[State Government R&D Survey](https://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvystaterd/surveys/srvystaterd-2020.pdf): Respondent Debriefing Protocol

Draft 10/16/20

Revised 10/27/20

# Purpose

* To gain feedback from respondents on the data sources used and reporting routines for the following questions:
	+ Q4: internal R&D
	+ Q5: external R&D
	+ Q9: internal R&D by type of R&D
	+ Q10: R&D employees
	+ Q11: R&D FTEs
* To determine the best placement of Q12

# Interview mode

Zoom

# Materials Needed

* Consent form
* Interview protocol
* Copy of submitted data (PDF)

# Introductions

* Thank you for completing the State Gov R&D Survey, and for agreeing to participate in this follow-up interview.
* Purpose: to learn how you went about answering questions – records/reports you looked at, people you talked to, anything that was particularly easy or hard about answering the questions.
* Start with general questions and experiences, then move to more specific questions.
* Who is in the meeting, titles, roles
* Consent form
* Start recording

# General Questions

* Overall, how easy or difficult was it to complete this survey?
	+ Very difficult
	+ Somewhat difficult
	+ Somewhat easy
	+ Very easy
* Do any questions stand out in your mind as being particularly difficult?
* Do any questions stand out in your mind as being particularly time-consuming?
* Did you answer the questions in order, or did you skip around?
	+ If skip around: do you happen to remember which questions you answered first? Which ones you answered last?
* Ok, let’s take a closer look at some of the questions on the survey.

# Question 4 (Expenditures for R&D Performed Internally)

Let’s start with #4.

* In your own words, what is this question asking you?
* Can you tell me how you went about answering this question?
	+ What records did you consult to answer this question?
	+ Did you get help from others in your agency to answer this question?
* Can you give me some examples of these types of expenditures?
* What did the term “internal R&D performance” mean to you? Do you use this term yourself? If not, what term or terms do you use to describe this type of activity?
* Do your records allow you to easily distinguish among these different sources of funds?
* What does “state funds used for internal R&D” mean to you? Can you give me an example of this?

# Question 5 (Expenditures for R&D Performed Externally)

Let’s go on to question 5.

* In your own words, what is this question asking you?
* Can you tell me how you went about answering this question?
	+ What records did you consult to answer this question?
	+ Were the records you reviewed for this question the same as the ones for Q4, or different?
	+ Did you get help from others in your agency to answer this question?
* What did the term “external R&D performance” mean to you? Do you use this term yourself? If not, what term or terms do you use to describe this type of activity?
* Do your records allow you to easily distinguish among these different sources of funds?

# Question 9 (Expenditures for R&D Performed Internally by Type of R&D)

We’re going to skip over several questions now. Let’s move to Question 9.

* In your own words, what is this question asking you?
* How did you go about answering this question?
	+ Did you use records to come up with an answer, or did you estimate?
		- If estimate, can you tell me how you went about estimating?
		- If records, what records did you consult to answer this question?
	+ Did you get help from others in your agency to answer this question?
* How easy or difficult was it to provide a response for this question?
* Do you remember whether or not you referred to the examples of basic research, applied research, and experimental development (at the top of the page)?
* Does your agency classify its R&D work in these three buckets (basic research, applied research, experimental development) or not?
	+ If not, does your agency classify its R&D projects some other way? Can you tell us about it?
* Were there any projects or expenditures that you were unsure how to classify? What made it hard? How did you decide what to do with it/them?

# Question 10 (R&D Employees)

* In your own words, what was this question asking?
* How did you go about answering this question?
	+ Did you use records, or did you estimate?
	+ Did you talk to other people, or were able to answer it on your own?
* Does your agency classify its own employees in the way this question asks? In other words, were you able to identify researchers vs. R&D technicians and equivalent staff vs. R&D support staff, or not?
	+ How did you go about determining which employees fit in each category?
	+ Do your agency’s records have this information? How easy or difficult was it to get this information from the records?
* What sort of employees did you consider to be “researchers”?
	+ Can you give me some examples of job titles?
* How about “R&D technicians and equivalent staff”?
	+ Examples of job titles?
* How about “R&D support staff”?
	+ Examples of job titles?
* How easy or difficult was it to obtain the numbers of employees in these three categories (rather than a headcount for the whole agency) – very difficult, somewhat difficult, neither easy nor difficult, somewhat easy, or very easy?
* Does your agency have any *full-time employees* who spend only part of their time on R&D?
	+ If yes: Did you include or exclude those employees in your answer?
* Does your agency have any *part-time employees* that would fit into any of these three categories (researchers, R&D technicians/equivalent staff, R&D support staff)?
	+ Did you include or exclude those part-time employees in your answer?
* What time period does your data cover?
	+ Did you happen to notice the reference date (pay period including March 12, 2020) when you were completing the questionnaire?
	+ Did you use that date, or some other date?

# Question 11 (FTE R&D Personnel)

* In your own words, what was this question asking? How was it the same or different, compared to Question 10?
* How did you go about answering this question?
* Did you use records, or did you estimate?
	+ If records:
		- What records did you use?
		- Did you access those records yourself, or did you work with someone else to get them?
	+ If estimate:
		- How did you estimate?
		- What process did you use?
		- Did you estimate in your head, use some sort of tool?
		- Did you talk to other people, or were able to answer it on your own?
* Does your agency already calculate the number of full-time equivalent employees it has? Was the survey asking you to do something you already do, or not?
* Did you happen to refer to the examples in the bulleted list?
	+ What did you think of the examples?
	+ Were they too long, too short, or about right?
	+ About how many times did you look at the examples?
	+ Were they helpful or not helpful?
	+ Did you think they were easy or hard to understand?

(If agency has part-time employees working on R&D) Were your agency’s part-time employees who work on R&D included or excluded in your answer to this question?

* What time period does your data cover?
	+ Did you happen to notice the reference date (pay period including March 12, 2020) when you were completing the questionnaire?
	+ Did you use that date, or some other date?

# Question 12 (Expenditures for R&D Performed Externally by Type of Entity)

Let’s take a look at Question 12, Expenditures for R&D Performed Externally by Type of Entity.

* How did you go about answering this question?
* Did you happen to look back at Question 5 as you were answering this question?
* What did you think of where Question 12 is located in the survey? Did it seem odd for it to come after Question 11, or was it ok?

# Wrap Up

Those were all the questions we had for you today. Did you have any questions for us?

Thank you for your time.