

VERSION 1: INITIAL NOTIFICATION FROM WESTAT
(For Private Industry Partners of Treatment Projects)

Dear **[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]**,

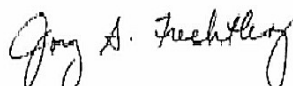
We are requesting your participation in an interview regarding NSF-private industry direct partnerships. Westat and RAND, independent research organizations, have been contracted by NSF to conduct an evaluation of the benefits of NSF-private-industry direct partnerships, document what makes them effective, and develop recommendations for how they might be improved. This evaluation focuses on “direct partnerships” between NSF and private industry and addresses the benefits of such collaborations on researchers, NSF, industry partners, and the field. The study is also seeking insights on any improvements that could make these partnership programs more effective or easier to implement.

You are being asked to participate in this interview because you served as a representative on **[insert name of program]** that was jointly administered by NSF and **[insert name of private industry partner]**. These interviews, which are being conducted with representatives from the private industry partners that participated in NSF-private industry direct partnerships, will provide you an opportunity to share insights on your experiences during the grant and the short-term and longer-term outcomes that can be attributed to the partnership.

The interview should take about 45-60 minutes. Your participation is voluntary but critical to the success of NSF improvement efforts. Your decision to participate or not to participate will not adversely affect consideration of your pending or future proposals. The information you provide will be used for statistical purposes. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and are subject to safeguards as provided by the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. § 552a).

More details about the interview and next steps are provided below. Thank you in advance for your participation, and please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Joy Frechtling
Project Director

What is the purpose of the interview and what topics will it cover?

The interview is designed to obtain information on (1) the basic characteristics and strategies employed by projects that participated in the NSF-private industry direct partnerships; (2) how projects interacted with the industry partners; (3) the factors that affected the scope and conduct of both the partnership interactions and the overall project effort; (4) the project's outcomes; and (5) the added value of having private industry as a funder.

What will happen to the information you provide?

The Westat/RAND team will summarize the results from the interviews (i.e., across all projects participating in the study) in a report that will be provided to NSF. While your responses will be identifiable to Westat and RAND, the report provided to NSF will only focus on overall results. Westat and RAND will not report any individual responses to NSF, nor will they release any information about individuals participating in the interviews to anyone outside their organizations.

What are next steps?

Please provide some dates and times when you would be able to participate in a 45-60 minute interview, and we will send you a meeting invite for a specific date and time.

[Link to Calendly (meeting scheduling tool) or list of specific dates/times of Westat /RAND availability to be provided here]

Our preference is to conduct the interview using Microsoft Teams, but if you have other preferences (e.g., Zoom, etc.), you may indicate that in your response.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation, and we look forward to talking with you. In the meantime, please let us know if you have any questions.