



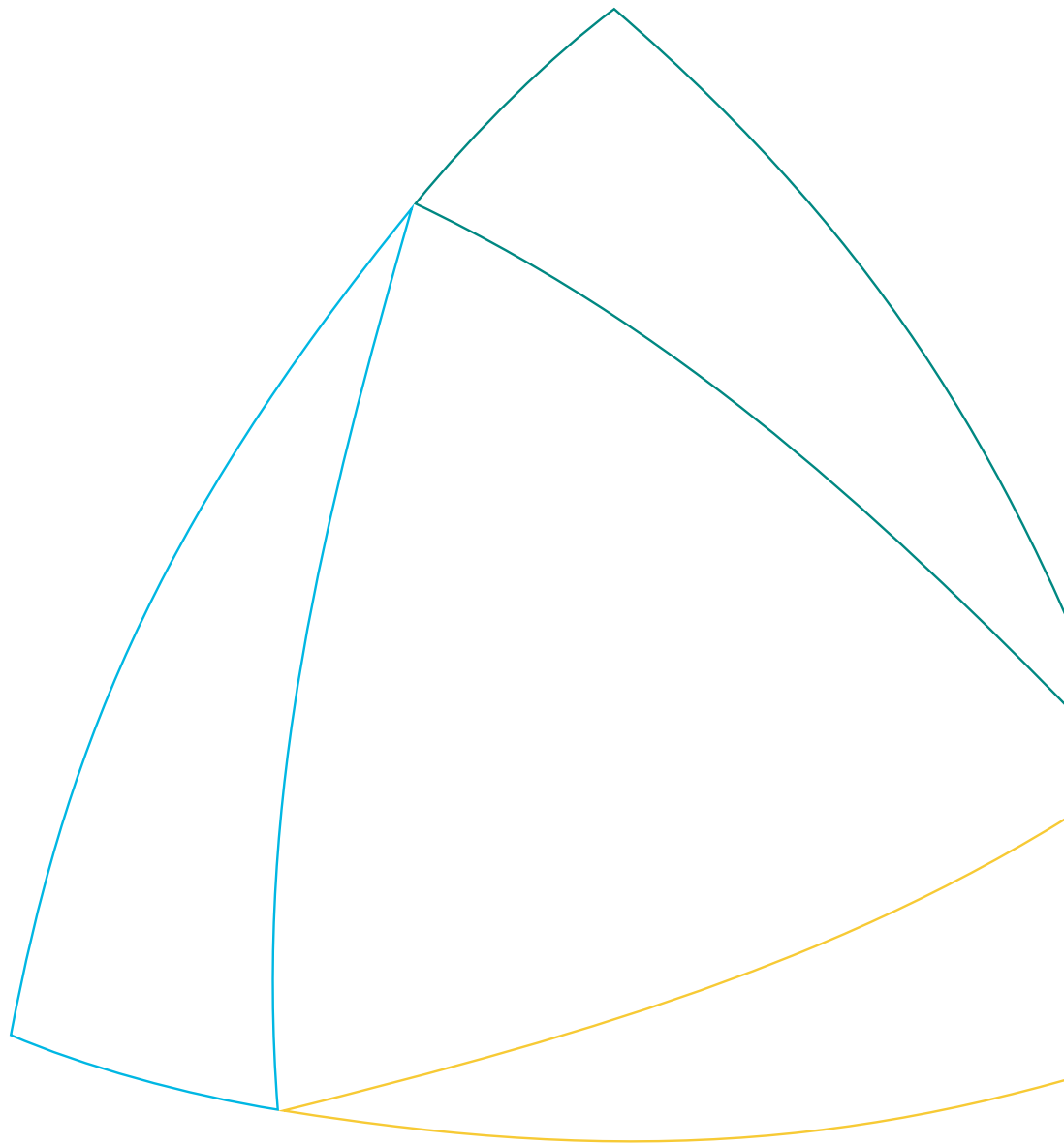
# SHEEO

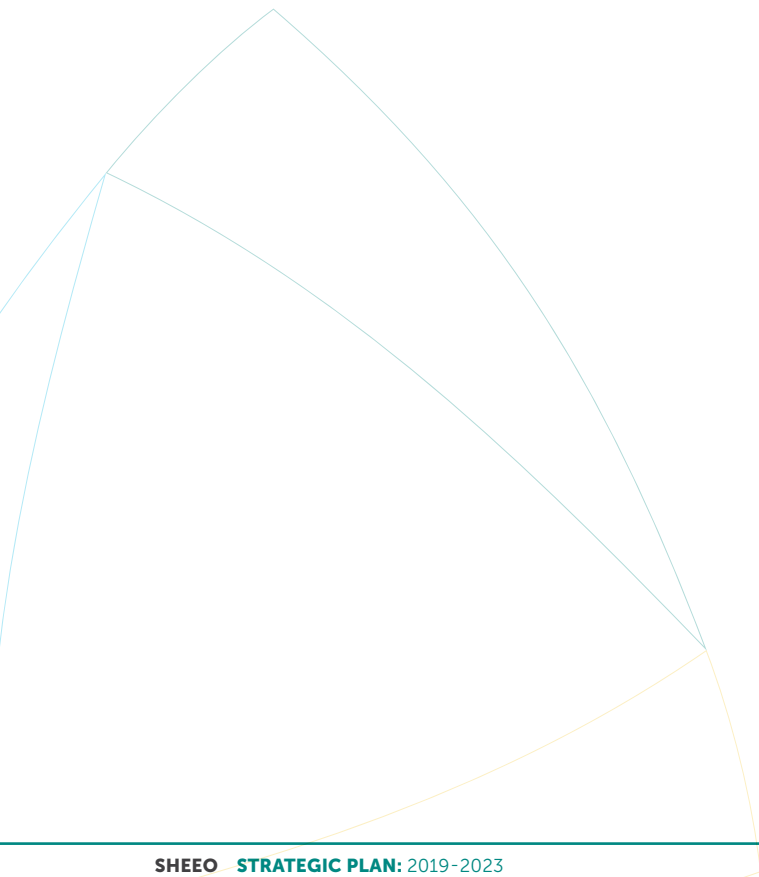
STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2019-2023

FEBRUARY 2019





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## AT A GLANCE

### VISION

Together with its members, promote an environment that values higher education and its role in ensuring the equitable education of all Americans, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic factors.

### MISSION

We will:

- Equip state higher education executive officers and their staffs with the tools to effectively advance the value of higher education.
- Promote public policies and academic practices that enable Americans to achieve success in the 21st century.
- Serve as an advocate for state higher education leadership.

### WHO SHEEO SERVES

Chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education and their staffs.

### SHEEO'S 2019-2023 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Serve and support membership by developing, connecting, informing, and guiding state higher education executive officers and their staffs.
2. Contribute to thought leadership in the field on salient higher education issues.
3. With its membership, advocate the value of higher education and the critical role of state-level higher education leaders.

## ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND AND STRENGTHS

Founded in 1954, the State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO) was created to serve as a national organization for chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education. Emerging at a time when the demand for higher education was growing at an unprecedented rate, SHEEO supported higher education leaders in expanding the scope and quality of the educational ecosystem. Today, SHEEO remains a membership organization supporting state higher education executive officers and their staffs across the country.

