Survey of Recent Former NRC NIST Postdocs (Within the past five years)

NRC NIST POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATESHIP PROGRAM EVALUATION

SURVEY OF RECENT FORMER POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATES

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has contracted Westat, an independent research firm located in Rockville, Maryland, to conduct a survey of the National Research Council (NRC) NIST Postdoctoral Research Associateship Program. NIST is conducting the study to collect information on the experiences and satisfaction of former NRC postdoctoral associates who participated in the NRC NIST Postdoctoral Research Associateship Program. The evaluation data will provide NIST with a better understanding of how the Postdoctoral Research Associateship Program is being implemented and how NIST program officers can enhance the quality of the program and opportunities made to future postdoctoral associates participating in the program.

Participation in the survey is voluntary; your decision will not affect your current or future employment at NIST. The survey data are being collected by Westat; individual responses to the survey will not be shared with the NRC or NIST. The information collected will be published in aggregate form only and will not identify individuals in any reports or presentations.

The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Please complete and return your survey within two weeks of receiving it.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Kimberley Raue at Westat at (800) 937-8281, ext. 3865 or nrcpostdocsurvey@westat.com.

NOTE: This questionnaire contains collection of information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). Notwithstanding any other provisions of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. The estimated response time for this questionnaire is 30 minutes. The response time includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this estimate or any other aspects of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing the length of this questionnaire, to the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Attn., Susan Heller-Zeisler, szeisler@nist.gov, 301-975-3111. The OMB Control No. is 0693-0033, which expires on 10/31/2012.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Our records indicate that you are a former NRC NIST postdoc. Is that correc	1.	Our records indicate that	you are a former NRC NIST	postdoc. Is that correct?
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Yes	••••
No	

(In order for us to provide you with the appropriate survey, please stop here and contact Kim Raue, survey manager at (800) 937-8281, ext. 3865 or nrcpostdocsurvey@westat.com.)

2. In what year did you earn your highest degree?

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3. In what field is your highest degree? (*Please select one answer.*)

Agricultural sciences	1
Biology	2
Biomedical sciences	
Chemistry	4
Computer sciences	
Engineering	
Health sciences	
Mathematical sciences	_
Natural resources	
Physics	
Other (please specify on line below)	
Interdisciplinary(<i>please specify on line below</i>)	

4. **Prior to your NRC NIST postdoc,** how many professional associations (e.g., American Physical Society) were you a member of? *(Please select one answer.)*

None	\Box^1 (Go to question 6.)
One	2
Two	3
Three	
Four or more	5

5. **Prior to your NRC NIST postdoc,** *did you hold either of the following leadership positions in a professional association?* (Please select one answer on each row.)

	Ye	S	No)
a. A volunteer leadership position		1		2
b. An elected leadership position		1		2

6. **Since accepting your NRC NIST postdoc,** how many professional associations (e.g., American Physical Society) have you been a member of? (*Please select one answer.*)

None	1	(Go to question 8.)
One	2	
Two	3	
Three	4	
Four or more	5	

7. *Since accepting your NRC NIST postdoc,* have you held either of the following leadership positions in a professional association? (Please select one answer on each row.)

	Yes	No
a. A volunteer leadership position	1	
b. An elected leadership position		

8. What is your ethnicity?

Hispanic or Latino	1
Not Hispanic or Latino	

9. What is your racial background? (*Please select all that apply.*)

American Indian or Alaska Native	1
Asian	2
Black or African American	3
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4
White	5

RECRUITMENT TO THE NRC NIST POSTDOC PROGRAM

10. Which of the following sources of information about the NRC NIST postdoc program was **most influential** in your decision to apply? (*Please select one answer.*)

Fellow graduate student(s)	1
Ph.D. advisor or other professor	2
University career placement office	3
Departmental or organizational listserv	4
Former or current NRC NIST postdoc	5
NIST employee	6
NRC or NIST presentation or poster at a professional meeting	7
NRC or NIST website	8
Advertisement in a professional publication	9
Other (please specify on line below)	10

11. Which one of these recruitment approaches do you think would be most effective for NIST to emphasize in the future? (*Please select one answer.*)

Fellow graduate student(s)	1
Ph.D. advisor or other professor	2
University career placement office	3
Departmental or organizational listserv	4
Former or current NRC NIST postdoc	5
NIST employee	6
NRC or NIST presentation or poster at a professional meeting	7
NRC or NIST website	
Advertisement in a professional publication	9
Other (please specify on line below)	10

12. At the time you were offered the NRC NIST postdoc position, were you offered any other postdoc positions?

Yes	1	
No	2	(Go to question 14.)

