



Rutgers-NPC 2027-2029 Health Policy & Communications Fellowship



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Leadership Statement

Dear Prospective Fellow,

On behalf of the National Pharmaceutical Council (NPC) and the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey (Rutgers), thank you for your interest in the Rutgers-NPC Health Policy & Communications Fellowship.

Health policy is essential to maintaining patient access to pharmaceutical innovation. Good policy is based on good evidence, and for over 70 years, NPC has developed credible evidence to inform policy development. For most of our history, NPC has partnered with respected academic institutions to help prepare emerging leaders for careers in the biopharmaceutical industry.

The 2027 fellowship, in collaboration with Rutgers, represents our continued commitment to training the next generation of pharmaceutical policy researchers and communicators.

This unique two-year fellowship is an accelerated path to industry experience and an opportunity to be part of a best-in-class research team, while forging relationships with thought leaders across the pharmaceutical industry. We invite you to **dream big, deliver impactful research,** and **drive better health policy** as a Rutgers-NPC fellow.

Sincerely,
John M. O'Brien, PharmD, MPH
President and CEO



About NPC

NPC is committed to fostering an inclusive community and leveraging diversity of thought, background, perspective, and experience.

The work of the National Pharmaceutical Council (NPC) has never been more relevant – or more important. NPC conducts policy-relevant research about the value of biopharmaceutical innovation and communicates it with impact.

Founded in 1953 and supported by the nation’s major research-based biopharmaceutical companies, NPC is better positioned to educate leaders than ever before. NPC serves patients and society with policy-relevant research on the value of patient access to innovative medicines. We envision a world where advances in medicine are accessible to patients, valued by society, and sustainably reimbursed by payers to ensure continued innovation.

NPC is proud to be a Certified™ Great Place To Work®.

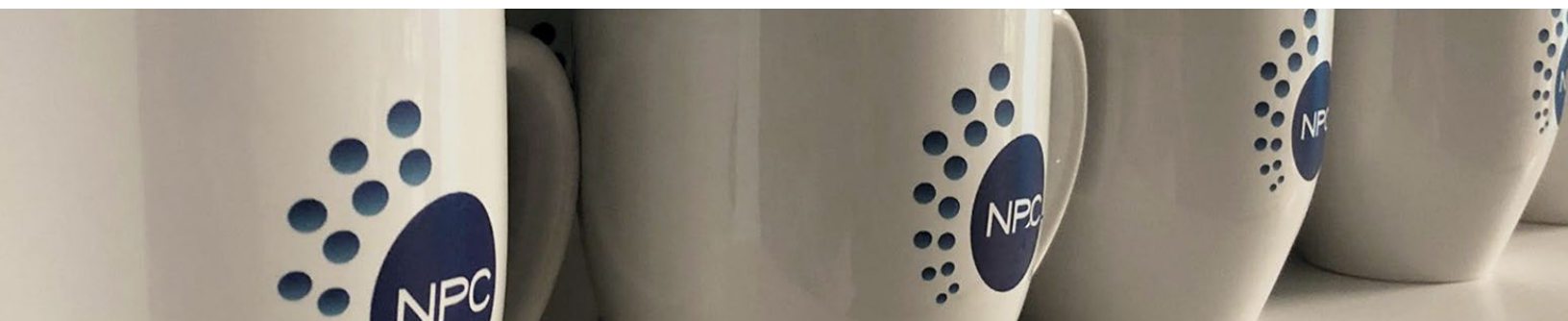
Our policy-relevant research agenda and communications-forward approach make NPC a uniquely credible, trusted, and impactful voice in the biopharmaceutical research and health policy communities.

NPC does not lobby but seeks to help educate stakeholders and policymakers on what the research reveals. Membership in NPC is limited to research-based biopharmaceutical companies with at least one product commercially available in the United States.

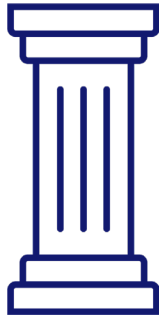
Our Board of Directors governs NPC and provides strategic direction through key committees. Board members and staff from our member companies contribute to our efforts through multiple workgroups. For more information, please visit www.npcnow.org.



Stay up-to-date with NPC This Week, a weekly newsletter offering a timely look-ahead to the policy, research, and industry conversations that impact the future of biopharmaceutical innovation.



NPC Prioritizes Policy-Relevant Research In Four Areas



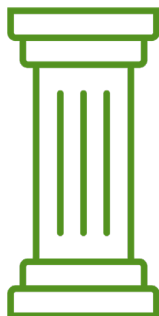
Misaligned Incentives

Examine and explain how the incentives in the US healthcare system prioritize margin over patient access and affordability.



