

FROM EXPERTISE TO INFLUENCE.

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A synopsis report on the inaugural Museum of Science Digital Science Communication Fellowship — designed and operated by SENDRIL with the Museum of Science, Boston. Thirty-two scientists, eleven professional mentors, six months, and a simple question: can institutional infrastructure turn expertise into public influence?

[APPLY FOR COHORT 02 →](#)



32 FELLOWS	11 MENTORS	2,832 PIECES PUBLISHED	31.3M VIEWS TO DATE
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AUTHORITY NO LONGER CONVERTS INTO ATTENTION.

Public confidence in scientists remains high by historical standards, but it has fallen from its pandemic peak. Knowledge now forms in feeds, through creators and algorithms rather than institutions.

Scientists are trained for research, publishing, grant writing, and peer review. The ecosystem now rewards storytelling, trust-building, and platform fluency — and almost no institution equips its experts for that work.

87 → 77% TRUST IN SCIENTISTS, 2020 TO 2026	28% HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE IN SCIENTISTS	69% ENCOUNTER NEWS THROUGH INFLUENCERS RATHER THAN SEEKING IT	98% vs 31% SCIENTISTS WHO RATE RESEARCH, THEN STORYTELLING, AS ESSENTIAL
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National survey data as compiled in the Cohort 01 report; scientist training figures from a national survey of scientists (N = 10,706).

The answer is not asking scientists to do more. It is building the infrastructure around them.

FIVE PILLARS. SIX COMPETENCIES.

The fellowship structure is not about how to become a social media influencer. It is about becoming a more effective public science communicator inside the modern information ecosystem.

Fellows moved through monthly learning units, mentor pods, cohort sessions, weekly office hours, and public-facing assignments — publishing real work from the first month.

01	Curriculum	Monthly learning units: voice, audience, storytelling, platform strategy, content systems, growth.
02	Mentorship	Fellows organized into mentor pods for feedback, accountability, and professional modeling.
03	Community	Cohort sessions, Slack, office hours, and peer feedback to create a shared learning environment.
04	Institutional Partnership	The Museum of Science provided legitimacy, convening power, and a public mission.
05	Applied Practice	Fellows created, published, refined, and built public-facing assets throughout.

SIX ELEMENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

Voice + Identity + Brand	01
Audience + Platform	02
Story Craft	03
Content Systems	04
Growth + Measurement	05
Debunking + Prebunking	06

FOUR PUBLIC PATHS EVERY FELLOW TRAINED

Content creator	Instagram · TikTok · YouTube
Podcast	Guest or host
Speaker	Stages · panels · museum floors
Public educator	Classrooms · workshops

