
How to:

Science Policy

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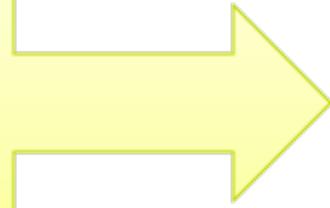
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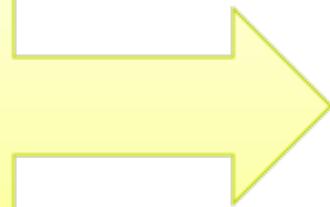
What is science policy?

**Policy for
Science**



Develop and determine STEM education and R&D funding priorities and directions; establish guidelines and regulations on practice and conduct of science.

**Science
for Policy**

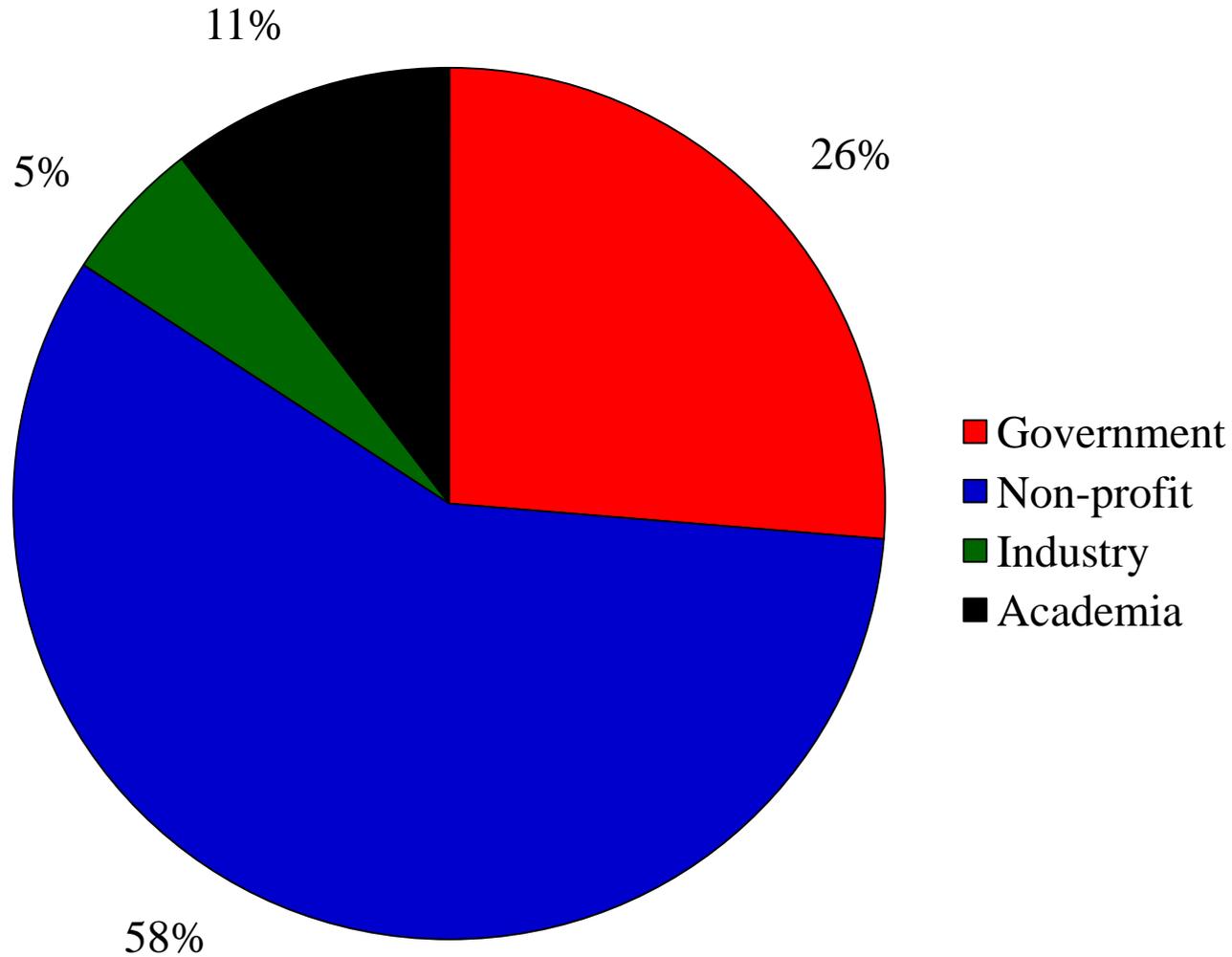


Inform and enhance the development, decision-making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and resulting programs and regulations.

What do science policy jobs entail?

