

# SCIENCE DAY

## Breakout Session Summaries

As part of [Science Day 2024](#), held on October 17, CCST and California Natural Resources Agency hosted a series of breakout sessions focused on different aspects of the logistics of State research partnerships, including communication, funding innovation, and novel partnership models. In these sessions — held in partnership with the [California Ocean Science Trust](#), and [CSU-COAST](#) and [CSU-WATER](#) — attendees from the State, research universities, federal laboratories, and NGOs were invited to share their experiences and best practices, as well as brainstorm solutions to common challenges in creating these partnerships.

These initial summaries, prepared by CCST, represent high level takeaways from the sessions and CCST welcomes participants to keep these conversations going as we explore pathways to addressing some of the identified barriers.



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## Bridging the Gap: Overcoming Communication Barriers

In this session, participants examined communication barriers that hinder collaboration among academia, state agencies, federal labs, and policymakers. Common issues identified included siloed programs, sector-specific jargon, and a lack of mutual understanding of priorities and timelines. Solutions discussed focused on incentivizing communication efforts, enhancing outreach strategies, and fostering connections among stakeholders to build trust and improve data sharing.

### What we heard from Participants:

- Lack of support and incentives for scientists to engage in communication and outreach can be addressed by integrating science communication into tenure evaluation packages and providing dedicated staff for outreach efforts.
- Many interactions occur only at high levels, so encouraging staff-level communication and early engagement with policymakers is essential for fostering meaningful partnerships.
- Effective matching of research and data to relevant audiences can be improved through enhanced awareness campaigns, centralized data clearinghouses, and tailored training for both researchers and policymakers.



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## Funding Strategies for Collaborations between Scientists and State Agents/Policymakers

In this session, participants discussed innovative funding structures and partnerships, sharing experiences and exploring potential collaborations. Many highlighted successful models, such as the US Fish and Wildlife partnership with ranchers and the [ARCHES hydrogen hub](#), illustrating how creative funding can foster environmental and community benefits. Participants emphasized the need for more inclusive management practices and collaborative efforts to enhance funding opportunities, while also considering the roles of non-profits, state agencies, and research institutions in these partnerships.

### What we heard from Participants:

- Innovative partnerships, like the ARCHES hydrogen hub, can effectively mobilize resources and stakeholders, leveraging convening power to create new markets.
- Nonprofits play a crucial role in advocating for legislation and forming partnerships that enhance funding possibilities and project sustainability.
- There is a strong need for management to actively listen and integrate diverse ideas, fostering an environment where creative funding strategies can flourish.



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## Building Effective Collaborations and Advisory Roles

In this session, participants explored the potential for scientists to engage in advisory roles within policy making organizations, emphasizing the importance of collaboration between state agencies and academia. They discussed various opportunities, such as science advisory committees, fellowship programs, and successful collaborations that have influenced policy, like UC Davis's social science initiatives. Participants highlighted the need for clear communication, relationship-building, and innovative incentives to encourage scientist involvement in policy development.

### What we heard from Participants:

- Establishing advisory councils and fellowship programs can create pathways for scientists to influence policy while fostering collaboration between academia and state agencies.
- Successful collaborations, such as those from [CA Sea Grant](#) and UC Davis, demonstrate the effectiveness of integrating scientific expertise into policymaking processes.
- Clear communication and relationship-building are crucial for breaking down barriers and enhancing engagement between scientists and policymakers, ensuring timely responses to state needs.

