



Community Science Note Worksheet

Created for Science Note Writing Workshop, September 2021

The process and products related to the research, publication, and distribution of Community Science Notes supports several objectives of the Missouri Local Science Engagement Network (LSEN), including:

- *elevating the role of science and evidence in deliberative processes;*
- *providing capacity, context, and content for local science advocates to use in broad engagement;*
- *and raising the profile of science and evidence in the media.*

Community Science Notes should always contain objective and nonpartisan research information. Writers should not make policy recommendations or include information that supports or opposes any policy alternative. All Community Science Note writers should adhere to the [Missouri LSEN Code of Conduct](#).

Drafting a Community Science Note

1. Choose your topic.

Topics should have a clear connection to science and policy and be relevant to your community or the state as a whole.

Missouri LSEN Priorities. The Missouri LSEN is especially interested in Community Science Notes that are related to any of our four priority areas:

- [Climate Change in Missouri](#)
- [Food & Health Disparities in Missouri](#)
- [Emerging Diseases in Missouri](#)
- [Environmental Pollution and Contaminants in Missouri](#)

For examples of previously published Community Science Notes, visit the [Community Science Notes page](#) of the MOST Policy Initiative website. MOST Policy Fellows have also published over eighty [Legislative Science Notes](#) related to a range of policy topics that have been discussed by the General Assembly.

Consider public comment periods and upcoming board/commission meetings. The [Missouri Register](#) can be used to identify proposed rules with open public comment periods. Missouri maintains a [searchable record of upcoming open meetings](#) across the state.

2. Research the topic.

Use appropriate resources, which include peer-reviewed research and review articles, data/reports from state or local agencies, and policy briefs from nonpartisan groups. We recommend finding resources using [Google Scholar](#) or other academic search engines (often accessed through a university). The search will likely not be exhaustive, but best judgement should be used to select relevant papers that cover a broad range of information that may be useful to policymakers.

Consider the policy implications and tradeoffs. Is there research about the economic, environmental, health and/or social consequences of a policy or program? Does a problem or policy disproportionately impact specific populations based on ability, geography, income, race, gender, etc.?

3. Write the Science Note.

Know your audience. Community Science Notes can be shared with state and local policymakers from various political backgrounds and roles in government. Readers should not need scientific expertise in order to understand the content.

Summarize the legislative background. Briefly summarize proposed legislation and similar legislation passed or introduced in other states. Reference legislation directly, rather than news articles discussing legislation.

Summarize the research. Select 3-4 primary results that would be relevant to policymakers, and briefly summarize each (including in-text citations).

Identify research highlights (3-5 bullet points) and limitations (1-3 bullet points). Select the overarching points from the literature review and list as bullet points directly following the legislative summary. Highlights should be a responsible representation of the literature and may stand alone. Do not include in-text citations in highlights. Limitations should represent any scientific disagreements or gaps in knowledge associated with the current state-of-knowledge in relevant literature

Write Executive Summary (1 paragraph). Although this is the first section of the completed Community Science Note, this is often easiest to write last. The summary should briefly frame the problem and briefly summarize the proposed legislation or rule change.

4. Format the Science Note

Sections. Each Community Science Note should contain the following sections in the following order:

- *First Page*
 - Executive Summary
 - Highlights
 - Limitations
 - Disclaimer (as footnote): "This community science note was prepared by the Missouri Local Science Engagement Network (LSEN), a partnership between MOST Policy Initiative and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) aimed to elevate science in policy conversations in Missouri. For more information, contact {AUTHOR NAME} - {EMAIL} or MOST Policy Initiative- info@mostpolicyinitiative.org. This was prepared on {DATE}."
- Research Background
- References
 - [APA](#) Style for bibliography list
 - In-text citations should be included as superscript numbers after the period of the sentence.
 - Include in-text hyperlinks where possible.

Formatting Details.

- Length: 2-4 pages
- Font: Serif Font- Book Antiqua, Size 11
- Spacing: 1.15
- Alignment: Justified
- Logo: Missouri LSEN logo should be in the upper right corner of the first page