



HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Postdoctoral Fellow Position: Conceptual Research Use and Institutional Change in Turnaround Schools

Principal Investigator: Dr. Ebony N. Bridwell-Mitchell, Herbert A. Simon Professor in Education, Management, and Organizational Behavior

The Harvard University Graduate School of Education invites applications for a Postdoctoral Fellow to join Dr. Bridwell-Mitchell's W.T. Grant funded research project combining theories of organizations, institutions, and school improvement. The project examines the extent to which conceptual use of research evidence and epistemology is a catalyst for institutional change in persistently low-performing school organizations often designated for 'turnaround'. The appointment is for an in-person, full-time position based in Cambridge, MA, July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.

Well-qualified candidates for this position have a background in organization theory and ideally in institutional theory, as well as in school improvement and reform. Well-qualified candidates also have a methodological background in both qualitative and quantitative methods with some interest, and ideally experience, in experimental methods.

Research focus areas include, but are not limited to:

- Schools as organizations
- Institutional processes and change
- School and district improvement
- School turnaround
- Education interventions
- Mixed-methods research
- Program evaluation

The postdoc will take a leading role in continuing development of the research design for the project, overseeing the research team, participant recruitment, and data collection, including implementing the experimental procedure, as well as data processing in preparation for analysis. Co-authored and solo-authored manuscripts related to the research are expected and desired. The position requires close collaboration with Dr. Bridwell-Mitchell, including on related aspects of her research program and broader work.

Qualifications

- Ph.D. in Education, Organization and Management Theory, Organizational Behavior, Organizational Sociology, Sociology of Education or similar by the position start date.
- Strong background in qualitative and quantitative research methods, solid understanding of experimental design and program evaluation.

- Experience collaborating with schools and districts or other organizations in the field, such as state education agencies and technical assistance organizations.
- Demonstrated ability to lead research projects independently, work collaboratively in interdisciplinary teams and thrive with emergent work processes.
- Strong project management skills; experience with conference or event planning is a strong plus.
- Commitment to executing work to the highest standards of excellence.

Application Details

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis starting November 10, 2025. Interested applicants should review [the research project proposal](#) and then submit the following materials via Interfolio at <https://apply.interfolio.com/175715>:

- A 2–3-page summary of your reflections on the project’s theoretical motivation, empirical strategy and implications for research, practice, and policy, emphasizing how various aspects resonate with your interests.
- A 1-2-page cover letter highlighting how your expertise and experience prepare you for the role, especially implementing the research methods for the project.
- A curriculum vitae
- The names of three references (letters are not required at the initial stage).

Salary is based on a 12-month appointment at \$82,000 and includes [full benefits](#).

For inquiries, please contact Dr. Bridwell-Mitchell’s faculty coordinator kyla_paintergse.harvard.edu.

The Harvard Graduate School of Education is an equal opportunity employer and all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability status, protected veteran status, gender identity, sexual orientation, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions or any other characteristic protected by law.