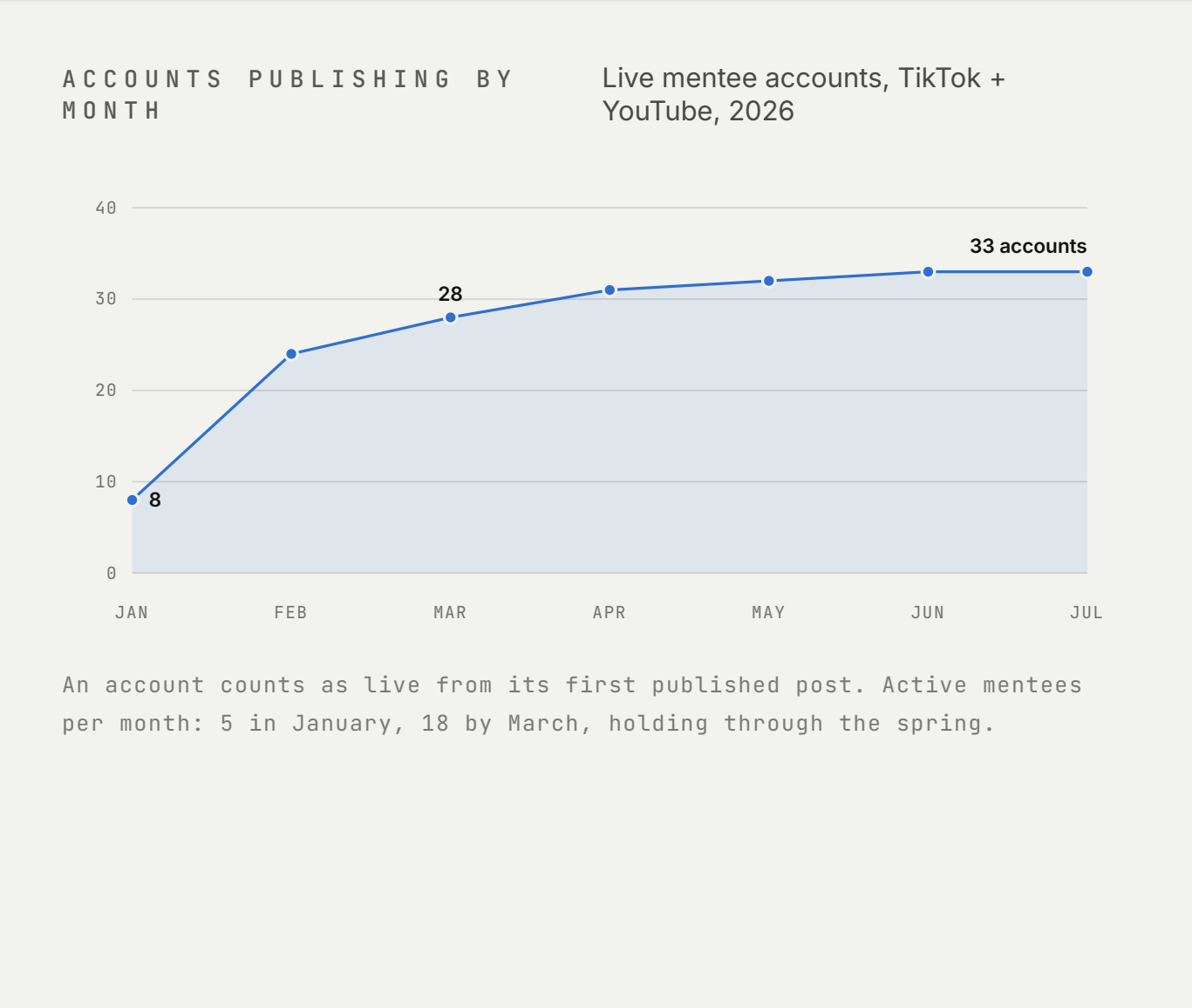
Every fellow works all four muscles during the program. Most leave leading with one. The numbers below measure the content-creator path; the fellows' own words carry the rest.

STILL CLIMBING.

The fellowship was not just about content creation and views. It was about building new skills for deeper public engagement: a more confident public voice, a clearer audience strategy, a consistent creative practice, and the willingness to publish.

The numbers are what that practice produced across Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube in six months.

239.8K+ TOTAL FOLLOWERS OF ALL MENTEES, ALL CHANNELS	2,832 PIECES CREATED SINCE THE FELLOWSHIP BEGAN	31.3M VIEWS SINCE THE FELLOWSHIP BEGAN	1.51M LIKES SINCE THE FELLOWSHIP BEGAN
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POSTING CADENCE

95 / 97

POSTS PER MENTEE / POSTS PER MENTOR

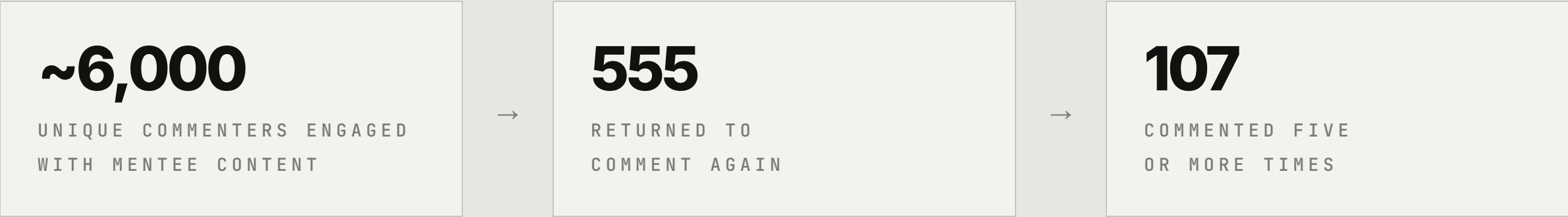
The eleven mentors are professional communicators with years of practice. The mentees were building the habit for the first time. Matching the mentors' rate was the highest-friction goal in the curriculum — and the cohort hit it: both groups posted about **3.4 times a week for 28 straight weeks.**

32 mentees		2,560
11 mentors		1,066

Posts published 1 Jan - 15 Jul 2026. Per-person rate uses the 27 mentees and 11 mentors with captured content.