- Assess scientific data
- Write briefs (*e.g.*, for websites or Congress)
- Communicate science to the general public, scientific audiences, or lawmakers
- Coordination of volunteers, committee members, and/or scientists
- Program management (*e.g.*, seminars, coalitions)

Where are the jobs?*



*most jobs are located in the DC metro area
n=19

What are the jobs called?

- (Senior) Science Policy Analyst
- Public Health Analyst
- Director of Science Policy
- Public Affairs Director
- Program Officer
- Health Science Policy Analyst
- Public Health Analyst
- Scientific Program Analyst
- Science and Technology Policy Analyst
- Policy Analyst Manager
- Director of Public Policy and Government Affairs
- Advocate, Administrator
- Health Policy Advisor
- Scientific Program Analyst
- Policy Specialist
- Government Relations Manager
- Director, Research Programs Advocacy



What is the likely career progression?

- Volunteer/Detail/Internship/Fellowship
- Analyst
- Senior Analyst
- Manager
- Director

(Lateral and upwards mobility are contingent upon the size of the office.)

What will I be paid?

- Salaries range from ~\$50,000 - \$250,000+.
- Check <http://www.glassdoor.com> and <http://salary.com>

(Jobs are quite stable, but are sometimes contingent upon grant funding.)

Are there options for non-US citizens?

- Fellowships are competitive but some offer opportunities to non-citizens.
- Positions in non-profit are likely to be more flexible.

See handout for more information about all of these questions.

Where are the jobs posted?

- For jobs in the government:
 - www.usajobs.gov
- For jobs in non-profit:
 - www.idealists.org
- For jobs on Capitol Hill:
 - <http://thehill.com>, <http://www.rollcall.com>
- For jobs in industry and academia
 - Check individual organizations' websites
- For jobs in general:
 - <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org>
 - BRIGHT_SIDE_JOBS@LIST.NIH.GOV
 - www.sciencepolicycareers.org



What skills does a position in science policy require?

- Broad knowledge of science
- Knowledge of science policy
- People skills
- Communication
 - Written and Verbal
- Analytical
- Project/Time Management

Knowledge of science

Science background with a broad science interest.

What can I do now?:

- Read about science broadly – in journals and in the popular press
- Keep abreast of the latest scientific and technological developments (read the New York Times or Washington Post science sections)
- Listen to podcasts about recent discoveries (<http://www.nature.com/nature/podcast/>)
- Give as many presentations as you can – to a wide variety of audiences
- Attend a broad range of seminars, journal clubs, conferences, etc.
- Know and talk to the experts in the fields

Knowledge of science policy

- Record of interest in science policy and/or experience in the field
- Fellowship, internship, or detail in a science policy shop

What can I do now?:

- Participate in NIH Fellow's Science Policy Interest Group (contact L. Renee Olano, olanol@mail.nih.gov)
- Read broadly about science policy (e.g., White House Science Policy Blog, ScienceInsider – from Science Magazine, FASEB “Washington Update”)
- Read recent science policy news (FASEB’s “Breakthroughs in Bioscience”)
- Participate on a city council, a board, or as an organization’s leader

People Skills

- Work well in a team
- Gain consensus-building skills
- Manage staff, a mentee, and/or volunteers
- Network

What can I do now?:

- Volunteer in an intramural or extramural setting, join Felcom or your institute's fellows group, join special interest groups, join committees
- Organize and lead meetings in your community or in your research group
- Collaborate with people in your own and other labs
- Take advantage of leadership seminars offered by OITE

Verbal Communication Skills

- Talk, educate, negotiate, etc. with people from various sectors, ages and educational backgrounds
 - Colleagues, volunteers, superiors, and mentees

What can I do now?:

- Outline your research to a variety of audiences (be able to translate technical information into plain language)
- Practice public speaking (give presentations and posters; join Toastmasters; chair a meeting)
- Communicate with scientists outside of your discipline (be able to clearly outline your research in 3 sentences or less)
- Teach younger students about an area of interest

Written Communication skills

- Write for multiple audiences (clear and concise!)
 - Memos and e-mails
 - Grants
 - Magazine, journal, or website articles
 - Curriculum (handouts)
 - Marketing materials

What can I do now?:

- Write and edit papers, reviews, grants
- Write non-technical material for NIH CATALYST or other newsletter
- Join NIH Fellows Editorial Board
- Take Science Writing classes
- Volunteer to help write promo material for your IC or the NIH
- Write for a website or newsletter for your science society

See handout for a variety of available opportunities

Analytical/organizational skills

- Be able decipher, analyze, synthesize and organize information into a clear summary
 - Narrow the focus to main points: you need to get your ideas across in a limited amount of space
 - Set expectations and evaluations of programs
- Show attention to detail

