

THE SSRC MISSION

SOCIAL SCIENCE FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

The Social Science Research Council leads innovation, builds interdisciplinary and international networks, and focuses research on important public issues. Independent and not-for-profit, the SSRC is guided by the belief that justice, prosperity, and democracy all require better understanding of complex social, cultural, economic, and political processes. We work with practitioners, policymakers, and academic researchers in all the social sciences, related professions, and the humanities and natural sciences. With partners around the world, we mobilize existing knowledge for new problems, link research to practice and policy, strengthen individual and institutional capacities for learning, and enhance public access to information. We bring necessary knowledge to public action.

BASIC COMMITMENTS

The SSRC approaches its work guided by five basic commitments:

1. **Fostering innovation.** We work on problems that need new approaches; we act as a catalyst for new thinking. We seek to mobilize the most creative and knowledgeable researchers and to help research institutions be more dynamic. Renewing existing expertise, putting knowledge to work on new problems, and generating novel data and theories are all crucial to advancing social science for the public good.
2. **Investing in the future.** We ensure the future of knowledge production through nurturing new generations of researchers, enabling practitioners to act on scientific knowledge, enhancing cross-fertilization among intellectual fields, developing capacity where it is most lacking, and facilitating the internationalization of social science.
3. **Working internationally and democratically.** Better understanding of basic social processes is a resource for improving the lives of all. It should be available to all. Participation in the production of scientific knowledge should also be as broad as possible. We support the internationalization of social science and opportunities for under-represented groups both as matters of equity and as requirements for ensuring that the production of knowledge is informed by different contexts and perspectives.
4. **Combining urgency and patience.** We bring researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and broader publics together to focus on topics of pressing public importance from health to human rights. But since even the most urgent problems are seldom solved overnight, we must learn even as we act, and we must continually renew existing knowledge.
5. **Keeping standards high.** Practical action, policy, and debate on major public issues all need to be informed by the best possible knowledge. This is produced by emphasizing scientific quality, engaging important public questions, and ensuring openness to critical analysis. Theory and research can then command the attention of those who approach practical issues with different values or agendas.



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