

DSEF Research Priorities 2017-2018

Research is a primary vehicle through which DSEF can build relevance and credibility to advance understanding of the direct selling channel. The Foundation's Research Priorities offers numerous opportunities for white papers and other research products, produced by DSEF Fellows.

1. Strategic Marketing Success Across Industries

Purpose: Produce a direct selling company case study highlighting a business, sales or marketing success that is applicable across industries. Case studies or academic journal articles.

Status: Under discussion.

2. Direct Selling as an Engine of Opportunity in Underserved Communities

Purpose and Partners: The report will document the positive impact of entrepreneurial opportunities created for Hispanics by direct selling companies. In producing and promoting the paper, the Foundation will seek a partnership with appropriate organizations such as the Latino Coalition, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce or the National Council of La Raza to produce and promote the paper. The Foundation will work with partner organization(s) to plan companion events to publicize study themes and results.

Status: Under discussion.

3. Economic Impact of Direct Selling Entrepreneurial Opportunities In Less Populated Markets With Limited Economic/Employment Options

Purpose: The report will document the positive impact of entrepreneurial opportunities created in rural or economically disadvantaged areas by direct selling companies and the impact on local economies. Research data is provided by DSA's Socio-Economic Study (SEIS).

Status: Under discussion.

4. Unique Benefit of Direct Selling Channel of Distribution as a Path to Market for Innovators/Products

Purpose: The study will document how direct selling companies and their independent salesforces drive product and training innovation. Direct selling companies have made a tremendous impact on industries that are commonly viewed as the biggest influencers behind economic growth and recovery in the

U.S.—clean energy, business services, health and wellness education, telecommunications services, and Internet technologies. Direct sellers remain a driving force of the rebirth of U.S. innovation. Direct

selling companies have rolled out unmatched products and services, transformed what it means to promote eco-friendly practices, and even incorporated top-of-the-line technologies to provide distributors and employees alike with invaluable business tools and education. Data from DSA's 2015 Growth and Outlook Survey is available, with 2016 comparative data expected in Q1.

5. Business Challenges/Case Studies

Purpose: Produce multiple academic study products by partnering DSEF or DSA board member companies with an Academic Advisory Council member(s) or other academic or institution to engage professors and MBA or other graduate students to conduct research/data analysis or work on projects to address specific business challenges. These interactions will advance understanding of the direct selling business model, leverage the Foundation's academic partnerships to address key industry challenges and provide valuable experiential learning opportunities and exposure to corporate opportunities for students and faculty.

Status: Under discussion.