

# State Government R&D Survey: 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:
  - o Q4: internal R&D
  - o Q5: external R&D
  - o Q9: internal R&D by type of R&D
  - o Q10: R&D employees
  - o 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?
  - o Very difficult
  - o Somewhat difficult
  - o Somewhat easy
  - o 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.