

KNOWLEDGE BASE

2. Continue to support education actors' access to and meaning-making of research on student experience

Studies of research use show that [syntheses of research](#) are particularly influential for education leaders. Syntheses can also help reveal where new research-based knowledge is needed. Funders, practitioners, and policymakers highly valued the research syntheses conducted and elevated by SERN; these syntheses were important knowledge-building tools in the field, and SERN paired them with opportunities for convening and dialogue in which people could unpack the implications of the research for their work. SERN's community also valued the [online knowledge hub](#) that our website offered for such trusted translational content.

Create both scholarly and translational syntheses of research on practically relevant topics.

Conduct academic scholarship that synthesizes key takeaways and gaps in research across disciplines, theories, and methods. This synthetic work should be guided by input from practitioners and policymakers about which questions and topics they consider high-priority. It can range from writing academic manuscripts to participating in multidisciplinary synthetic activities (e.g., national committees). Early career scholars who are close to the latest literature are well poised to conduct such work and can develop valuable cross-disciplinary experience in the process.

Create translational syntheses of research that are designed for education audiences and mindful of how the target audience(s) access information and use research-based insights in their work. This translation can take multiple forms, including written, oral, visual, and multimedia, and can be led by a variety of actors—including collaborations across research, practice, and/or policy.

Cite and share high-quality scholarly and translational syntheses on practically relevant topics in student experience within both academia and education circles to increase awareness of and demand for such work.

Where possible, create online repositories for translational syntheses that are easily accessible and relevant to education audiences; when such actors are aware of the resource and trust the source's credibility and translational skill, these online resources can become vital hubs of knowledge access and dissemination.

It is important to pair syntheses of research with opportunities for education actors to unpack (or "make meaning" of) the findings and consider them with respect to their needs, challenges, and contexts.

Provide structured (e.g., events, initiatives) and informal (e.g., one-on-one discussions) opportunities where practitioners, policymakers, and funders can engage individually and collectively with translational synthetic content, articulate how it might apply to their context, and surface new questions that arise based on the research. This meaning-making can inform both their own work and the next phase of research on the topic.

Document insights from these meaning-making opportunities in order to share them back with attendees, and others when applicable (e.g., SERN shared [insights from our funder briefings](#) publicly).

Leverage existing structures and resources in academia to enhance researchers' capacity to engage in synthesis and meaning-making work with education actors.

Encourage academic venues to support investments in and training for researchers to conduct scholarly (especially cross-disciplinary) and translational synthesis and to engage with practice and policy audiences in making meaning of research insights. Such venues include academic journals, research societies and professional associations, as well as

undergraduate and graduate training programs. Encourage dialogue among research, practice, and policy actors that can surface new practically relevant knowledge-building needs.

As discussed in the cross-cutting priorities section in this memo, revise structures in academia to incentivize these activities and ensure they are sustainable for researchers. This includes tenure and promotion policies, discipline-specific norms within academia, publishing practices, and funding structures.