Access to Innovation

Highlight the benefits medicines bring to patients and inform approaches to ensure patients benefit from innovation.



Value

Engage in the Value/HTA discussion by highlighting shortcomings in current methods and proposing alternatives.



Government Regulation

Scrutinize government approaches to price regulation and support with evidence alternatives preserving incentives for innovation.

NPC Member Companies



Fellowship Overview

The Rutgers-NPC Fellowship is a unique two-year opportunity to learn the inner workings of a national health policy research organization supported by the U.S. pharmaceutical industry.

The fellow will report to and be mentored by the President and CEO, and work closely with NPC's senior leadership team, Board of Directors, and member company staff workgroups.

Alumni of the fellowship will be highly qualified to join NPC or a similar organization as a health policy researcher or communicator. They will also be qualified to join a pharmaceutical company in a health policy, market access, or strategic communications role. Past NPC fellows have gone on to work for NPC members in roles including Associate Director of Policy Research and Director of Public Payer and Health System Strategy.



Fellows connect with researchers, industry leaders, and health policy professionals at national conferences.



Fellow Haley (right) with Director of Research Dr. Tyler Wagner (left) presenting their poster, "Subsequent Indications in Personalized Medicine: Potential Implications of the Drug Price Negotiation Program on Clinical Development" at AMCP 2025.

NPC This Week

NPC's look-ahead to the policy, research, and industry conversations that impact the future of biopharmaceutical innovation.

Risks of UPL implementation, new HRSA data on 340B covered entity 2025 drug purchases, and more.



Fellows play a leading role in policy-relevant research projects and communication initiatives.



Fellowship Responsibilities



Policy

Completing the AcademyHealth Health Policy Orientation

Evaluating and summarizing legislation, regulations, and other health policy proposals to NPC members

Drafting an official response or comment letter



Research

Completing selected ISPOR Short Course Core Curriculum

Advancing longitudinal research projects, including: research ideation and design, manuscript and publication drafting, and presentation of findings at a national meeting



Communications

Completing executive media training and presenting to high-profile audiences

Leading all aspects of a communications rollout, including: content creation, press and social media plan, partner and KOL engagement, workgroup briefings



Leadership

Participating in leadership and professional development sessions designed for a strengths-based culture

Executing against a strategic plan for a non-profit association

Key Fellowship Mentors



John M. O'Brien
PharmD, MPH
President & CEO

Leads NPC's strategic vision for research, communications and partnerships, bringing deep experience spanning the private sector, academia and government, including senior positions at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.



Jon D. Campbell
PhD
Chief Science Officer

Leads NPC's research agenda in concert with the board and research team, providing deep expertise in health economics, health policy, and value assessment study design in addition to applying evidence to decision-making and stakeholder engagement.



Kimberly Westrich
MA
Chief Strategy Officer

Provides strategic guidance to NPC's policy-relevant research and communications activities with extensive experience in value assessment and patient-centered benefit design. She has deep passion for helping others learn and thrive and is a certified yoga teacher and life coach.



Julie Patterson
PharmD, PhD
**Vice President of Research; Director,
NPC Enterprise Lab**

Oversees major Enterprise-led research projects at NPC with deep expertise in pharmacoeconomics, drug value and pricing, and patient preferences as well as over five years of experience in teaching graduate students.



Michael J. Pratt
Chief Communications Officer

Leads NPC's communications and external affairs work with over ten years of experience in health, policy, and science-focused communications from working with biopharmaceutical companies and at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.

Fellowship Testimonials



"If you are passionate about the impact pharmacists make in shaping our healthcare system, this fellowship is for you. The Rutgers-NPC fellowship exposed me to invaluable opportunities, from conducting policy-relevant research to supporting executive leadership as they communicated that evidence at international forums. The hands-on experiences enabled me to advance NPC's mission while being coached by industry-leading mentors. I am incredibly grateful for this world-class training opportunity, as it served as the foundation for my career as a pharmacist in association management and health policy."

Haley McKeefer, PharmD, MHA, MS, RUCIF
2024-2026 Fellow



"The Rutgers-NPC fellowship has served as an educational foundation and a road map – allowing me to learn the skills for my desired career while also showing me the type of impact I care about and desire to make. The relationships I have been able to build and the tables I have sat at would have taken years in a traditional sense, but this fellowship has greatly reduced that timeline. As an aspiring public servant, NPC has been a great place to start a career as I transition from pharmacist to policy professional."