13. In which of the following career sectors were you offered a postdoc other than the NRC NIST postdoc? *(Please select all that apply.)*

Government	\square^1
Academia	2
Industry	3

14. Was the NRC NIST postdoc your first choice?

Yes	1
No	2

Why or why not?

15. Have you encouraged a prospective candidate to consider applying for a postdoc position at NIST? *(Please select one answer.)*

Yes	1	
Not yet, but I would	2	
No, and I would not	3	(Go to question 17.)

16. What would be your **primary** reason for encouraging a prospective candidate to apply for the NRC NIST postdoc program? (*Please select one answer.*)

Availability of interesting research projects	1
Quality of NIST research facilities and equipment	2
Ability to acquire or improve research skills and knowledge	3
Level of research autonomy and independence	4
Quality of interactions with peers	5
Quality of interactions with NIST postdoc advisor or direct supervisor	6
Existence of an intellectually stimulating atmosphere	7
Quality of working conditions	8
Benefits to long-term career goals	9
Other (please specify on line below)	10

17. What would be your **primary** reason for discouraging a prospective candidate to apply for the NRC NIST postdoc program? (*Please select one answer.*)

Availability of interesting research projects	1
Quality of NIST research facilities and equipment	2
Ability to acquire or improve research skills and knowledge	3
Level of research autonomy and independence	4
Quality of interactions with peers	5
Quality of interactions with NIST postdoc advisor or direct supervisor	6
Existence of an intellectually stimulating atmosphere/culture	7
Quality of working conditions	8
Benefits to long-term career goals	9
Other (please specify on line below)	10

CAREER SINCE THE NRC NIST POSTDOC PROGRAM

18. Did you leave the NRC NIST postdoc program before the two-year appointment was over? Yes.....

No..... \Box^2 (Go to question 20.)

19. Why did you leave the NRC NIST postdoc program before the two-year appointment was over? (*Please select one answer.*)

Found other employment	1
Left to accommodate spouse or significant other's employment]2
Other (please specify on line below)]3

20. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about **career opportunities available at NIST** after your postdoc? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

Statements about career opportunities at NIST	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. There were ample positions available to me at NIST	1	²	3	4	5
b. The positions that were available at NIST were intellectually challenging	1	²	3	4	5
c. The positions available at NIST offered competitive salaries for my field	1	²	3	4	5
d. My NIST postdoc advisor or direct supervisor encouraged me to seek a position with NIST after my postdoc	1	²	3	4	5
e. I actively pursued career opportunities at NIST after my postdoc ended	1	2	3	4	5
Optional comments:					

21. Including self-employment, have you been employed at **any** job since completing your NRC NIST postdoc?

Yes	1
No	\square^2 (Go to question 36.)

22. Including postdoc positions, where have you been employed since finishing your NRC NIST postdoc? *(Please select all that apply.)*

NIST	1
Government other than NIST	2
K–12 institution	3
Two-year college, community college, or technical institute	4
Four-year college or university	5
Industry	6
Not-for-profit	
Self-employed	

23. Including postdoc positions, where was your **first** job after completing your NRC NIST postdoc? (*Please select one answer.*)

NIST	1
Government other than NIST	
K–12 institution	3
Two-year college, community college, or technical institute	4
Four-year college or university	
Industry	
Not-for-profit	
Self-employed	

24. Including postdoc positions, please provide the following information about your **first** job after the NRC NIST postdoc. (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

First job after NRC NIST postdoc	Yes	No
a. This was a full-time position	1	2
b. This was a postdoc position	1	2