FELLOWS CULTIVATED REPEAT COMMENTERS AND TRUE SUPER FANS

TIKTOK + YOUTUBE

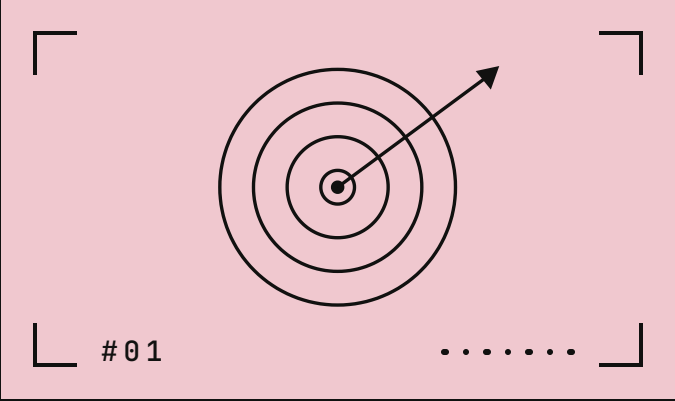
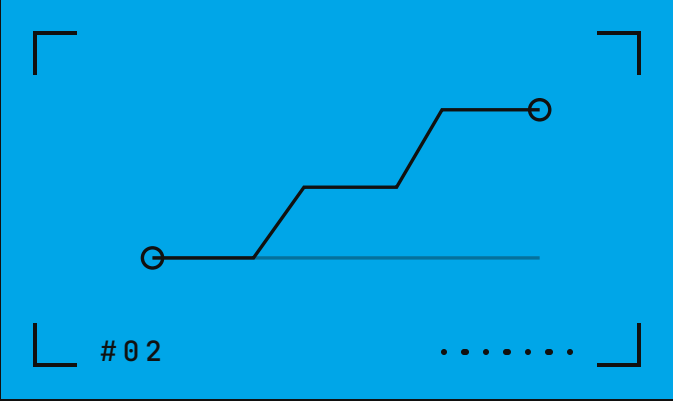
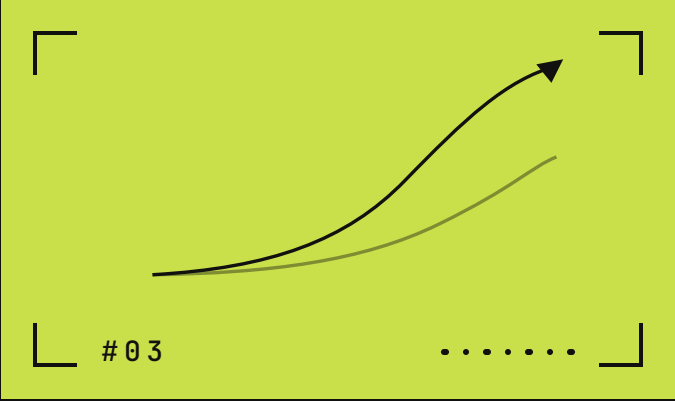


THREE STARTING POINTS.

THREE DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS.

Fellows entered with very different public footprints. We measured each against where they began — not against each other.

All per-post comparisons use medians, so single viral posts cannot inflate results. Baselines are drawn from each fellow’s own 2024–2025 content.

