

# **Redesign of the Survey of R&D Expenditures at Universities and Colleges**

## **Cognitive Site Visit Topics**

### General Topics

- Preferred methods of NSF informing institutions of changes
- Institutional response to incremental changes versus all change at one time (e.g., taxonomy is a work in progress)
- Reactions to additional questions and overall response burden

### General Instructions

- Use and comprehension of general instruction page; recognition of changes
- Response to including all R&D fields
- Compatibility with institutional records
- Response procedure (assembling response within institution)

### Sources of Funds for R&D

- Comprehension of instructions, use and interpretation of definitions embedded within items
- Response to new items (nonprofit, categories of institutional funds)
- Interpretation, examples of sources, availability of information, effort to provide
- Institutional practices in reporting of gifts and donations
- Calculation of separate components of institutional funds (organized research, cost sharing, and unrecovered indirect costs)
- Sources included by institutions in "all other sources."
- Availability of information on expenditures from grants vs. contracts.

### Foreign Sources

- Ability to provide information
- Comprehension and application of definition of "foreign"
- Records and process involved in reporting foreign sources

### Medical School Expenditures and Clinical Trials (where applicable)

- Comprehension of instructions
- Availability of information, ability to separate expenses
- Process of providing response
- Appropriate respondent: central finance/sponsored research office or medical school

### Basic Research, Applied Research, Development

- Comprehension of definitions of basic, applied, and development
- How institutions would prepare the response

Receipt of Pass-Through Funding and Funding to Subrecipients  
Response to revised presentation of instructions  
Response to order of items

## Expenditures by Sources of Funds

- Response to separate questions for R&D expenditures from federal sources and nonfederal sources

- Response to inclusion of R&D expenditures from non-S&E fields

### Federal sources

- Response to illustrative fields on same page as expenditures items and impact on reporting

- Other agencies to include, agencies funding non-S&E R&D

- Alternate question asking about all federal agencies

### Nonfederal sources

- Effort in providing expenditures by field and by sources

## Capturing information on interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary R&D

- Response to overlay question

- Interpretation of definition and suggested alternatives

- Process involved in reporting R&D expenditures for interdisciplinary research

## Equipment

- Purchased versus leased equipment, consortium agreements for equipment use

- Types of arrangements (purchase, lease-to-own, rental, consortium, how they appear in institutional records, how they are reported in the survey)

- Use of current fund expenditures vs plant funds for R&D equipment

## Cost Elements

- Interpretation of different cost elements

- Reporting R&D salaries of faculty paid by institutional funds or endowed chairs

- Relationship of cost elements to other expenses reported (e.g., item 1 and equipment expenditures)

- Distinction between equipment and capitalized software in records and survey response

- Payments to subrecipients, vendors, and subcontractors as accounting attributes

## Personnel

- Identifying correct respondent/office for this topic

- Ability to calculate FTE and headcount as requested

- Positions included in the institutional definition of "faculty"

- Reporting faculty FTE and headcount when faculty are paid by institutional funds or endowed chairs

## Proposals and Awards

- Identifying correct respondent/office for this topic

Counting proposals and those awarded, denied, and pending  
Collaborative proposals and their distinction from proposals involving  
subrecipients

#### Intellectual Property and Commercialization

Interpretation of definitions, need for additional specification  
Process of responding  
Suggested alternative measures