

Dear Professor Name Here,

We would like to ask for a few minutes of your time to complete an online interview regarding your Department of Energy (DOE) sponsored project (Award No: xxxxxx). You have been selected as part of a random sample of principal investigators to assist the DOE in meeting its reporting obligations to Congress. Soon after the receipt of this letter, you will receive an e-mail notification for your login ID and password.

The DOE Technical Manpower survey is a pilot study to determine whether online surveys are a valid and practical means for providing Congress with accurate information regarding DOE funding activities. We want to assure you that the information will not be used in any way to evaluate your own project, but instead will be aggregated with other respondents' data and used to evaluate the activity of the DOE itself. Therefore, we have retained an outside consulting firm (Summit Consulting LLC) to implement this survey. Summit staff will remove your ID number before any analysis to ensure confidentiality.

This survey will ask questions about the number of graduate students and principal investigators currently funded by a DOE sponsored project, and the number of hours per week they are employed. This survey will also inquire about the number of students who worked for you last year and completed their degree during that time period. For these questions, you might need to consult with your grants administrator if you are unsure about their answers.

Currently, the reported number of graduate students who received DOE funding is based on estimates provided in award proposals. It is our intent to provide a more accurate number of graduate students by their full- or part-time status based on actual participation in DOE sponsored projects. We believe that by interviewing a small number of randomly selected principal investigators (less than one-fifths of the awards), we will be able to report accurate figures to Congress with small margins of error and, more importantly, with minimal intrusion. For the majority of the selected principal investigators the DOE Technical Manpower survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.

We acknowledge and apologize for the inconvenience of this request. With your voluntary cooperation, we hope to establish that sampling methods can provide Congress with the data it requires while making requests for information from individual investigators relatively rare.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Christine Chalk at (202) 586-7203.

Sincerely,

Bill Valdez
Director of Planning and Analysis
Office of Science
Department of Energy