), and more. Through its programs, DNCR enhances education, stimulates economic development, improves public health, expands accessibility, and strengthens community resiliency.

Cross-Sector Partnership Features and Q&A

Can telemedicine improve health access and costs within NC correctional facilities? ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: NC Department of Public Safety, UNC Health, UNC School of Medicine

What programmatic, policy, and/or structural changes can help maximize the accessibility and perceived utility of the NC Responder Assistance Initiative health and wellness services for first responders? ([recording](#))

Partners: NC Department of Public Safety, RTI International

What is the effect of NC InCK's Primary Care K-Readiness Bundle on Early Learning Inventory Kindergarten Readiness, and how does this association change over time? ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Government Data Analytics Center, NC Integrated Care for Kids, Duke Margolis Center for Health Policy, UNC School of Medicine, UNC School of Social Work/UNC Sheps Center for Health Services Research

How can integrating the latest advances in technology - such as sensing and augmented reality - with daily training activities of first responders improve training quality and quality of life? ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: Charlotte Fire/Police Academy, National Science Foundation, N.C. A&T State University, UNC Charlotte

Guilford County Solution to the Opioid Problem (GCSTOP) ([recording](#))

Partners: Guilford County Emergency Services, UNC Greensboro, MetroLab

Digitizing historical rules records ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: NC Office of Administrative Hearings, UNC School of Information and Library Science, NC Collaboratory

Evaluating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on K-12 learning ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Collaboratory

Mitigating educator workforce impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through coaching ([slides](#); [recording](#))

Partners: NC Department of Public Instruction, NC Collaboratory, UNC Charlotte

Morning Wrap Up

Dr. Chandrika Rao, Interim Director, State Center for Health Statistics, and Director, Central Cancer Registry, shared this [slide deck](#) about the Center, the data stored, the process for creating data linkages, and how to access this information ([recording](#)). Anyone is welcome to attend the [2023 NC Public Health Data Summit](#) on May 15-16.

Workshops

Workshop 1: Data Access and Use in North Carolina: Anticipating and Addressing Potential Challenges

- [Advancing Transportation through Linkages, Automation, and Screening](#) (ATLAS): This NCDOT program improves business processes by providing up-to-date, authoritative human and natural resource data and a storage framework to support informed project development.
- [NC Department of Health and Human Services \(NCDHHS\) Data Sharing Guidebook](#): Establishes processes for data sharing and integration among NCDHHS divisions and offices as well as with strategic partners of NCDHHS and people and organizations interested in partnering with the agency.
- [NC Education Research Data Center](#) (NCERDC): The NCERDC was established in 2001 through a partnership with the [NC Department of Public Instruction](#) (NCDPI) to store and manage data on the state's public schools, school districts, students, and teachers. The data, which include information dating back to the mid-1990s, are available to university researchers, nonprofit research institutions, and government agencies. NCERDC is a unique portal to an immense store of data from NCDPI and the [National Center for Education Statistics](#).
- [NC Government Data Analytics Center](#) (GDAC): GDAC's vision is to transform existing data assets into an information utility for state leaders to use in making program investment decisions, managing resources, and improving financial programs, budgets, and results. A key function of GDAC is the management of data sharing and integration initiatives. GDAC works with agencies to define their analytic needs, determine access to required data sources, and scope the level of effort to support the analytics development.

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- [NC Common Follow-up System](#) (CFS): The Common Follow-up System is a longitudinal repository of workforce and education data maintained by a collaborative effort between GDAC and the Labor and Economic Analysis Division of the NC Department of Commerce. The CFS contains data on participants in NC public employment, training, and education programs since the late 1990s. It also contains employment and wage information on all individuals working in unemployment insurance-covered employment in NC over the last 25 years, making it one of the largest sources of historical wage data in the nation.
- [NC Longitudinal Data System](#) (NCLDS): NCLDS provides data contributors, practitioners, and trusted research partners with secure access to cross-sector, longitudinal and linked record-level data for the purpose of helping them address the state's most pressing questions via data-informed decision making, continuous improvement, and performance management processes.
- [NC OneMap](#): The geospatial backbone supporting NC data users, NC OneMap is an organized effort of partners throughout NC, including local, state, and federal government agencies, the private sector, and academia. NC OneMap is directed by the [NC Geographic Information Coordinating Council](#). The NC OneMap program promotes and supports a commitment to data sharing, [data discovery and access](#), [orthoimagery in NC](#), [parcels for NC](#), and archiving to preserve long-term access to geospatial data.

