



The success of recent doctorate recipients is critical to the success of the U.S. scientific enterprise and will influence U.S. and global scientific markets for years to come.



EARLY CAREER DOCTORATES SURVEY

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NCSES National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics



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About the Survey

The Early Career Doctorates Survey is a survey of individuals who earned their first doctoral degree (PhD, MD, or equivalent) within the last 10 years and are currently working in one of the following areas of employment:

- U.S. academic institutions
- Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs)
- Intramural research program of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

The work and professional development of recent doctorate recipients will influence innovation in U.S. and global markets for years to come. Despite the critical importance of this population to the success of the U.S. science and engineering enterprise, comprehensive surveys of this group are limited, and the data needed to understand their work patterns and contributions to the U.S. economy are sparse.

To address this need, the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) at the National Science Foundation developed the Early Career Doctorates Project to gather in-depth information about postdoctoral appointees (postdocs) and other recent doctorate recipients during the first 10 years of their working careers.

What topics does the survey cover?

✓ Educational history	Degrees earned—dates awarded, fields of study, and institutions
✓ Professional activities and achievements	Conference attendance Publications and presentations Professional service Grants experiences Patents
✓ Employer characteristics	Type of employer Type of work
✓ Professional and personal life balance	Typical workload Flexibility in scheduling work
✓ Mentoring, training, and research opportunities	Work relationships Work expectation Training Research opportunities
✓ Career paths and plans	Plans over the next 10 years

How did you select my institution?

Your institution is one of 201 institutions and FFRDCs selected to participate in this survey through scientific sampling methodology.

What does my participation involve?

NCSES is asking that you designate a coordinator who will work with RTI International (the survey contractor) to develop a contact database of all early career doctorates working at your institution. This database will serve as the frame from which 40 prospective respondents will be selected to participate in the survey. You (or your designee) will also be asked to use a semi-automated system to send a survey notification e-mail to each participant and to return a letter of support for the survey.

This letter will be sent to nonrespondents late in the data collection period to urge them to complete the survey.

What kind of information is needed for the contact database?

In addition to each early career doctorate's name and contact information, the coordinator will be asked to provide data such as each early career doctorate's highest degree held, year of degree, job title, department, field of research, gender, year of birth, and citizenship. These fields will improve our ability to achieve a representative sample of early career doctorates.

To minimize the burden of gathering these data, NCSES is requesting only data available within your institution's administrative databases. NCSES estimates that it will take your designee 6–8 hours to develop and submit the contact database.

How will our employees' privacy be protected?

Protecting respondent privacy is a priority for NCSES and RTI International. The following steps ensure that your employees' privacy and confidentiality are protected:

- The survey data will be used for statistical purposes only and will be safeguarded in accordance with the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended, and the Confidentiality Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002.
- All data will be collected using secure data transfer protocols and maintained within encrypted databases.
- Each respondent will be given unique credentials (username and password), and the survey will be conducted over a secure internet connection (https).
- All survey staff will complete a confidentiality training and sign an affidavit of nondisclosure before being able to work on the survey.
- Prior to publication, data will be aggregated in ways that prevent the identification of individual respondents.