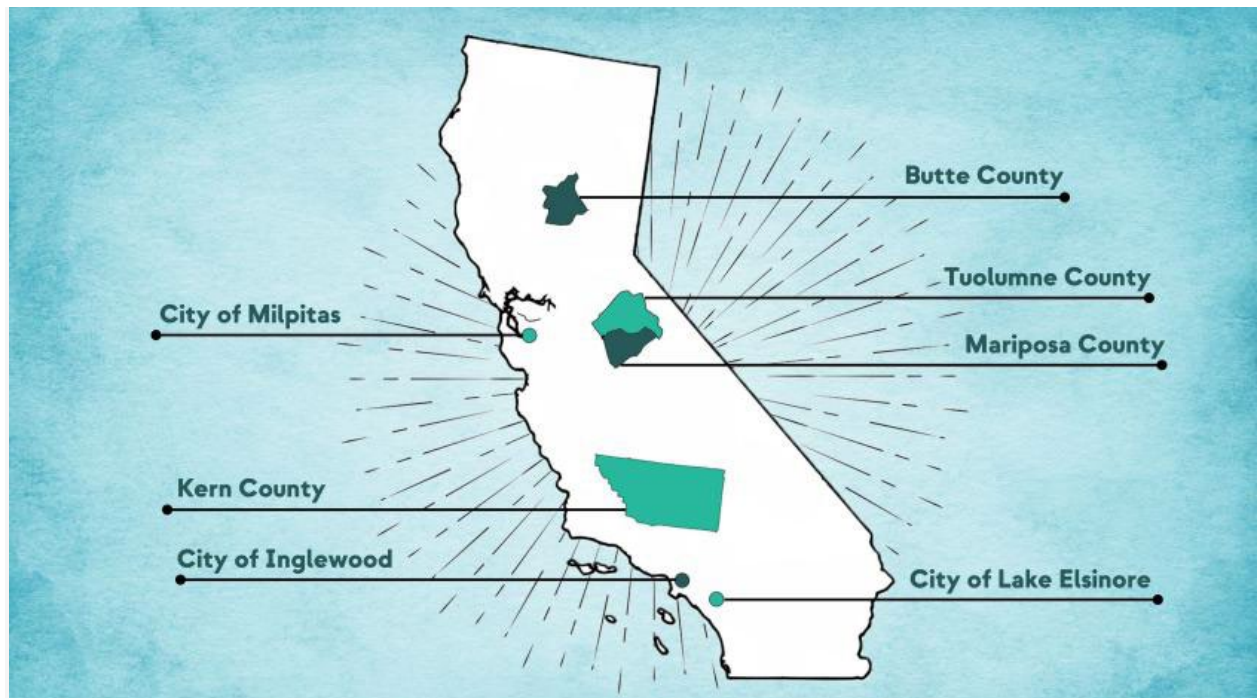




Seven Staff Members from Local Governments Across California Take Part in Brand-new Stanford Fellowship

27 NOVEMBER 2023

Stanford Impact Labs welcomes the inaugural cohort of Evidence for Policy Fellows



I am thrilled to announce the inaugural cohort of Stanford Impact Labs (SIL) Evidence for Policy Fellows. The [Evidence for Policy Fellowship](#) is a one-year

program [developed](#) to support the professional development and policy goals of career staff on teams in local governments in California as they seek to bring data, evidence, and research to bear in the design and implementation of a policy priority. These seven staff members from local governments across California are working to address economic opportunity and social mobility in their communities:

- [Alex Andrade, City of Milpitas](#)
- [Adam Gufarotti, City of Lake Elsinore](#)
- [Ben Goger, Mariposa County](#)
- [Briqiett Guzman, Kern County](#)
- [Katie Simmons, Butte County](#)
- [Qiuana Williams, City of Inglewood](#)
- [Robbie Bergstrom, Tuolumne County](#)

Over the next twelve months, fellows will test approaches to affordable housing (through rental assistance programs and the development of a community housing trust), strategies for homelessness services, support for entrepreneurs and small businesses, town center development, and the conceptualization of a model for sustainable disaster recovery.

Fellows were selected through an open application process, in which a selection committee reviewed applications and interviewed finalists. The Stanford Impact Labs team was overwhelmed by the quality of applications we received, and is grateful to everyone who took the time to apply. We are convinced of the [need for this kind of program](#), and we look forward to testing the choices we made as we [designed](#) the fellowship.

I'm also pleased to announce that Amanda Graor and Michelle Skoor will join the Evidence for Policy team to co-facilitate workshops, lead virtual trainings, and provide support and technical assistance to fellows over the coming year.

Amanda has spent over 15 years using data and evidence to drive decision making at the regional metropolitan planning organization and council of governments for the bi-state Kansas City metro area working in transportation, environment, innovation and organizational strategy. Michelle has spent over a decade in the technology industry, partnering with governments in California on workforce development and apprenticeships, and has deep expertise in collaborating to design the systems and structures required to make decisions using data and evidence.

The team at Stanford Impact Labs is excited to draw on Amanda's and Michelle's expertise as we support the fellowship cohort.

In the process of launching this program and reviewing applications, our team learned that local governments are looking to use data and evidence for economic opportunity in multiple ways:

- Some fellows are keen to provide broader context about a specific issue in their communities, in order to shape discussions around upcoming program and policy decisions
- Some fellows are ready to scope future projects using data and evidence
- Some communities are seeking to evaluate the effectiveness of existing programs, services, or policies to determine how and whether to continue them
- Some communities are collecting large amounts of data, but need support in systematically synthesizing that information into something actionable

All fellows in the cohort expressed a need for (1) improved approaches and practices to use data and evidence in their day-to-day work, and (2) a learning culture and mindset within their organization. All fellows also plan to collaborate both across their municipality and with external partners to shape their projects.

The SIL team looks forward to welcoming the cohort and teaching team to Stanford later this week for a kickoff workshop to dig into research questions and project approaches and begin an exciting year of learning from one another.

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