#0120 FELLOWS · 29 ACCOUNTS  Fresh Starts No account existed at intake. Success = launch, cadence, first audience. Every one launched, and together they went from zero traction to sustained momentum. 1,051 POSTS 233K LIKES 6.03M VIEWS 24,500+ FOLLOWERS, FROM NOTHING	#0213 ACCOUNTS  Platform Rebuilds An account existed but had gone quiet. Success = reactivation. Of 13 mentees publishing in both February and June–July, 8 improved their median views per post. +28% TYPICAL GAIN, MEDIAN VIEWS PER POST 8 of 13 IMPROVED, FEB TO JUN-JUL 6.4x LARGEST GAIN IN THE COHORT 2.9x · 2.6x NEXT TWO STANDOUTS	#039 FELLOWS · 15 ACCOUNTS  Audience Accelerators An active account with real traction. Success = beating their own pre-fellowship baseline. Measured on every 2026 post against each fellow’s own 2024–25 median. +43% TYPICAL CHANGE, MEDIAN VIEWS PER POST 6 of 8 MEASURED ACCOUNTS BEAT THEIR BASELINE +79% TWO FELLOWS, INSTAGRAM & TIKTOK +56% ON A 13.3K-VIEW BASELINE
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FRESH STARTMARINE BIOLOGY Rhowan Ho @explainer.ihardlyknowher · TikTok + YouTube + Instagram Deep-sea science that makes you go “ohhh.” Launched at intake; a top post reached 792K views. 149 POSTS 3.6M VIEWS	FRESH STARTAI ETHICS Lauren Mushro @anatomyofai · Instagram AI ethics, art, and technology explainers — from no account to a verified page with a consistent publishing system. 64 POSTS 845K VIEWS	PLATFORM REBUILDSPORTS SCIENCE Michael Ormsbee @mikeormsbee · Instagram + TikTok + YouTube Sports nutrition and performance science, FSU. Median views per post went from 48 to 306 while tripling cadence — and podcast invitations followed. 6.4x MEDIAN VIEWS, FEB TO JUN-JUL 192 POSTS, THREE PLATFORMS	AUDIENCE ACCELERATORSHARK SCIENCE Carlee Jackson @carleejackson_ · Instagram Making shark science joyful and personal. Beat her own 2024–25 baseline on median views per post, with a top post at 583K. +79% MEDIAN VIEWS VS. BASELINE 16.3K FOLLOWERS
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FROM HESITATION TO VISIBLE PRACTICE.

97%

HAD OPPORTUNITIES TO APPLY
WHAT THEY WERE LEARNING

97%

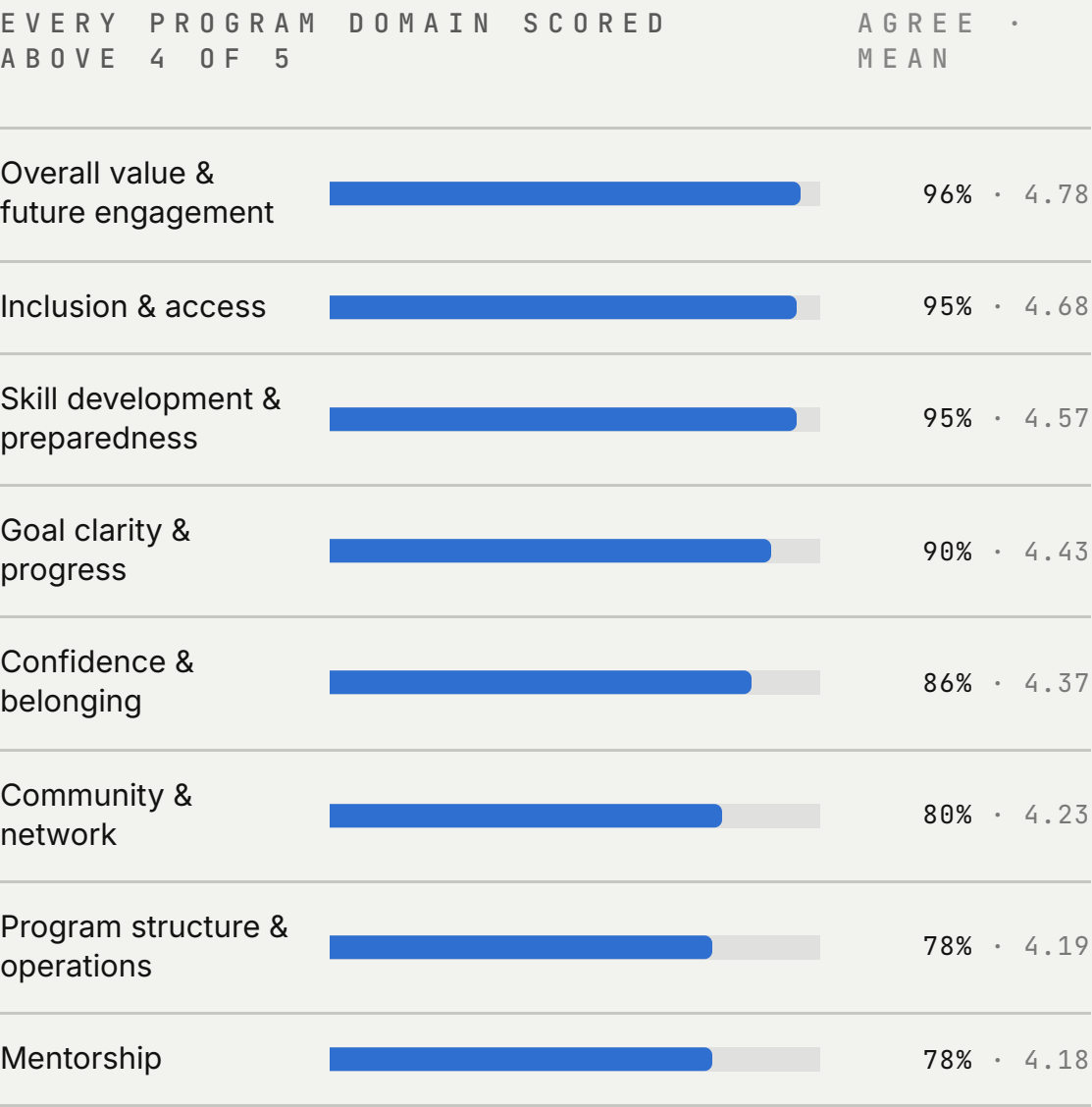
FEEL MORE PREPARED FOR
FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