Workshop 2: Exploring Agency Challenges and Leveraging Researcher Expertise: Researcher-Agency Matchmaking Hour

Representatives from the [NC Wildlife Resources Commission \(NCWRC\)](#), [NC State University \(NCSU\)](#), and OSP highlighted and shared their experiences creating and facilitating partnerships between state agencies and academic institutions in North Carolina. OSP panelists provided an overview of OSP's researcher-agency partnership process (*see also information about the North Carolina Project Portal in the Workshop 3 summary below*) and support available from OSP to help connect those in state agencies with research expertise to help answer policy or programmatic research questions. NCWRC shared their experience working with OSP and research partners at NCSU and Wake Forest University to help answer questions around increasing compliance with wildlife regulations to boost public safety. NCSU highlighted several ongoing research projects working with various philanthropic and state agency partners in North Carolina and considerations researchers and agencies should keep in mind when pursuing a potential partnership. Some recommended strategies included:

- **Be flexible:** Researchers can consider adapting or modifying their research agendas to answer policy relevant questions from state agencies. State agencies can consider being open to refining their research questions based on input from the research community.
- **Be specific about planned use of results:** When initiating a partnership, agencies and research partners would do well to set clear goals and objectives for how the results from the collaboration will be used in order to make the most of limited time and resources.
- **Be patient:** Building and developing a research partnership takes time, including clarifying a scope of work, developing a contract agreement, and establishing a common language between researchers and agencies as a project gets started. Workshop panelists recommended those interested in partnerships be clear-eyed and understand that starting a project requires investing time to clarify project objectives and to build relationships between agency and research partners.

Representatives from OSP then led participants in an activity to identify partnership opportunities within their organizations and share among workshop participants to find possible connections. Examples of the types of opportunities shared include research questions related to strategies to find non-traditional sources for talent in state government, how to best support underserved communities in the disaster recovery process, and how to effectively communicate to researchers the availability of integrated public safety datasets.

OSP staff will be in touch with workshop attendees in the coming weeks about connecting with potential agency and research partners on specific topics discussed during the session.

Workshop 3: Sharing and Communicating Research and Science

Representatives from the NC Department of Revenue (NCDOR) and OSP offered tips and guidance for sharing and communicating research and science, including:

- Recommending that researchers notify state agency representatives before starting a relevant research project. Connecting early in the research development phase and maintaining clear communication throughout the life of a project helps to avoid pitfalls.
- Government agencies are often willing and eager to co-create research projects with researchers in ways that are mutually productive and beneficial. (For example, see the [digital currency project](#) with NCDOR and N.C. A&T.)
- Use communication strategies that help to connect partners. For example, use language that the other sector will understand.
- State agency strategic plans can be a useful resource for learning about agency priorities and potential entry points for collaboration (*see more information about agency strategic plans in the Workshop 4 summary below*).

In addition to the above, workshop facilitators shared information about the following resources:

- [NC Department of Transportation \(NCDOT\) Research and Development Office](#): Oversees transportation-related research for NCDOT. The Office solicits ideas and proposals, oversees selection with a rigorous, multi-step process, and manages all State Planning and Research (SPR Part B) funded research projects. Projects are conducted primarily by researchers from NC colleges and universities.
- [North Carolina Project Portal](#): OSP developed the North Carolina Project Portal to share state agency research needs and for people to express interest in partnering on those opportunities. As of April 2023, it contains 35 open, in-progress, and complete projects.

Workshop 4: Pathways to Engagement With and Within Government

- [NC Project Portal](#) (More above)
- [Agency Contacts for Partnerships and Research](#): Designated "points of entry" contacts for representatives from colleges, universities, or other research organizations who need an initial contact for potential partnerships.
- [Monthly Connect](#): OSP's Monthly Connect is a series of panel discussions on topics relevant to partnerships among state government, research institutions including colleges/universities, philanthropy, and others.
- [State Budget](#): Search for information (use "control + F") to search for budget items by keyword, phrase, agency name, etc.)
- [State Agency Strategic Plans](#): Outline what an agency will do over the next 2-5 years and how it will achieve desired results.
- Sign up for [state agency](#) press releases: Many state agencies have an online signup option for press releases and other information. This is a great way to stay informed about news, events, and opportunities.
- [Sign up for NC General Assembly committee notices](#) [Boards and Commissions](#): The Governor of North Carolina makes appointments to 350+ statewide boards and commissions, which provide North Carolinians a way to engage in public service and help make decisions that shape the quality of life in our state.
- Internships: Many state agencies offer a variety of internships throughout the year. Opportunities are posted by the [State of NC Internship Program](#) and by [individual agencies](#).

- [Ed2NC](#): Collaborative effort among the NC Office of State Human Resources, NC Office of Strategic Partnerships, representatives from college and university career services, and state agency recruiters, Ed2NC strengthens the state government talent pipeline.
- [NC Office of Historically Underutilized Businesses](#): Promotes economic opportunities for historically underutilized businesses in state government contracting and procurement to foster growth and profitability.
- [Grant Opportunities with State Agencies](#): Links to grant programs across NC state government agencies.
- [Secretary of State public meetings calendar](#): Includes all scheduled meetings of any “public body” in NC.

The North Carolina State Budget: Who, What, Where, When, & Why

Representatives from the NC Office of State Budget and Management provided an introduction and overview of the North Carolina state budget including the process, who is involved, and how to read and understand the budget. The presentation, discussion, and Q&A highlighted the relevance and importance of the budget for all North Carolinians. ([slides](#); [recording](#))