SHEEO and its members play a critical and unique role within the higher education environment. As the complexities of higher education have grown and evolved, SHEEO's importance as a national association focused on supporting states, SHEEOs, and their agencies has likewise grown. SHEEOs and the agencies they lead are uniquely positioned to provide an informed, professional perspective on higher education policy development and implementation and to properly navigate and work within both the higher education and political environments. SHEEO aims to support state higher education agencies so that they can most effectively play a central role in all state higher education finance, policy, governance, planning, and coordination considerations.

SHEEO supports its members as they face challenges such as regular turnover (at all levels) and the integration of leaders who may be unfamiliar with higher education, and, in some cases, with small or under-resourced offices. Our member agencies turn to SHEEO as they seek to stay abreast of national best practices, better align stakeholders such as K12 and workforce, work to ensure adequate resources for higher education, and develop policies and practices to advance student success. Often, executive officers navigate tensions between elected officials, institutions, the interests of students, and the public good. SHEEO agencies are charged with implementing and sustaining policy solutions meant to solve some of the most pressing problems facing our states and country. **There is no other association attuned to these complexities and focused solely on the professional needs of state higher education agencies other than SHEEO.**

SHEEO's priority is carrying out a vision and mission that are reflective of its distinctive membership and committed to supporting the public good. In a shifting landscape of college affordability issues, diverse and challenging political environments, and changing student demographics, SHEEO's new vision and actionable mission allow it to remain at the forefront of assisting states in their work to ensure a more educated society.