94%

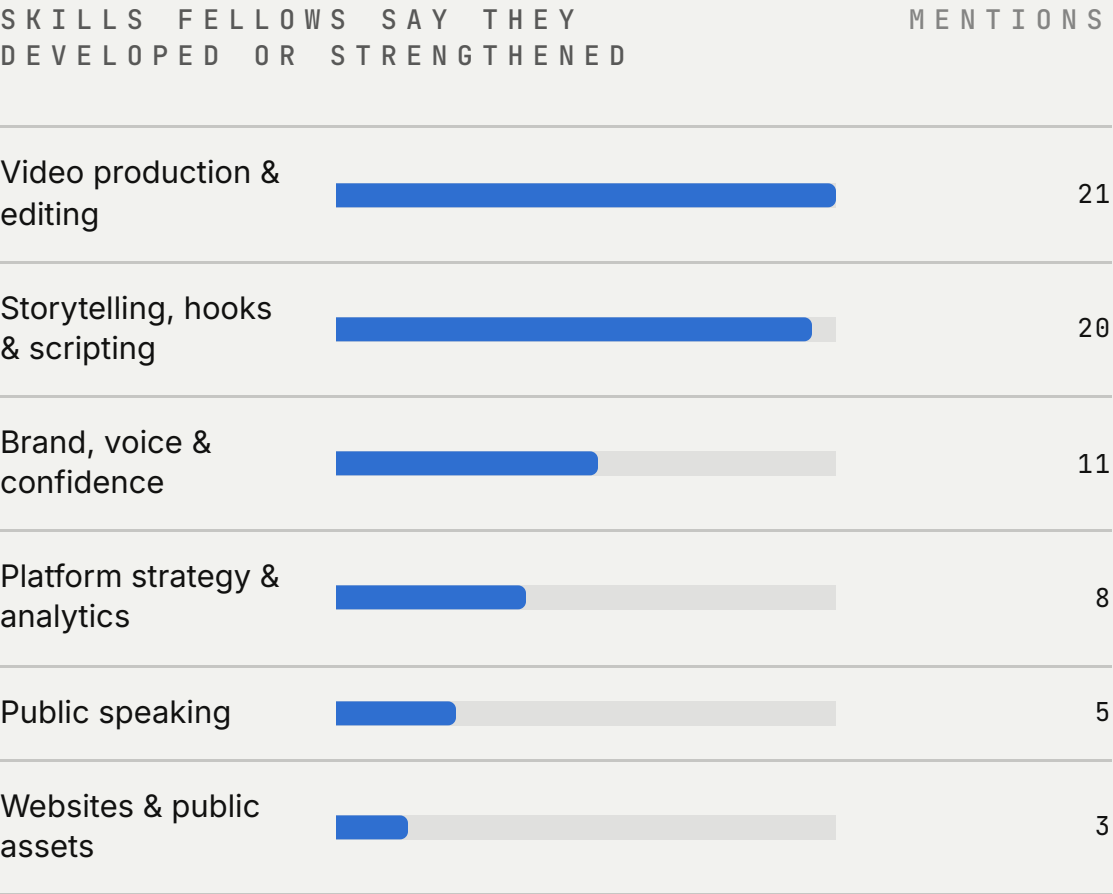
DEVELOPED
NEW SKILLS

90%

MADE MEANINGFUL
PROGRESS
ON CAREER GOALS



