

Tips for Identifying Expertise at Colleges and Universities

The [Monthly Connect](#) is a series of virtual panel discussions on topics relevant to partnerships among state government, universities/colleges and other research institutions, philanthropy, and others. Monthly Connects are open to anyone interested in attending.

SESSION AT A GLANCE

Panelists representing external affairs and government relations offices from Duke University, N.C. A&T State University, and UNC Greensboro shared insights about external affairs offices, the resources they offer, and the many ways they can be of service to government partners. This includes helping to identify and connect with experts at their institutions for collaboration on research partnerships, student engagement, grant opportunities, and more.

HIGHLIGHTS

Engage with Offices of External Affairs

- Many colleges and universities have an Office of External Affairs or similar (e.g., External Relations Office), which are conduits of information and resources and a starting place for connecting with researchers.
- Other entry points include the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities' [State Relations and Partnerships Contacts](#) and the University of North Carolina System [State Relations Officers](#).

Use researcher profiles to identify potential partners

- Colleges and universities often have researcher profiles and directories of faculty and staff that are searchable by department and area of expertise. (Examples: East Carolina University: <https://scholars.ecu.edu/>; UNC Asheville: <https://www.unca.edu/directory/>)
- The [Guide to Identifying Potential Partners for Government-Research Partnerships](#) shares the process that OSP developed to identify potential partners for research partnership opportunities.

Proactively reach out to researchers

- Using the tips above, share information about potential partnership opportunities with researchers who have relevant areas of expertise and/or experience.
- Think creatively by expanding beyond a project's immediate focus. Consider not only the topic at hand but also delving into relevant background, skills, and expertise essential for meeting a project's needs. For example, a project involving the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services may not only need a researcher with healthcare expertise but also may need a researcher with expertise in training.
- Reach out to your existing partners; they may have recommendations for researchers who would be a good fit for new research partnerships.

Share opportunities with undergraduate and graduate students

- Involving students at all levels can increase awareness of opportunities (including for research partnerships, internships, and careers) available across state government.
- Since this Monthly Connect, OSP and partners have developed a [directory of career services contacts](#).



*“One of Duke University’s core tenets is building purposeful partnerships to address challenges facing people and communities in North Carolina. To accomplish that, Duke and other universities and colleges must share research expertise in ways that make it possible for government to use that expertise for the advancement of our state. **This OSP Monthly Connect was an important opportunity to highlight ways to partner with government continuously and for the long-term.**”*

- Doug Heron, Associate Vice President for Duke State Relations, Duke University

SPEAKERS

Andrew Cagle, Director of State and External Affairs, [UNC Greensboro](#)

Doug Heron, Associate Vice President for Duke State Relations, [Duke University](#)

Ray Trapp, Director of External Affairs, [N.C. A&T State University](#)

Click [HERE](#) to watch the full session.

The North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships (OSP) develops, launches, and enhances partnerships between state government and North Carolina’s research and philanthropic sectors.

OSP works with state government and non-governmental partners on priority issues, develops and convenes networks of public sector and research experts, and provides learning and engagement opportunities. These efforts help to deepen connections between North Carolina state government and external research experts and to increase state government’s internal capacity to generate and use evidence to improve policies and programs.



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