

Advancing Heller

HELLER'S MISSION

The Heller School drives positive social change through research, education and public engagement that inform policies and programs designed to address disparities in well-being and social inclusion in a sustainable way.

HELLER'S HISTORY

When the Heller School was founded in 1959, it offered a small, pioneering doctoral program whose graduates would break a barrier by using social science disciplines and the most

advanced research methods toward building a more equitable nation. Heller's academic scope has since expanded to include numerous master's degrees in both domestic and international policy, with a common focus on assessing and managing relevant social issues. Today, Heller is one of the country's most highly ranked schools of social policy and a leading research institution shaped by the social justice roots it shares with Brandeis University.

Heller's Character

OPEN-MINDED

We look at policy from a variety of angles and know that progress is often found at the intersection of various fields and ideas. We are also aware of the effect that our identities have on how we interact with the world.

RESPONSIVE TO HUMAN NEEDS

The research we generate and the knowledge we create empowers the vulnerable and marginalized. Our collective work is united by a commitment to social justice.

RESPECT FOR SOCIAL ISSUES AND ORGANIZATIONS

We acknowledge the complexity of social issues and recognize the need for social organizations to have prepared, effective leadership in order to succeed.

AUDACIOUS

We challenge assumptions associated with the status quo and create an environment for others to do the same.

PRAGMATIC IDEALISTS

We provide the practical training and skills that are required to solve seemingly intractable problems.

EXPERTISE

To determine solutions, we must have a deep understanding of the foundational knowledge of our respective fields. Our research is grounded in practice, and our practice is supported by research.



Heller's Values

SCIENTIFIC RIGOR

We do not take information at face value. Our research incorporates thorough quantitative and qualitative testing and analysis. The results of our work are not just theoretical, but applied.

SUSTAINABILITY

We aspire to find solutions that ensure enduring structural changes, but not at the expense of the natural environment or the well-being of future generations. We work at the grassroots level with local partners who are best positioned to sustain and amplify the impact of our work.

NEW IDEAS

We build on foundational knowledge with bold thinking. Heller fosters an entrepreneurial spirit.

COMMUNITY

We strive for diversity in all its forms and recognize that the inclusion of different perspectives, backgrounds and experiences makes for a better learning environment, both socially and in the classroom. Together, we form a support network and offer professional connections for fellow Heller students, alumni, faculty and staff.

RESPECT

We do not impose our ideas on the communities we work with and for. We take local knowledge into account and are connected to the groups and individuals who are the focus of our work.



Our Messages

KNOWLEDGE ADVANCING SOCIAL JUSTICE

We are a diverse academic community with a common interest in empowering marginalized and vulnerable groups and individuals worldwide. This commitment to social justice is at the core of who we are as a mission-driven institution at Brandeis University.

WE PREPARE STUDENTS TO DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE SOCIAL POLICIES

When students graduate from the Heller School, they possess the skills to navigate the full circle of policy creation and implementation. They have developed a deep understanding of the root causes of society's most pressing issues, have gained the management skills to design effective solutions

and have the capacity to put their innovative ideas into practice.

WE HAVE A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE AND AN INTERNATIONAL IMPACT

Heller community members come from around the world and offer diverse perspectives in our classrooms and in our research. Heller actively contributes to solving pivotal issues in government policy and public discourse both in the U.S. and abroad. We generate applied research and prioritize public engagement.

OUR RESEARCH AND SCHOLARSHIP EMPOWERS OTHERS TO MAKE EVIDENCE-BASED CHANGE

Heller students, faculty and researchers are creating the

knowledge and disseminating the information that policymakers in government and practitioners in the field can use to advance their own work on critical social policy areas.

OUR GOALS ARE AMBITIOUS AND NECESSARY

As a leading school of social policy that is also a powerful research institution, we don't just analyze pivotal social issues — we create the knowledge that's needed to make and sustain evidenced-based change. We believe that societies and people achieve greater health, productivity and happiness when social policies that promote social justice are implemented, and that it is incumbent on us to contribute to these solutions.