Stanford and Third Sector Launch Partnerships for Economic Opportunity

Third Sector Capital Partners and the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality will provide assistance in evaluating social programs that address homelessness, unemployment, and family disadvantage.

The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and Third Sector Capital Partners have joined with three state and local governments to develop a new big-data infrastructure for evaluating programs that aim to increase economic opportunity.

The San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, the Santa Cruz Human Services Department, and the Washington Department of Early Learning will receive research and development support from Stanford and Third Sector. These government-nonprofit-university partnerships will build linked federal, state, and local administrative data sets for evaluating policy and improving economic outcomes and well-being.

The first cohort of state and local agencies will be supported by a grant [1] awarded by the Social Innovation Fund, a federal program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), to the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and Third Sector Capital Partners. This $1.5 million grant was matched by a $1.5 million contribution from the Ballmer Group.

These communities are showing their commitment to using data to develop programs based on outcomes. By accessing and linking to critical data, these communities will be able to better measure results and improve services. This effort is essential to expanding data-driven social programming resulting in delivering proven support to those individuals most in need,? said Caroline Whistler, CEO of Third Sector Capital Partners.

The three awardees are:

San Diego County, CA, will use data and technical assistance from this project to address homelessness. The partnership with the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality and Third Sector Capital Partners will strengthen the County?'s capacity to develop and analyze innovative approaches to integrating housing, health care, and human services. The goal: To improve outcomes for homeless individuals and families.

Santa Cruz County, CA, will study changes in self-sufficiency for individuals who participate in subsidized employment programs as part of CalWORKS. Linked data will provide new evidence on outcomes after participants finish these programs. The goal: To evaluate how subsidized employment programs and other welfare-to-work activities affect housing stability, substance abuse, and mental health.

The Washington Department of Early Learning plans to evaluate its early childhood intervention
With new big-data capacity, each agency will be able to measure both short- and long-term effects of their programs. The Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality is committed to improving the country’s infrastructure for evaluating and developing policy to reduce poverty and expand opportunity. These new partnerships will address key issues related to child and youth development, labor market attachment, and individual well-being. We’re excited to join with these communities to evaluate their economic opportunity programs, to learn what works and what doesn’t, and to build capacity for ongoing innovation,” said Charles Varner, Associate Director of the Stanford Center on Poverty and Inequality.

In addition to evaluation and program design, award recipients will join in thematic learning communities that will span the entire West Coast to provide peer development opportunities and encourage the adoption of outcomes-based, data-driven policy.

“The Social Innovation Fund is changing the way the government works with the private sector. We identify and invest in efficient and effective models so that more people can benefit from them,” said Lois Nembhard, Acting Director of the Social Innovation Fund. “This group of sub-recipients exemplify how communities are building innovative, data-driven programs. By supporting this opportunity, the Social Innovation Fund is continuing to support evidence-based public policy and create a pipeline of Pay for Success-ready governments.”

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THE STANFORD CENTER ON POVERTY AND INEQUALITY, a program of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences at Stanford University, is a nonpartisan research center dedicated to monitoring trends in poverty and inequality, explaining what’s driving those trends, and developing science-based policy on poverty and inequality. The Center’s mission is to conduct and facilitate research on issues of domestic poverty, mobility, and inequality and to disseminate the results of this research to scholars, policy makers, and the general public. The guiding principle of the Center’s work is that research findings should be evidence-based, the result of rigorous scientific inquiry, and communicated clearly and objectively. For more information, visit [inequality.stanford.edu](http://inequality.stanford.edu).

THIRD SECTOR CAPITAL PARTNERS leads governments, high-performing nonprofits, and private funders in building evidence-based initiatives that address society’s most persistent challenges. As experts in innovative contracting and financing strategies, Third Sector is an architect and builder of the nation’s most promising Pay for Success projects including those in Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, Santa Clara County, California and Salt Lake County, Utah. These projects are rewriting the book on how governments contract for social services: funding programs that work to measurably improve the lives of people most in need while saving taxpayer dollars. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit based in Boston, San Francisco and Washington, DC, Third Sector is supported by its work for governments and service providers as well as philanthropic and government grants.

THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND (SIF) is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency that engages millions of Americans in service through its AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Volunteer Generation Fund programs, and leads the nation’s volunteer and service efforts. The SIF positions the federal government to be a catalyst for impact; using public and private resources to find and grow community-based nonprofits with evidence of results. The SIF focuses on overcoming challenges confronting low-income Americans in three areas of priority need: economic opportunity, healthy futures,
and youth development. To learn more, visit www.nationalservice.gov/sif [3].