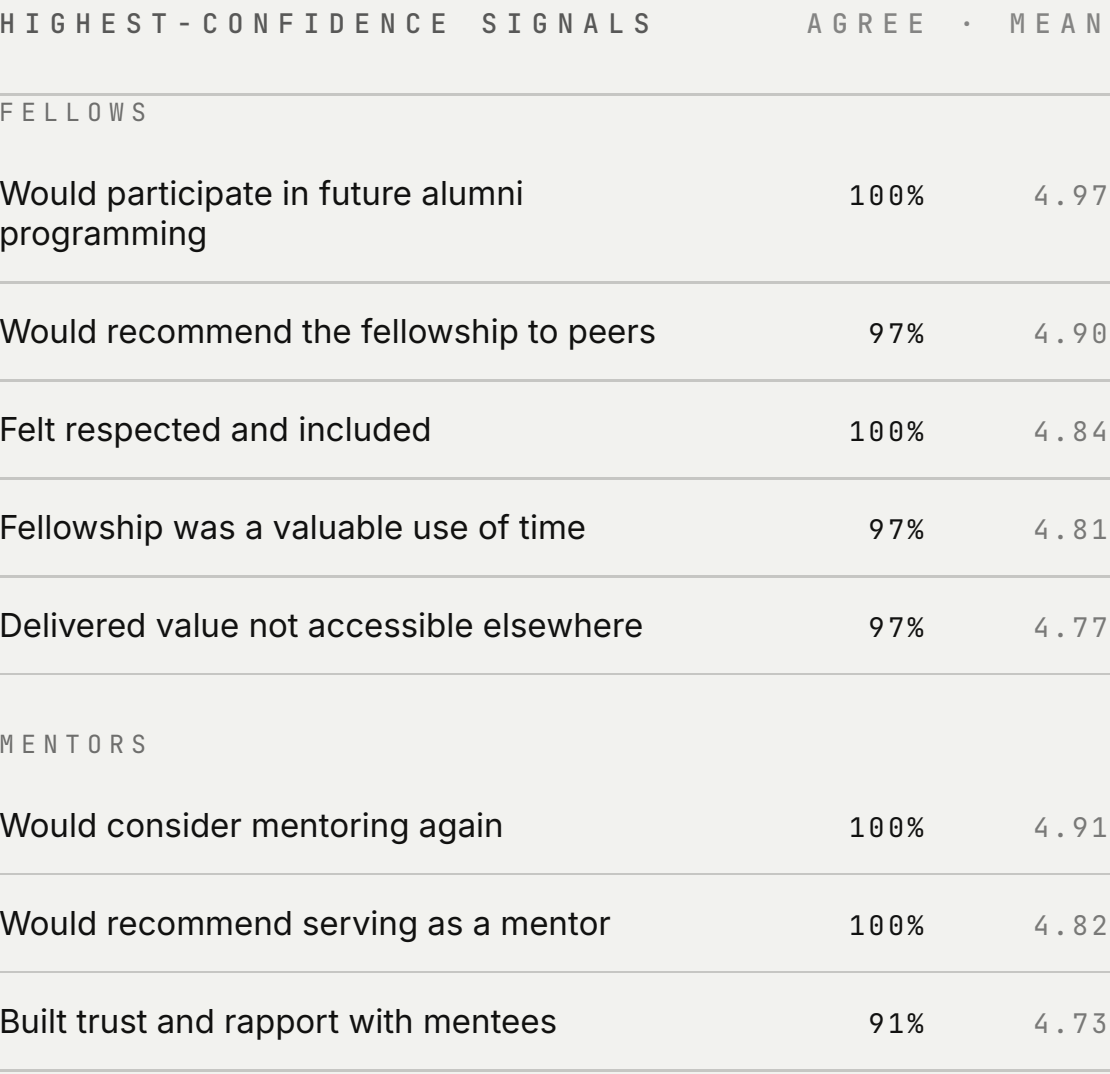
n = 31 fellows. Likert 1-5; agreement = rating 4 or 5.