Roswell Cole, PharmD, MPH
2025-2027 Fellow



"Through the Rutgers-NPC fellowship, I have been able to combine my passion for public health and pharmacy to improve medication access through evidence-based policy. Working alongside experts has strengthened my ability to translate evidence into meaningful impact while broadening my perspective on healthcare decision-making. The fellowship's collaborative environment and exceptional mentorship has helped me grow as a leader and prepared me for a career dedicated to advancing patient-centered health policy."

Emma Kikerkov, PharmD, MPH
2026-2028 Fellow

Rutgers-NPC Fellowship Outcomes

NPC has regularly collaborated with respected academic institutions to help prepare emerging leaders for careers in the biopharmaceutical industry. Alumni from these programs have gone on to serve in senior industry roles, including in outcomes research and market access. First roles for recent Rutgers-NPC Fellowship alumni include:



Haley McKeefer, PharmD, MHA, MS, RUCIF
2024-2026 Fellow

Director, Strategic Partnerships at Texas Pharmacy Association



Rayan Salih, PharmD, RUCIF
2023-2025 Fellow

Chief Medical Writer at InsightsRx.AI



Rutgers Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowship (RPIF) Program

Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy (EMSOP)

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

The RPIF Program has thrived under the leadership of the founder, Dr. Joseph A. Barone, Dean and Distinguished Professor of EMSOP, Dr. Carolyn Seyss, the Executive Director for the Institute for Pharmaceutical Industry Fellowships, and is supported by a team of RPIF alumni experienced in the pharmaceutical industry.



Joseph A. Barone,
PharmD, FCCP
*Dean and
Distinguished Professor*



Carolyn Seyss,
PharmD, RUCIF
*Fellowship
Executive Director*



Joseph Fulginiti,
PharmD, MBA, RUCIF
RPIF Associate



Erica Dankiewicz,
PharmD, RUCIF
RPIF Consultant



Patrick Park,
PharmD, MBA, RUCIF
RPIF Consultant

Program History

1984

EMSOP and 2 pharmaceutical companies began a first-of-its-kind collaborative pilot program to evaluate the potential contributions of clinically-trained pharmacists within a pharmaceutical industry practice setting. Following the successful pilot, the RPIF Program grew significantly and expanded to now include 26 companies within the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry with almost 300 Fellows.

2002

Dr. Ernest Mario generously provided an endowment to establish RPIF as an Institute to enhance and promote the role of pharmacists in industry through the RPIF Program. The Institute staff members:

- Create the Fellowship structure, providing strategic leadership and administrative support
- Promote quality, communication, scholarly activity, and professional development
- Arrange specialized training opportunities within the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry

2018

RPIF expanded to offer interdisciplinary Fellows' training by adding physician Fellowship opportunities to our well-established program.

2023

The RPIF Certificate is recognized with special credentials so our alumni can now proudly identify themselves as **RUCIF (Rutgers University Certified Industry Fellow)**.

Well over 1,900 Post-Doctoral Fellows have completed the RPIF Program, most of whom are experiencing influential and rewarding careers in the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry throughout the US and abroad. The RPIF Program has Preceptors and Mentors from industry who share their knowledge and experiences with the Fellows through an intense but closely-guided training program. Assignments and projects are challenging, meaningful, and designed to enhance understanding of the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry and the Fellow's functional area(s). Our goal is to provide the environment for Fellows to build the foundations to fuel their careers as future leaders in the industry.

Professional Development Series

All Fellows gather once monthly as a group to participate in the Professional Development Day (PDD) series, an important component of their training that complements the hands-on experience provided at the sponsor companies. The PDDs are steered by a committee of Fellows and are designed to enhance the Fellows' leadership skills such as emotional intelligence, communication, critical decision making, and presentation skills. Fellows develop skill sets under the guidance of external trainers and accomplished RPIF alumni. PDDs also provide general knowledge about various aspects of drug development/commercialization and issues facing the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry, and promote connectivity and a sense of community among Fellows and alumni from different companies and disciplines.

The Fellows can learn from each other through individual and group presentations on topics and issues related to the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry. In addition, outside experts provide training and professional development in a variety of areas (e.g., tools for corporate success, professional writing, presentations, meeting facilitation, negotiating, influencing, networking, conflict resolution, giving and receiving feedback, and business etiquette). Other PDD guest speakers include senior industry executives, including our successful RPIF Program alumni, who share their career paths, insights, and experiences. Importantly, PDDs provide an excellent opportunity for Fellows to interact with each other and develop lasting personal friendships and a strong professional network of Fellows, faculty, alumni, and other industry executives.

