



# HOW TO JOIN THE SCHOLARS STRATEGY NETWORK

The [Scholars Strategy Network](#) (SSN) is an organization of university-based scholars who are committed to using research to improve policy and strengthen democracy.

In order to be eligible for SSN membership, you must meet all of the below criteria:

- Affiliation with a college or university.
- Pursuing or currently holding an advanced degree.
- Conducting or (or have conducted) peer-reviewed research.
- Committed to sharing expertise with policymakers, journalists, & civic leaders.

To join, eligible scholars must complete a **profile form** and draft a **short written document**. If you are not eligible or unsure about your eligibility, please reach out to [Membership@scholars.org](mailto:Membership@scholars.org).

## STEP 1: FILL OUT THE PROFILE FORM

The profile form gives scholars an opportunity to build their public-facing [www.scholars.org](http://www.scholars.org) profile, which helps policy and media stakeholders find the expertise they need. Complete the profile form here: <https://scholars.org/new-member-survey>.

## STEP 2: DRAFT A SHORT WRITTEN DOCUMENT

In order to effectively share research with policymakers, civic leaders, and journalists, it is essential for scholars to write concise, research-based pieces in compelling everyday language. All incoming members are required to draft one of the policy or media documents listed in the chart below, with the strategic support of our national staff. **The title of each document type links out to a comprehensive how-to guide on how to write each respective document.**

Type	Goals	Target Audience	Timeliness
<a href="#">SSN Brief</a> : Two-page jargon free summary of your research or an issue in your field	Distill research into a short resource + bring inform certain policy conversation	Policymaker, civic organization, media, public	Anytime but considers timeliness of policy issue
<a href="#">OpEd</a> : Research-backed opinion piece for a local or national news outlet	Same goals as an SSN Brief, plus, convince someone of your opinion	Policymaker, civic organization, media, public	Timely for current or upcoming news cycle
<a href="#">Policy Memo</a> : Response to a request for expertise from a policy stakeholder	Meet requests for expertise by policy actors	Policymaker or civic organization	Contingent on request
<a href="#">Testimony</a> : Summary of expertise related to legislation or court case	Educate legislators or judiciary; persuade with evidence	Legislators, courts	Current legislation or court case with scheduled hearing
<a href="#">Public Comment</a> : Summary of expertise in response to a rule or regulation change	Inform rulemaking and implementation process at any level	Agency staff (in some cases, the courts or legislatures)	Open public comment period (typically 60 days)

### **PROGRAMMING TO SUPPORT YOU**

- **SSN Orientations:** Join us to learn more about the Scholars Strategy Network's mission, the value of membership, and steps to becoming a member. These sessions also provide time to begin brainstorming your written submission type. [Find a time and register here.](#)
- **SSN Writing Sessions:** Join us for a lightly programmed writing space to make progress on your writing goals and attend optional 1:1 coaching blocks with SSN staff. [Find a time and register here.](#)

If you are looking for staff support but are unable to attend one of our orientations or writing sessions, please email [Membership@scholars.org](mailto:Membership@scholars.org) to set up an individualized coaching call.

### **FINALIZING SSN MEMBERSHIP**

**Please submit drafts of written documents to [Membership@scholars.org](mailto:Membership@scholars.org).** Once received, a member of SSN's staff will provide feedback, strategic advice, and if an OpEd, pitching support to a media outlet. In most cases, you can expect to hear back from us with initial feedback within a week of submission. However, if your submission is about a fast-moving news or policy opportunity, please flag that in your email and we will respond as promptly as possible.

**Membership is finalized when both the profile form and written document are completed.**

Once your profile is uploaded to our website, you will receive an official welcome email from our membership team, be introduced to your local chapter leaders, and become eligible to receive the full array of resources offered by the network.

### **QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about SSN membership, please email us at [Membership@scholars.org](mailto:Membership@scholars.org). We look forward to having you in our network!