

Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City
Economic Development in Underserved Communities - Where Research and Practice Meet
Speaker Biography

Paul Nelson is the Executive Director of Commercial Revitalization Initiatives at the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS). SBS makes it easier for businesses in New York City to form, do business, and grow by providing direct assistance to business owners, fostering neighborhood development in commercial districts, and linking employers to a skilled and qualified workforce.

In his current role, Paul oversees the Agency's Avenue NYC program, a \$2.3 million portfolio of investments that support commercial revitalization activities in more than 50 low- to moderate-income communities throughout the five boroughs. Each year Avenue NYC-funded organizations leverage SBS investments to attract new businesses to vacant storefronts, launch marketing campaigns that draw consumers to neighborhood commercial districts, and organize local stakeholders to better their communities. As part of his work through Avenue NYC, Paul has launched a comprehensive suite of capacity building services and programs that strengthen local non-profit partners through management training, leadership development and one-on-one consulting.

Prior to his current appointment, Paul served as Senior Advisor to SBS' Deputy Commissioner where he developed recommendations for strategy, new programs, and policy with a focus on the Division's place-based economic development programs in commercial districts. Before joining the Agency, he worked in both the non-profit and private sectors in the U.S. and abroad, most notably at Funders Concerned About AIDS, a philanthropic affinity group, and Groupe E.C.S., an executive education firm servicing Fortune 500 companies based in France.

Paul holds a Masters in Public Administration from New York University, a Masters in History from the University of Versailles/Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines in France, and a B.A. in History from Brown University.