Key Program Features

RPIF FOSTERs the growth and development of future pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry professionals and leaders.

Because of its relationship with and close proximity to most of the nation's leading pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies, EMSOP and the RPIF Program are uniquely capable of providing Fellows with advanced training in the pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical industry.

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey is one of the major state university systems in the United States. EMSOP is part of Rutgers Health and is the only state school of pharmacy in New Jersey. EMSOP is located on the University's main science and technology campus in Piscataway, New Jersey.

While RPIF offers all the benefits of a large program with an extensive network of distinguished professionals, Fellows receive the individual attention of a small program where they are known and supported as individuals.



Family of Leading Companies

Partners include several top global pharmaceutical/biopharmaceutical companies and offer large to small company environments.



Outstanding Alumni Track Record

Well over 1,900 alumni hold prominent positions at many leading companies, including VP and C-suite levels.



Strong Network

Fellows develop valuable, lasting connections with each other, alumni, Preceptors, and Rutgers EMSOP faculty.



Trusted and Proven Since 1984

The Rutgers Fellowship Program is nationally recognized, trusted, and proven as the key pathway to industry, developing foundations for future leaders



Enhanced Career Development

Breadth of experiences informs career path choices, increasingly challenging assignments build depth of experience, and visibility creates opportunities - enhancing the potential for accelerated career paths.



Rigorous Academic Component

Rutgers affiliation provides academic and professional development opportunities.

Application Process and Eligibility Requirements

Pharmacy Fellows for the RPIF Program are selected on a nationally competitive basis. Candidates must have completed a Doctor of Pharmacy from an ACPE-accredited institution before July 1 of the fellowship term.

HOW TO APPLY:

The RPIF Program is highly competitive. **Candidates will be selected for interviews on a rolling basis, so we strongly encourage you to submit your application as soon as possible.**

Interested candidates may submit their application with short-answer questions and supporting materials (letter of intent, curriculum vitae, and 3 letters of recommendation) as soon as **Wednesday, October 14, 2026** by visiting our website at: <https://pharmafellows.rutgers.edu/how-to-apply/>

All application materials must be submitted electronically to the RPIF website per instructions on the site.

REQUIRED ITEMS:

Application with short-answer questions

Letter of Intent (LOI)

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Letters of Recommendation (LORs)

SUBMIT BY:

Tuesday, October 20th

Tuesday, October 20th

Tuesday, October 20th

Tuesday, December 1st

ADDRESS LOI AND LORs TO:

Joseph A. Barone, PharmD, FCCP
Dean and Distinguished Professor
Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
160 Frelinghuysen Road
Piscataway, NJ 08854-8020



"My experience as an RPIF Fellow has been one of the most meaningful and transformative parts of my professional journey, providing countless opportunities for growth while reinforcing the importance of giving back to the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy community. I am grateful to draw upon my nontraditional experiences prior to pharmacy school to mentor, support, and advocate for our RPIF Fellows, encouraging them to embrace their own unique backgrounds as strengths in their professional careers. Investing in their professional and personal development is especially rewarding because today's Fellows will become tomorrow's leaders, advancing innovations that improve the lives of patients and strengthen the communities we serve."

John (Eun Sik) Cho, PharmD
Global GMP QA Strategy



"I am incredibly grateful for the personal and professional growth I have experienced as a Rutgers Fellow. Through RPIF and my partner company, I have been able to learn from inspiring mentors, collaborate with talented peers, and pursue opportunities that have accelerated my development. Being surrounded by such a supportive fellowship community has made this experience especially meaningful and has helped me feel prepared and excited for the future!"

Brynn Gilbert, PharmD
Medical Communications



"It is hard to put into words how much this fellowship has meant to me in just my first year. RPIF has challenged me to grow, think differently, and embrace opportunities I never imagined having this early in my career. Knowing that my work has the potential to impact patient care on a global scale has been incredibly rewarding, and I am excited to see how RPIF continues to shape my career and growth as a leader. I encourage future fellows to take advantage of everything the program has to offer because the experiences you gain and the relationships you build will shape your future."

Hillary Anne Reeves, PharmD
Late-Stage Clinical Development



Aligned First Offer Date
December 11, 2026

The choice of a Post-Doctoral Industry Fellowship is an important decision. AIFA exists to promote a consensus first offer date for all Fellowship positions. We believe this is a positive reflection of the cultures our Programs offer, and that culture is a critical consideration in choice of Fellowship.

We hope that other academic and non-academic Fellowship Programs will NOT pressure candidates to accept offers prior to this AIFA-aligned offer date. Candidates should feel free to request an extension for any earlier offer to allow them to consider their options.