

Attachment D – Confidentiality and Security Measures

Confidentiality and Security Measures

Protecting respondent privacy is a priority for NCSES and RTI. The following steps will be taken to ensure that personally identifiable information (PII) is protected and all responses kept confidential.

- Respondents will complete the survey via a secure web survey (connection protected by Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology with 128-bit encryption).
- Login credentials will be unique, sent only to the respondent, and will be deactivated upon completion of the questionnaire.
- Respondents will be required to affirm having read the informed consent text before beginning the survey.
- Contact information gathered from the institution will be transferred to RTI by secure FTP or 128-bit encrypted zip file.
- Contact information will be stored separately from questionnaire responses with a survey generated (meaningless) respondent ID linking the two datasets.
- All data will reside within private secure servers at RTI until delivery of final analytic data files.
- All PII will be removed prior to sending analytic data files to NSF and a new, randomly generated respondent ID created for the analytic dataset (the ID used during data collection will be deleted).
- All physical documents containing PII will be stored in locked file cabinets accessible only by RTI survey staff. All electronic files will be maintained on secure servers.
- All RTI staff with access to the PII will have completed CIPSEA training and signed an affidavit of nondisclosure (the ECDS Data Use Agreement) prior to accessing the data.
- Organizationally, RTI also commits to maintaining the confidentiality and security of the ECDS data through an annually updated organization data use agreement with NCSES.

Informed Consent

After logging into the web survey and verifying they are one of the sample members, respondents will be directed to the consent web pages. Respondents are required to affirm that they have read the below informed consent material in order to proceed to the questionnaire.

The National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, a federal statistical agency within the National Science Foundation (NSF), is conducting the Early Career Doctorates Survey (ECDS) to learn about the career paths and research opportunities of individuals who earned their first doctorate (PhD, MD, or other equivalent doctorate degree) within the last 10 years.

This information is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 as amended, and the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002. Per the Federal Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, your data are protected from cybersecurity risks through screening of the federal information systems that transmit your data. The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes only. Your responses will be kept confidential. Your response is voluntary and failure to provide some or all of the requested information will not in any way adversely affect you. Once you begin the survey, you may stop at any time or skip any question. The average time to complete this survey is about 30 minutes.

Please send any comments on the time required to complete this survey to the National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Blvd., Suite 295, Arlington VA 22230, ATTN: NSF Reports Clearance

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Officer. If you have questions about your rights as a survey participant, you may contact the NSF survey contractor's Office of Research Protection at 1-866-214-2043, RTI International.

If you agree to participate, please click "Begin Survey" below.