Keyword-assisted coding of open-ended responses; categories are not mutually exclusive.

The clearest pattern across the surveys is movement from hesitation to visible, confident public practice: posting, publishing, filming, pitching, and refining a public identity.

Outcomes include first videos and reels, websites and media kits, podcast appearances, speaking invitations, institutional collaborations, and long-form project plans.



“This fellowship really exceeded my expectations. I don’t know if six months ago I could have seen myself consistently posting online and actually getting positive engagement that would move my career along.”

LAUREN MUSHRO · FELLOW

“I truly feel like this program marks a turning point from hobbyist to professional science content creator.”

MAGGIE SEIDA · FELLOW

“This fellowship was the push I needed! I never would have started this journey without it, but now I can’t think of stopping.”

LINDSAY HOUSE · FELLOW

“The work you are doing is not being replicated elsewhere. It is crucial that you continue these efforts for the foreseeable future.”

MICHAEL STAMATIKOS · FELLOW

“My approach to science communication has shifted from focusing on the ‘what’ to the ‘why’.”

CHRISTIAN FERKO · FELLOW

“It has the potential to completely change your career, amplify your research, open new doors, educate new audiences, and unlock new experiences.”

BEN REIN · MENTOR

“This program is incredibly educational and valuable for mentors too. I was surprised and invigorated by how much I learned alongside my mentees.”

JOE HANSON · MENTOR

NEXT: APPLYING THE MODEL TO PUBLIC HEALTH.

The second fellowship brings this institutional model to health and public health. It supports experts seeking to build credible public practices, reach wider audiences, and communicate evidence with greater clarity and consequence.

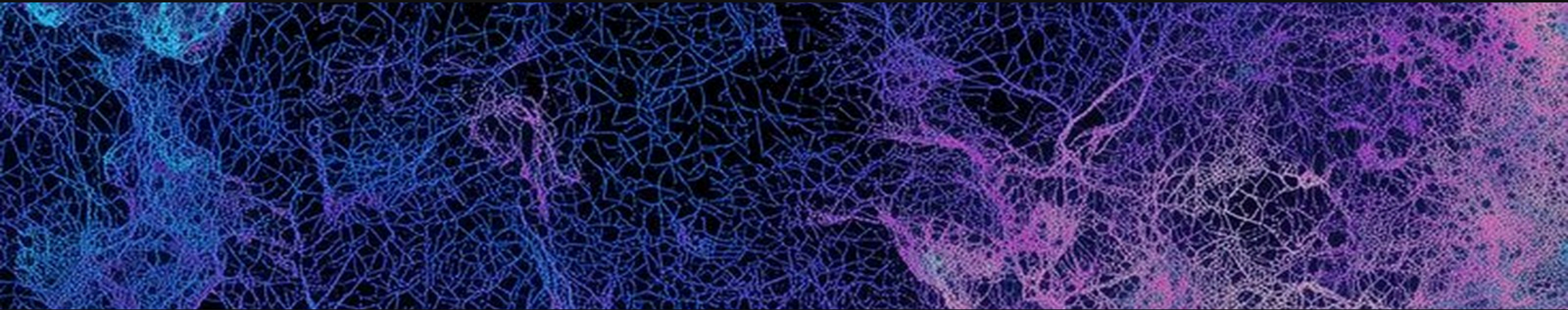
Cohort 02 runs with the Museum of Science, Boston, and carries forward what Cohort 01 proved: mentors at the center, community designed on purpose, and public work from the first month.

[APPLY FOR COHORT 02 →](#)

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KEY DATES

JULY 30, 2026	Applications open
SEPTEMBER 18, 2026	Applications close
SEPT 18 - OCT 2, 2026	Application review
OCTOBER 2, 2026	Fellowship acceptances confirmed
OCTOBER 22, 2026	Virtual orientation
NOVEMBER 19-21, 2026	Mandatory onsite convening in Boston
JAN 1 - APR 1, 2027	Five mandatory virtual classes; exact dates to be determined
APRIL 22, 2027	Culmination



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