25. Rounding to the nearest whole number, how many years did you work at your **first** job?

_____ year(s)

How useful did you find the following factors in obtaining your **first** job after your NRC NIST postdoc? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

actors in obtaining first job	Not useful at all	A little useful	Moderately useful	Very useful	Extremely useful	Not applicable
Contacts initiated by the employer	1	2	3	4	5	6
Contacts initiated by you.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor	1	2	3	4	5	6
Contacts provided by someone else at NIST	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prestige of NIST	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc	1	2	3	4	5	6
Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor		2	3	4	5	6
Publications for which you received credit while you were a NRC NIST postdoc	— .				r	
		2	3	4	5	6
Presentations you gave while you were a NRC NIST postdoc	1	2	3	4	5	6
Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc		2	3	4	5	6
The area you were researching while you were a NRC NIST postdoc		2	3	4	5	6
Other (please specify on line below):		2	3	4	5	6
	Contacts initiated by you. Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor Contacts provided by someone else at NIST Prestige of NIST Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor Publications for which you received credit while you were a NRC NIST postdoc Presentations you gave while you were a NRC NIST postdoc Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc The area you were researching while you were a NRC NIST postdoc The area you were a NRC NIST postdoc Cher (please specify on line	actors in obtaining first jobat allContacts initiated by the employer1Contacts initiated by you.1Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor1Contacts provided by someone else at NIST1Prestige of NIST1Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc1Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc1Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc1Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor1Prestige of your NIST postdoc1Presentations for which you were a NRC NIST postdoc1Presentations you gave while you were a NRC NIST postdoc1Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc1The area you were researching while you were a NRC NIST postdoc1Other (please specify on line1	actors in obtaining first jobat allusefulContacts initiated by the employer12Contacts initiated by you.12Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor12Contacts provided by someone else at NIST12Prestige of NIST12Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc12Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc12Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor12Publications for which you received credit while you were a NRC NIST postdoc12Presentations you gave while you were a NRC NIST postdoc12Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc12Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc12Other (please specify on line12	actors in obtaining first jobat allusefulusefulContacts initiated by the employer123Contacts initiated by you.123Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor123Contacts provided by someone else at NIST123Prestige of NIST123Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc123Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor123Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor123Presentations for which you received credit while you were a NRC NIST 	actors in obtaining first job at all useful useful useful Contacts initiated by the employer 1 2 3 4 Contacts initiated by you. 1 2 3 4 Contacts provided by your 1 2 3 4 NIST postdoc advisor 1 2 3 4 Contacts provided by someone else at NIST 1 2 3 4 Prestige of NIST 1 2 3 4 Prestige of the NRC NIST postdoc 1 2 3 4 Prestige of your NIST postdoc advisor 1 2 3 4 Publications for which you received credit while you were a NRC NIST postdoc 1 2 3 4 Presentations you gave while you were a NRC NIST postdoc 1 2 3 4 Participation in proposals while you were a NRC NIST postdoc 1 2 3 4 Other (please specify on line 1 2 3 4	actors in obtaining first job at all useful useful useful useful useful useful Contacts initiated by the employer a a² a a² a a² Contacts initiated by you. a a² a a² a a² Contacts initiated by you. a a² a a² a² a² Contacts provided by your NIST postdoc advisor a² a² a² a² a² Contacts provided by someone else at NIST a a² a² </td

Optional comments:		

26. Including self-employment, are you **currently** employed?

Yes.....

No	2	(Go to question 33.)
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27. Where are you **currently** employed? (*Please select one answer*.)

If your current employer is the same as your first employer, check this box and go to question 31.

NIST	1
Government other than NIST	2
K–12 institution	3
Two-year college, community college, or technical institute	4
Four-year college or university	5
Industry	6
Not-for-profit	7
Self-employed	8

28. Please provide the following information about your **current** job.

Current job	Yes	No
a. This is a full-time position	1	2
b. This is a postdoc position		2

- 29. Rounding to the nearest whole number, how many years have you worked at your **current** job?_____ year(s)
- 30. Excluding bonuses and other benefits, what is your current salary? (*Please select one answer*.)

Less than \$50,000	1
\$50,000–\$74,999	
\$75,000-\$99,999	
\$100,000-\$124,999	_
\$125,000-\$149,999	
\$150,000-\$174,999	
\$175,000-\$199,999	
\$200,000-\$224,999	
\$225,000-\$249,999	
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To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your **current** job? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

Statements about your current job	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a. I am satisfied with the type of work I am currently doing	1	²	3	4	5
b. I am satisfied with the opportunities for advancement at my current employer	1	2	3	4	5
c. I have a leadership role in my current organization	1	²	3	4	5
d. I am compensated fairly for the work that I do	1	2	3	4	5
e. Overall, my career has met my expectations	1	2	3	4	5
Optional comments:					

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your NRC NIST postdoc? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

