

Appendix A

Westat Cover Letter for IT Survey



An Employee-Owned
Research Corporation

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MONTH DAY, 2010

NAME
TITLE/DEPARTMENT
INSTITUTION
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP

Dear Dr. LAST NAME:

I am contacting you as a past or current principal investigator (PI) for the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Institutional Transformation (IT) project at your institution. NSF has contracted with Westat to conduct an outcome evaluation of two components of the ADVANCE Program: the Fellows component and the first two cohorts of ADVANCE IT grantees. Data collection for the IT evaluation has two parts: 1) an interactive survey administered via WebEx videoconference, and 2) collection of institutional data using an outcome indicator data form.

For the survey, PIs from the 19 Cohorts 1 and 2 IT grantee institutions and their designees will be asked to respond to questions on institutional context, project activities, and changes in STEM faculty gender equity during a videoconference discussion facilitated with respondents from your institution via WebEx. A paper version of the survey is attached along with a one-page glossary of terms and a list of IT-related social science research publications and presentations for your project that will be discussed during the session. We leave it to you to designate up to four individuals at your institution to participate in the WebEx videoconference, which will last 90 minutes. We ask that you look at the questions ahead of time, but expect that you and your colleagues will formulate the answers together as part of the group discussion. A staff member will be in touch in the next two weeks to arrange a mutually agreeable date and time for the session.

The outcome indicator data form, whose design was informed by NSF's Toolkit for Reporting Progress, requests quantitative data on faculty gender equity in STEM fields at your institution for two time points: 2001 and 2008. The data are needed for these two years to enable comparison with a sample of like institutions from the 2001 and 2008 administrations of the Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR). We again ask that you designate one or more individuals to complete the form, which is due by [INSERT DATE]. Project staff will be available to answer questions and provide assistance throughout the process of completing the form.

We recognize that your time is extremely valuable; we aim to obtain information critical to the evaluation while minimizing the burden to your institution. To ensure that NSF obtains the highest quality data for this important evaluation, your institution will receive a grant of [\$ X ,



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000] to help defray the costs of participating in the survey and of collecting and compiling the outcome indicator data. We also want to assure you that responses to the survey will be kept completely confidential. Only designated Westat project staff members who have signed a pledge of confidentiality will have access to the data. The data will be maintained with utmost security, either in a locked cabinet (if hard copy) or on a password-protected server (if electronic). We will report findings in the aggregate and take care to disguise the identity of the institutions associated with any quotes. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you on this important evaluation. Questions regarding the study should be directed to me at 301-294-3936 or susanberkowitz@westat.com.

Sincerely,

Susan Berkowitz, Ph.D.
Project Director
Quantitative Evaluation of the ADVANCE Program