

Societal Experts Action Network Fall 2025 Symposium

Networks that Work: Supporting Resilience through Collaboration and Connection

Wednesday, September 17, 2025 (9:30am – 3:30pm EST)

Overview

The Societal Experts Action Network's (SEAN) 2025 Fall Symposium will explore how sustained networks deliver public value and improve resilience, particularly in times of crisis and constrained resources. The symposium will examine how both emerging and long-standing collaborations can advance community leadership, foster collaboration, build trust, and bridge evidence and policy.

By convening experts in the social, behavioral, and economic (SBE) sciences alongside state and local decision makers, the event will spotlight proven models of network-building and governance in order to identify characteristics that foster success and clarify key challenges. Discussions will focus on how to mitigate challenges, sustain mission-driven efforts and ensure adaptability amid fiscal uncertainty and shifting priorities.

Purpose

- Showcase successful, mission-driven networks (public health, climate, education, responsible AI)
- Explore practical governance, funding, and accountability models
- Identify shared challenges and success factors for sustaining networks
- Facilitate new collaborations to strengthen the use of social, behavioral, and economic (SBE) science in state and local decision-making

9:30am

Registration Opens and Breakfast Available

10:00am – 10:15am **WELCOME**

Maria Carmen Lemos, University of Michigan, Co-Chair of the SEAN Executive Committee

Michael Hout, New York University, Co-Chair of the SEAN Executive Committee

10:15am – 12:00pm **SESSION 1 - THE NETWORK IMPERATIVE: WHY EVIDENCE NEEDS INFRASTRUCTURE**

Networks in Action: Sustaining Evidence Ecosystems

This session spotlights real-world success stories from networks operating at the national, regional, state, municipal, and local levels. It highlights how governance structures, funding models, and cultural practices sustain networks in public health, climate resilience, education, and responsible AI. The panel will feature a moderator, five presenters, and a Q&A session focused on the foundational infrastructure that enables evidence-informed collaboration and long-term impact.

Moderator: Adam Seth Levine, SNF Agora Institute Associate Professor of Health Policy and Management, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Overview Presentation and Q&A

Anita Chandra, Vice President and Director, RAND Social and Economic Well-Being

Case Examples

Florence Hudson, Executive Director & Co-Principal Investigator, Northeast Big Data Innovation Hub

Dovev Levine, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Affairs & Assistant Vice Provost for Outreach and Engagement, University of New Hampshire, New England Municipal Sustainability Network

Maria Flynn, President & CEO, Jobs for the Future

Erin O'Malley, Executive Director, Coalition for Trust in Health & Science

Facilitated Room Discussion

The facilitator will open the discussion to the room, focused on common themes and novel or interesting ideas. This collective sharing will allow participants to identify emerging patterns and issues that resonate across domains.

12:00pm – 1:15pm **NETWORKING LUNCH**

1:15pm – 2:15pm **SESSION 2 - DESIGNING FOR DURABILITY: FIELD NOTES AND FUTURES OF NETWORKED ACTION**

This session moves from examples in different issue areas to actionable strategies—spotlighting how resilient networks evolve, adapt, and endure across contexts. We'll hear from leaders who are navigating the key functional challenges that affect all networks: sustaining funding, leading through change, building trust, and coordinating across sectors.

Four dynamic speakers will each deliver short presentations focused on one of these cross-cutting challenges. Their insights will offer field-tested strategies and practical models that can be applied to a wide range of networks, regardless of mission or sector.

Moderator: Sonia Angell, Johns Hopkins University, Member of the SEAN Executive Committee

Presentations

Terri Ferinde, Partner, Collaborative Communications

Anna Ricklin, Health in All Policies Manager, Fairfax County Health Department, Society of Practitioners of Health Impact Assessment

Sacoby Wilson, Founding Member, Mid-Atlantic Justice Coalition

Jenifer Maze, Co-Director, National Center for Child Traumatic Stress

Facilitated Room Discussion

The facilitator will open the discussion to the room, focused on common themes and novel or interesting ideas. This collective sharing will allow participants to identify emerging patterns and issues that resonate across domains.

2:15pm – 3:25pm

SESSION 3 – IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Facilitator: Bridget Kelly, Burke Kelly Consulting

Review of the Day's Themes

The session facilitator will present key themes from the day's sessions, focusing on the contributing factors and strategies that support effective networks. A graphic note-taker will be capturing the main themes and insights throughout the symposium, and these notes-in-progress will be shared with all attendees. This reflection will serve as an opportunity to connect the day's learnings with opportunities for action.

Tabletop Activity

Participants will rotate through two small group discussions to build on the day's insights, first to consolidate shared understanding and identify areas of opportunity and then to generate actionable ideas to help build and sustain networks. The session facilitator will provide instructions for the activity and table hosts will help guide the conversations. Online participants will engage in a parallel activity to contribute their insights and ideas.

Sharing Takeaways and Facilitated Discussion

The session facilitator will ask each table host to share one new insight and one action idea from their table, then invite attendees to add additional highlights and discuss collective and cumulative takeaways.

3:25 pm – 3:30pm

FINAL REFLECTIONS AND ADJOURN

Maria Carmen Lemos, University of Michigan, Co-Chair of the SEAN Executive Committee