

# ***NC Office of Strategic Partnerships***

**Presentation to**

**NC House Standing Committee on Oversight and Reform**

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# ***Overview & Process***

## **The North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP)**

- Was started to increase government-research and government-philanthropy communication, coordination, and partnership.
- Develops, launches, and enhances partnerships between state government and North Carolina's research and philanthropic sectors
- Increases government transparency, demystifies government, opens opportunities for government and NC's colleges, universities, and others to partner
- Is housed within the Office of State Budget and Management

# Overview & Process

- Making state government more open and responsive is critical.
- OSP developed and now implements processes for government-research and government-philanthropy engagement
  - Overall framework for engagement
  - Nimble and tailored to government needs and goals
  - Leverages NC's vast and deep capacity in higher education (4- and 2-year institutions) and philanthropy
- Widely attended virtual sessions for partners from across sectors
- 30+ government-research partnership opportunities with ~14 state agencies across Cabinet and Council of State; interest from 350+ researchers at ~50 colleges and universities



## *Overview & Process*

- Capitalizes on expertise across the state and develops and increases state government's internal capacity to generate and use research evidence for decision making
- Provides a unique combination of opportunities for cross-sector facilitation and dialogue, technical assistance, and other resources and support.
- Receives regular requests from state governments and others interested in learning from and/or replicating our processes and approaches (e.g., Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Minnesota, Tennessee).

## *Resources (personnel and funding)*

- Staff: Director, Deputy Director, Evidence Advisors, Philanthropy Liaison, Program Manager, Program Support Specialist, Interns
- State and external support/funding
- OSP raises funds in part to support state agencies' need for greater capacity to answer research questions
- In-kind contributions come from partners across sectors - government, research, philanthropy - in the form of expertise, experience, guidance, and input to OSP about all aspects of the work.

# *Research Impact: Summary*

- Types of impact include
  - Research results that can inform programs, policies, and investments
  - Specific programmatic guidance
  - Improved communication with NC residents through state agency operations
  - Substantial increase in awareness of and opportunities for all of NC's colleges and universities to partner with state agencies
  - Increasing government knowledge and capacity to benefit from research
- OSP prioritizes partnerships that are scalable, sustainable, and that develop public, open-source resources.

# Research Impact: Use of Results

Agencies and OSP specify how the results of each project on the NC Project Portal may guide future decision making. Selected examples are below.

Agency	Research Question	Use of Results
DIT	What are the best practices in digital literacy and what additional research and innovation are needed because evidence isn't yet available?	Results will be shared with NCDIT, OSP, and philanthropies interested in investing in digital literacy alongside state government.
DOI	How many code enforcement officials does North Carolina need to perform inspections within two business days statewide? What is the best methodology and tool for optimally allocating inspectors across the state?	Results will be shared with the NC Code Officials Qualification Board, participating jurisdictions, and inspector trade associations. Results may be shared with the NC General Assembly, City and County Managers Assoc., NC League of Municipalities, NCWorks, UNC School of Government, and industry trade groups such as the NC Home Builders Association and other occupational licensing boards. Completion of this project will create a framework for collecting and using data to answer questions about recruitment, training, and effective employment/deployment of code enforcement officials by local governments.

# ***Research Impact: Planned Use of Results***

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Use of Results</b>
DOR	How can NCDOR improve and simplify communications to North Carolina residents?	NCDOR adopted revised forms as the new standard communication. Results may be used to inform the revision and redesign of additional NCDOR forms. Lessons learned can be applied to other state agencies' communication with NC residents.
Wildlife Resources Commission	How Can the NCWRC Improve Compliance with Wildlife Regulations and, in turn, Public Safety?	The NCWRC plans to use the results for evidence-based decision making on the creation and modification of regulations, agency practices, and allocation of resources to increase compliance and public safety. The results will also inform outreach and communication efforts on regulation changes. These results will also be applicable to other regulatory agencies.

*\*Full “Planned Use of Results” chart available.*



# *Research Impact: Partners' Perspectives*

Descriptions of impact or potential impact from projects as described by OSP partners:

“Having this on the NC Project Portal gives it credibility and visibility. OSP was able to help with that.” “OSP was proactive throughout...following up, sending emails, jumping on calls...just really invested in the process.”

*Mike Hejduk, Executive Director, Code Officials Qualification Board, NC Department of Insurance*

“Government-research partnerships are critical and OSP's approach to helping meaningful partnerships happen has meant all the difference. State agencies, community colleges, colleges, and universities across NC, including N.C. A&T, are increasingly engaged in this work. We look forward to ongoing cross-sector collaboration.”

*Tonya Smith-Jackson, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, N.C. A&T State University*

“The work of OSP to help funders identify opportunities to leverage significant federal resources coming to North Carolina has been extremely helpful. We appreciate OSP leading these discussions and inviting us to participate.”

*Ted Lord, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, Golden LEAF Foundation*

“As a funder who believes that scientific evidence is more likely to be useful to society if it accounts for decision-makers' questions and needs, I understand the critical role that North Carolina's OSP plays in integrating researchers with staff in the state agencies. OSP is a leader in this field and a model for how governments can create partnerships that benefit both science and the state.”

*Charlotte Hudson, Project Director, The Pew Charitable Trusts*



# ***Research Impact: Project Examples***



# ***Department of Public Instruction & NC Collaboratory***

- OSP co-planned and co-hosted with the NC Department of Public Instruction and the NC Policy Collaboratory a researcher interest meeting for the \$6.73M COVID-19 Learning Impact Program 2022 RFP.
- 60+ researchers from nearly 20 colleges and universities attended the meeting
- Researchers submitted 22 proposals for the partnership
- DPI selected and is funding 20 projects with researchers from multiple NC colleges and universities

# ***Department of Information Technology & The Duke Endowment***

- Led by the OSP Philanthropy Liaison, the NC Office of Digital Equity and Literacy (ODEL) and The Duke Endowment are partnering to support a literature review to learn “what evidence-based digital literacy programs exist and what investments in innovation and research are needed because evidence isn’t yet available.”
- ODEL and OSP partnered to share the opportunity.
- Results will be shared widely with NCDIT, OSP, and others to highlight learnings about digital literacy and possibilities for partnerships.



## ***OSP Evidence Advisors & Department of Adult Correction***

- OSP (primarily the Evidence Advisors) are assisting the Department of Adult Correction with developing a research/learning agenda. This includes identifying research and evaluation priorities.
- This is an area of technical assistance that OSP provides to agencies in a range of ways; can be short- or long-term engagement and related to an entire department or parts of a department.



## ***Lessons that the legislature and state agencies can apply***

- There is increasing demand for and growing understanding of the value of research
- Importance of being based *inside* government
- Approaches for developing and implementing partnerships are replicable within and across agencies
- Need dedicated government capacity
- Researchers and government are eager to partner with each other but often don't know how
- Enhancing government's use of evidence can increase government efficiency and save taxpayer dollars
- Nimbleness and adaptability are important

# ***Examples of OSP Resources***

- [OSP Website](#)
- [NC Project Portal](#) Research partnership opportunities with government agencies
- [State agency contacts](#) for partnerships and research
- [College and university contacts](#) for partnerships and research
- [Philanthropy Liaison](#) resources focused on engagement and partnership between government and philanthropy
- [Monthly Connect](#) Panel discussions on cross-sector partnerships – view recordings of over 30 sessions to date; sign up [here](#)
- [Highlights](#) Monthly e-news and resources ; sign up [here](#)
- Contact [partnerships@osbm.nc.gov](mailto:partnerships@osbm.nc.gov) with questions or partnership ideas and requests.