National Science Foundation-funded study shows the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring is an effective strategy for faculty diversity.

The Institute on Teaching and Mentoring convenes more than 1,000 scholars of color each year — more than 20,000 since it began in 1994 — for professional development and networking at the nation’s largest event of its kind. The goal: help more underrepresented minority students complete Ph.D.s, succeed in academic careers and diversify the faculty of U.S. campuses.

Key findings of the study
- The Institute is an important complement to university doctoral programs.
- Scholars overwhelmingly report that their experiences at the Institute are extremely important to their academic and professional success.
- Sessions on completing the dissertation were rated as most valuable, contributing substantially to the academic success of participants.
- The Institute was at least as effective as Ph.D. programs in preparing them to collaborate with colleagues and communicate about their research, scholars said.
- Institute participants are significantly more likely than their peers nationally to work in faculty positions at four-year colleges and universities.
- Black alumni of the Institute are significantly more likely than their counterparts to engage in basic research.

Next steps
Now: SREB will apply the results to learn how the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring can serve students even better.

2019: The researcher will examine Institute participants’ productivity in academic fields, using new data from the Council on Graduate Schools.

Beyond: SREB hopes to collaborate with other minority Ph.D. programs to learn what works and why — so that all programs that share the mission of diversifying the professoriate can improve their effectiveness.

About the study
The study surveyed almost 2,000 participants of the Institute on Teaching and Mentoring from 2011 to 2016 and compared the results against data from the Survey of Doctorate Recipients for a national benchmark. David Feldon of Utah State University conducted the study with a grant from the National Science Foundation Directorate for Education and Human Resources, Division of Human Resource Development.