What can I do now?:

- These skills are readily transferable from what you do today!
 - Gather, analyze and organize information
 - Find and test solutions to problems
 - Formulate plans

Project and Time Management

- Plan the tasks and allocation of resources
- Manage different projects at the same time
- Complete tasks on deadline

What can I do now?:

- Participate as a mentor (of an undergraduate student or join a mentoring program like AWIS)
- Set and follow through with goals
- Plan, schedule, and prioritize

Computer Skills

- Microsoft Office
- Email
- Internet

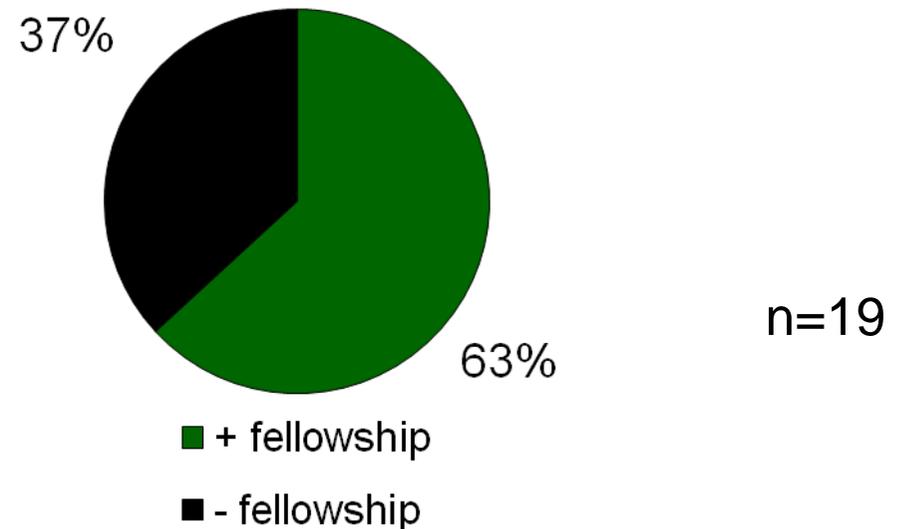
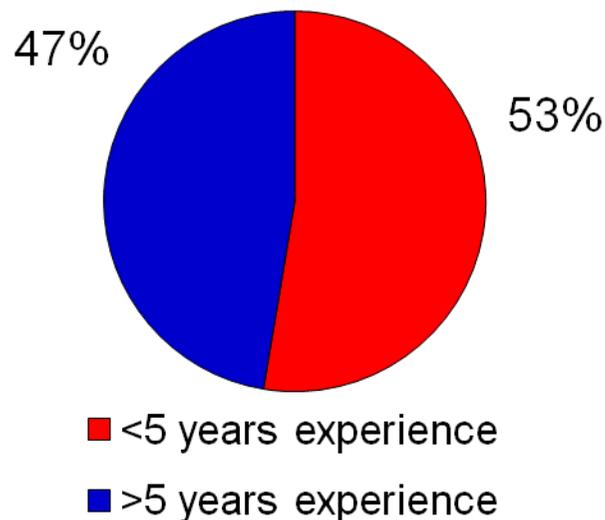
What can I do now?:

- Take NIH Library courses (e.g., the Community of Science)
- Become familiar with scientific search engines (e.g., PubMed)
- Be able to use multiple functions of Word and Excel

How do you get your foot in the door?

- Fellowships (e.g., AAAS S&T Fellowship)
- Internships (e.g., science societies; generally unpaid)
- Details (e.g., NIH institutes; 1 day/week)
- Networking (e.g., DC Science Policy Happy Hour Group)
- Volunteering (e.g., science policy committees)

**Fellowships, details, and internships are valuable to prepare you for working in science policy, but not all positions require them.



Handout outlines a variety of opportunities available

Showcase your talents

Resume and cover letter tips:

- Ensure you demonstrate that you can transition your skills off of the bench (do NOT list the techniques you can perform!)
- Tailor your resume (demonstrate appropriate level of science knowledge – e.g., understanding heart disease at AHA)
- Demonstrate a level of interest or exploration into science policy beyond simply applying for the opening
- Demonstrate your knowledge of the company or institute



What can I do now?

- Write for newsletters or magazines (NIH CATALYST, AWIS, alma mater(s), etc.)
- Fellowships, internships, and details (with OITE - www.training.nih.gov, your institute, or your science society)
- Journal clubs
- Attend public hearings on Capitol Hill
- Volunteer at science societies, graduate student organizations, coalitions, or in political campaigns
- Enroll in science and technology policy classes (e.g., at George Washington University or Johns Hopkins University)
- Sit as a representative on a faculty or postdoc committee
- Network! and do informational interviews



Questions