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To carry out its mission and vision, SHEEO will capitalize on the following organizational strengths to deliver its services and address its strategic priorities:

- **Coordinator of a unique membership association** – Coordinating and supporting this unique group provides SHEEO with access to information on policies and practices; strengthens a broad perspective on challenges and paths to success; and fosters the ability to build nationwide relationships and connections to benefit its members and the field. This positions SHEEO to be the expert voice on state higher education leadership and policy matters.
- **Long-term presence and recognition in the field** – For over 60 years, SHEEO has brought together state-level leaders of higher education, state agency staff, and others to build a network of support and be a resource on issues in higher education. SHEEO is a known entity in the field, which provides it with a valuable platform from which to advocate about the critical role of higher education in our society.
- **Responsive knowledgeable staff** – SHEEO employs a staff with a breadth of expertise across higher education policy, practice, and research gained from experiences working with elected leaders, state agencies, researchers, postsecondary system offices and institutions. SHEEO uses its experience and expertise to support the professional development of its membership and to support the knowledge base of the field and policymakers.
- **Convening power** – SHEEO coordinates two annual meetings of its members, their staffs, and other higher education leaders and partners in the field, as well as numerous project-specific convenings involving participants from multiple states. Hundreds of higher education professionals convene at these meetings for the invaluable networking, information sharing, and professional development experiences they provide.
- **Critical analysis and reporting of state higher education finance** – SHEEO annually produces a comprehensive analysis of state higher education financing—to provide leaders and their staffs with information about their state in relation to others, to set benchmarks, and to inform policy. This body of work is noted widely in the field as an important and necessary source in higher education finance.
- **Expertise and support for state postsecondary data systems** – SHEEO is the higher education community’s primary source of information regarding the capacity and effective use of postsecondary data systems across the states and territories. SHEEO leverages this intelligence and regularly provides professional development and technical assistance to state data practitioners.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: 2019-2023

Over the next five years, SHEEO will work to strengthen its service and support of its members and the field by focusing on three strategic priorities.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Serve and support SHEEO membership by developing, connecting, informing, and guiding SHEEO agencies.

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*The goal of this priority is to support SHEEOs and their staffs in the procurement of relevant knowledge, by serving as a primary and reliable source of in-depth and comprehensive information on state higher education policy and practice.*

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SHEEO aims to promote the value of its membership with its ability to bring members together to network, learn from each other, and create connections with peers across states. Membership provides access to thoughtful, non-partisan, and timely analysis of critical issues for the field to inform policies within states. The association supports the professional development of the leaders and staffs in SHEEO organizations, and champions the critical role these higher education leaders play for the states. Through these efforts, SHEEO works to advance the profession and promote critical outcomes like educational equity and the public good.

### STRATEGIES

- Developing SHEEOs and their Staffs
  - Develop and implement a new-SHEEO onboarding protocol, curriculum, and supports.
  - Develop a comprehensive curriculum, materials, and delivery program for the professional development of state agency staff, including components specific to cultivating and supporting diverse staffs.
  - Leverage state expertise to facilitate professional development among states.
  - Continue to focus on and provide specific supports and training for SHEEO agency staffs on data collection and use and evidenced-based decision-making.
- Connecting SHEEO Agencies
  - Coordinate two annual meetings of its members, their staffs, and other higher education leaders in the field.
  - Initiate regular communications highlighting promising practices and membership accomplishments.

- Develop a plan to connect states with contextual similarities as well as those outside their zone of familiarity.
- Ensure purposeful but unstructured networking and conversation time at annual gatherings.
- Facilitate peer-mentoring to a broader range of state agency staffs.
- Offer low-cost options such as webinars or regional meetings.
- Informing SHEEO Agencies
  - Develop an easily accessible archive of best and promising practices that is frequently updated and allows for comparison, and proactively share this information with SHEEO agencies.
  - Increase access to comparative studies.
  - Improve the utilization of information to resonate with a variety of stakeholders.
  - Further develop and build on the State Higher Education Finance project and report.
- Guiding SHEEO Agencies
  - Provide SHEEO agencies with information on innovative practices and emerging issues in other states.
  - Guide and support SHEEO agencies as they garner support from critical stakeholders.
  - Explore and apply for grant opportunities that have clear value and are mission-aligned.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Contribute to thought leadership in the field on salient higher education issues.

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*The goal of this priority is to offer thoughtful analysis and insights into issues, such as equity and finance, which build the knowledge base of leaders of higher education policy.*

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Multiple organizations regularly share the latest headlines and research related to higher education issues, challenges, and successes. While valuable, rarely are these outlets from the perspective of the state leaders in the field who aim to turn this information into policy. SHEEO sees it as its responsibility to contribute thought leadership about issues that affect the decisions of policymakers and their staffs. SHEEO offers analysis across states, taps into the expertise and experiences of its membership, and provides a broader perspective on matters relevant to the field. SHEEO sees it as a responsibility to be a prominent voice in the field, particularly around issues of educational attainment, equity, and other important student outcomes.

