

Attachment 4: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Survey of Earned Doctorates?

The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is the nation's primary source of information on the educational history, demographic characteristics, and postgraduation plans of doctorate recipients. It is funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Who is the National Science Foundation (NSF)?

The National Science Foundation (NSF), <http://www.nsf.gov>, is an independent federal agency whose mission is to support all fields of fundamental science and engineering. If you would like to contact NSF directly, please contact the study's Project Officer, Dr. Lynn Milan, at lmilan@nsf.gov or 703-292-2275.

Who is NORC?

NORC is a not-for-profit social science research organization affiliated with the University of Chicago. NORC is conducting this study on behalf of NSF. You can learn more about NORC at its website, www.norc.org, or by contacting the Study Director, Mary Ann Latter, at Latter-MaryAnn@norc.org or calling the project's TOLL-FREE NUMBER.

What is the study about?

This study is being conducted in order to assess the potential utility of adding a section on graduate school experiences to the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED). It is also intended to solicit opinions about what kinds of questions stakeholders would be interested in seeing in this new section.

How is the study being conducted?

NORC is conducting focus groups and one-on-one interviews with representatives from SED institutions and foundations or programs that fund scholarships or conduct research on graduate education. The sessions will last about one hour and will be conducted via online videoconference.

How long will the study take?

The interview or focus group will take about one hour.

Who do I contact if I have questions about my rights as a respondent?

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a study participant, you may call the NORC IRB Manager, toll-free, at 866-309-0542.

How is my privacy protected?

Your answers will always be kept private by the research team, and none of the information that you provide will be used for any purpose other than research. Your responses are protected under

the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended, and the Privacy Act of 1974. Your name or any information that could identify you will never be used by the research team. The research team will not associate your name with any responses you give and will not provide the names of any participants to NSF. NSF may observe or listen to the focus groups or one-on-one interviews pending the approval of participants.

What does NSF hope to learn from these focus groups/one-on-one interviews?

- How might institutions use GSE data?
- Would receiving aggregated data on peer institutions enhance the institution's interest in the GSE module?
- How useful are various GSE topics that could be included in SED?
- In what ways do views on a GSE module vary across institutions?
- Would aggregated data for sensitive items still be useful to institutions?
- What impact would a SED GSE module have on institutions that already conduct their own exit survey?
- Regarding the above topics, what views are held by researchers and other data users who are outside of SED institutions?