Imagine a website that shows what life is like in southern Arizona and also highlights studies that could help improve residents' way of life. The Making Action Possible for Southern Arizona Dashboard Project, also known as the MAP Dashboard Project, is just that.

Created and maintained by the Eller College of Management's Economic and Business Research Center, the MAP Dashboard's goal is to improve southern Arizona through data and education. The data collected since the project's launch at the end of 2014 has been used by the community at large, as well as the University community.

"Since the launch of the MAP Dashboard we have had 17,000 users and over 100,000 page views," said Jennifer Pullen, research economist for the Economic and Business Research Center. "The research appearing on the dashboard has been featured on the front page of the Arizona Daily Star and in other news publications."

Since the launch of the MAP Dashboard Project, more than 20 articles, written mostly by researchers in Eller's Economic and Business Research Center, have been published on various subjects including road conditions, unemployment, migration and teacher wages. These articles are posted on the MAP Dashboard website and distributed in a monthly newsletter, which currently has more than 1,600 subscribers.

"It is a free resource for our community, a common place where our elected officials, business leaders, nonprofit community and general community members can go to find out how Tucson is doing across 36 socioeconomic measures," Pullen said. "It's also a great resource for students and faculty to use to gauge how the local economy is doing compared to other similar metropolitan areas in the West."

Two of the featured articles on the site are in-depth white papers written by UA faculty members.

One published white paper was written by Brian Mayer, professor of sociology in the UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and Julia Smith, a doctoral candidate in the School of Sociology. The piece provides a comparison of poverty-reduction strategies in five cities from across the country and shows what Tucson can learn from them.

"MAP Dashboard has allowed us to reach a wide audience of community stakeholders," Mayer said. "The site is an important source of data for the community and especially for those interested in where our region stands in terms of indicators like poverty. If someone is interested in our poverty rate, we wanted to also provide information on how we can work together to reduce those numbers."
The second white paper examines **food access in Tucson** [5]. The paper was written by faculty members **Daoqin Tong** and **Stephanie Buechler** in the **School of Geography and Development** [6], along with **Yang Bao**, research assistant in the school. The paper also shows how independent stores enhance access for areas in Tucson that might be considered "food deserts," or involve low-income, low-access communities.

The Economic and Business Research Center is currently calling for proposals from UA faculty members for MAP Dashboard White Paper grants, at $7,500 per grant. The white papers should provide residents of southern Arizona with insight on critical social and economic issues from an academic perspective.

The deadline to submit **white paper proposals** [7] is May 2, and proposals can be emailed to **George Hammond**, director of the Economic and Business Research Center. Announcement of the awards will be made on May 23.

You can visit the **MAP Dashboard** [1] website to see other data that has been collected, or you can follow **@MapAZDashboard** [8] on Twitter for the most recent updates on the project.

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**Source URL:** https://uaatwork.arizona.edu/lqp/ua-project-seeks-white-papers-help-improve-life-southern-arizona

**Links**
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