## STRATEGIES

- Identify 2-3 issue areas in which SHEEO has current expertise to provide extensive analysis and develop consistent and ongoing communications to distribute to its membership.
- Identify and collaborate with other experts in the field to bolster internal expertise and maximize SHEEO's voice.
- Determine additional areas of focus over the second through fifth years of the plan and develop communications that build on the successes and learnings from year one.
- Provide balanced analysis of the issues and highlight state successes.
- Craft and communicate analysis around federal actions and policies to help inform states.
- Increase communications efforts to ensure that analysis and insights reach a wider audience.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

With its membership, advocate the value of higher education and the critical role of state-level higher education leaders.

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*The goal of this priority is to position SHEEO, along with its members, as critical voices to be engaged at the state and federal levels on issues pertaining to and intersecting with higher education.*

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The national discourse about higher education indicates that a significant proportion of America questions its value and questions the purpose and benefits of state-level offices governing or coordinating higher education. SHEEO's most significant service to its members is the role it plays in being a champion for both the public good of higher education and the state leaders who focus on these issues.

### STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement a communications plan and set of national strategies that promote the value of higher education and the work of its membership.
- Communicate the importance of SHEEO agencies as essential partners for policymakers and institutions.
- Take a non-partisan stance on broad higher education issues.
- Develop a strategy to engage at the federal level on critical higher education issues with and on behalf of state agencies.

## ABOUT SHEEO'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The desired outcome of the strategic planning process was a mission-focused, actionable plan that broadens and maximizes SHEEO's strengths and strategically positions the organization to realize its vision and accomplish its mission.

SHEEO received a capacity building grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to engage in a strategic evaluation and planning process to assess its direction, ensure effective and efficient service to its members, and develop a strategy for future action. To help them do this, SHEEO contracted with VOX Global, HCM Strategists, and Research for Action (RFA).

The strategic evaluation and planning process included phone interviews and online surveys between November 2017 and January 2018 to gather feedback and input from current and former state higher education executive officers, state higher education policy organizations, and other stakeholders. Visits to 15 state higher education member agencies representing a diverse group in terms of size, geography, and governing type occurred between November 2017 and June 2018. All SHEEO staff were interviewed in April and May 2018. Overall, well over 300 people from the higher education field provided their insights to inform the development of this plan.

### MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

#### SHEEO Staff

- Robert Anderson, *President*
- John Armstrong, *Senior Policy Analyst*
- Gloria Auer, *Executive Assistant*
- Andy Carlson, *Vice President of Finance Policy and Member Services*
- Caitlin Dennis, *Grants and Events Coordinator*
- Eric Godin, *Associate Vice President*
- Annahita Jimmerson, *Strategic Communications Director*
- Jiah Kim, *IT Systems and Database Manager*
- Sophia Laderman, *Senior Policy Analyst*
- Denise Pearson, *Vice President of Academic Affairs and Equity Initiatives*
- David Szczesny, *Director of Finance*
- David Tandberg, *Vice President of Policy Research and Strategic Initiatives*
- Dustin Weeden, *Senior Policy Analyst*
- Christina Whitfield, *Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff*

## CONSULTANTS

- HCM Strategists, LLC
  - Cristen Moore, *Senior Associate*
  - Malia Sieve, *Director*
- VOX Global
  - Emily Brelage, *Account Supervisor*
  - Michael Marker, *Managing Director*
- Research for Action
  - Kate Shaw, *Executive Director*
  - Ginger Stull-Hunter, *Research Associate*
- Gates Capacity Grant Advisory Board
  - Wil Del Pilar, *Vice President of Higher Education Policy and Practice, The Education Trust*
  - Tom Harnisch, *Director of State Relations and Policy Analysis, American Association of State Colleges and Universities*
  - James Hearn, *Professor of Higher Education and Associate Director, Institute of Higher Education, University of Georgia*
  - Rochelle Hendricks, *Former Secretary of Higher Education, New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education*
  - Teresa Lubbers, *Commissioner, Indiana Commission for Higher Education*
  - James Purcell, *Executive Director, Alabama Commission on Higher Education*
  - Kim Hunter Reed, *Commissioner of Higher Education, Louisiana Board of Regents*
  - Judith Scott-Clayton, *Associate Professor of Economics and Education and Senior Research Associate, Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University*



# STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

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