	Statements about your NRC NIST Postdoc	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree
a.	When it came to securing my first position after my NRC postdoc, my postdoc experience gave me an advantage over other postdocs of similar qualifications		2	3	4	5
b.	My postdoc experiences significantly contributed to my knowledge about how to conduct independent research			3	4	5
c.	My postdoc experiences significantly contributed to my knowledge about how to prepare proposals for competitive funding	1	2	3	4	5
	My postdoc experience provided me with a professional expertise that I would not have developed otherwise	1	2	3	4	5
е.	My postdoc experience continues to help me achieve my career goals	1	2	3	4	5
OI	otional comments:					

PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

31. To what extent have you accomplished the following professional activities in your career? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

Professional activities	Not at all	A Minor extent	A Moderate extent	A Great extent	A Very Great extent
a. Engaged in interdisciplinary research	1	2	3	4	5
 Pursued a new theoretical direction or addressed a topic previously unexplored in your field 	1	2	3	4	5
c. Contributed to a scientific breakthrough in your field	1	2	3	4	5
d. Contributed to innovative ideas in your field	1	2	3	4	5
e. Addressed key knowledge gaps in your field	1	²	3	4	5
f. Advanced within your employing organization	1	2	3	4	5
g. Achieved your career goals	1	2	3	4	5

Please use the space below to describe any other professional accomplishments you may wish to highlight or were not included above.

During the past five years (or since the end of your postdoc if fewer than five years), how often have you engaged in the following professional activities? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

Professional activities	None	Once	Two or three times	Four or five times	Six or more times
a. Organized a seminar or workshop on your research area	1	2	3	4	5
b. Lectured at a host institution	1	2	3	4	5
c. Presented your research in your own lab/department at your organization	1	2	3	4	5
d. Presented your research in another lab/department at your organization	1	2	3	4	5
e. Presented your research at a national meeting	1	2	3	4	5
f. Presented your research at an international meeting	1	2	3	4	5
g. Authored or co-authored a paper in a peer-reviewed journal	1	2	3	4	5
h. Authored or co-authored a book chapter	1	2	3	4	5
i. Authored or co-authored a book	1	2	3	4	5
j. Authored or co-authored a technical report	1	2	3	4	5
k. Received competitive funding for your research			3	4	5
l. Received a patent	1	2	3	4	5
m. Received a professional award related to your research	1	2	3	4	5
n. Developed a prototype or marketable product	1	2	3	4	5
o. Assumed a role as a group leader (e.g., technical group leader)	1	2	3	4	5
p. Assumed a management position in your organization (e.g., division head)	1	2	3	4	5
 q. Served formally or informally as a mentor to others at your organization 		2	3	4	5
r. Other professional activity(please specify on line below):	1	2	3	4	5

Optional comments:

BENEFITS FROM THE NRC NIST POSTDOC

32. To what extent did you benefit from the NRC NIST postdoc appointment in the following ways? *(Please select one answer on each row.)*

Benefits from the NRC NIST postdoc program	Not at all	A Minor extent	A Moderate extent	A Great extent	A Very Great extent
a. Increased my subject matter knowledge/expertise	1	2	3	4	5
b. Improved my research skills and/or techniques	1	2	3	4	5
c. Improved my ability to manage research projects	1	2	3	4	5
d. Improved the overall quality of my research	1	2	3	4	5
e. Positively influenced the specific direction of my current research	1	2	3	4	5
f. Positively affected the progress of my current research	1	2	3	4	5
g. Improved my publication and presentation skills		2	3	4	5
h. Improved my proposal writing skills		2		4	5
i. Improved my mentoring skills	¹	2	3	4	5
j. Increased my experience using specialized equipment	1	2	3	4	5
 Increased my confidence in performing leading-edge research 	1	2	3	4	5
l. Increased my contacts with colleagues in my field	1	2	3	4	5
m. Positively influenced my success in obtaining subsequent funding for my research	1	2	3	4	5
n. Provided me with career opportunities that I would not have had otherwise	1	2	3	4	5
Optional comments:					

To what extent have you stayed in touch with the following people from your NRC NIST postdoc? (*Please select one answer on each row.*)

Persons	Not at all	A Minor extent	A Moderate extent	A Great extent	A Very Great extent
a. Your NIST postdoc advisor	1	2	3	4	5
b. Other NIST staff	1	2.	3	4	5
c. Other NIST postdocs	1	2	3	4	5

PROGRAM OPERATION

33. If you could make improvements to the NRC NIST postdoc program, what would they be?

34. Please provide any additional feedback about the NRC NIST postdoc program you have in the box below.