

Protocol for Title IX Coordinators

Introduction

Thank you so much for taking the time to speak with us today. My name is Allison Smith, and I am part of a team conducting research for the National Science Foundation's (NSF's) Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) on the policies that NSF has developed to promote safe and harassment-free research and education environments. I am also joined by my colleague, _____, who will be taking notes during our conversation.

As part of this research, we are conducting interviews with representatives at NSF awardee organizations across the United States. Given your role in the Title IX Office, we are very interested in learning about your perspectives on NSF's anti-harassment policies and their implementation, as well as any opportunities or challenges they have presented within your organization. We would also appreciate you sharing any recommendations you may have related to these policies.

We will be audio-recording the conversation today to ensure that we capture your exact words and that our final report reflects all participants' views as accurately as possible. We will not share this recording or our notes from this interview with NSF or anyone outside of the immediate project team, and both the recording and our notes will be deleted once the project is completed.

After we complete all of the interviews, we will analyze the data collected to identify major findings and recommendations. To ensure confidentiality, none of the findings or recommendations reported to NSF will be connected with the names of specific interview participants or their organizations.

This interview is completely voluntary, and you may skip any question or stop participating at any point. The interview should take no more than an hour to complete, and the OMB clearance number is 3145-XXXX. Before we begin, do you have any questions for us?

If you are ready to start, we will begin recording now. Thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research.

Background Questions

1. How would you describe your responsibilities in the Title IX Office? *[Probe for how the office is organized, how responsibilities are divided, and whether individuals work together or independently.]*
2. In addition to your role in the Title IX Office, do you serve in other roles in your organization?
 - a. If so, what are these roles? *[Probe for whether working on Title IX issues is the participant's primary role, what percentage of their time is dedicated to their Title IX-related responsibilities, and whether they feel they have enough time to fulfill their Title IX-related responsibilities.]*

Questions Related to Communication and Knowledge of the T&C

1. Are you aware of NSF's term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault?
 - a. If so, how did you learn about it? *[Probe for whether they recall receiving emails or other communications from NSF regarding the T&C, whether they learned about it from the office of sponsored research, etc.]*
2. *[Show the [T&C webpage](#) on the screen and give the participant time to look at it.]* What additional information, if any, would you like about the NSF term and condition? *[Probe for comments on the website, what, if any, additional information they would like, and how it could most effectively be disseminated.]*
3. If you had questions about the NSF term and condition, whom would you ask? *[Probe for whether they would ask someone else in the Title IX Office, someone in a different campus office, someone at NSF, etc.]*

Questions Related to Implementation of the T&C

1. Could you take me step by step through the process that would be followed at your organization to make a notification under the NSF term and condition? If you could also identify the roles that different offices would have in this process, that would be very helpful. *[Probe for how different offices in the organization would work independently and coordinate with others, which office(s) would decide whether to put the PI on administrative leave, how the investigation would be conducted, and how long the process might take.]*
2. How would your office be involved in this process? *[Probe for whether they would initiate the process, be involved in the investigation, etc.]*
3. Has your organization had to institute any procedural or organizational changes in order to ensure compliance with the NSF term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault?
 - a. If so, what changes have been instituted?
 - b. If so, how are these changes working? *[If the participant mentions challenges, probe for the nature of these challenges and how they might be addressed.]*
4. Has the Department of Education's Title IX Final Rule, which became effective on August 14, 2020, affected how your organization processes complaints of sexual harassment and sexual assault?
 - a. If so, how?
 - b. If so, have these changes affected how your organization would implement the NSF term and condition related to sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, or sexual assault?
 - i. If so, how?

5. Are there any changes or revisions you would recommend making to the NSF term and condition?
 - a. If so, what changes and why?

Questions Related to Perceptions of the T&C

1. Do you think that all agencies that fund your organization should have a term and condition similar to NSF's?
 - a. If so, why?
 - b. If not, why not?
2. Do you have any concerns about NSF's term and condition?
 - a. If so, what is the nature of these concerns?
3. Do you think that NSF's term and condition helps to prevent and address sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault in your organization? Why or why not?
 - a. If so, are there particular aspects of the term and condition that make it effective?
 - b. If not, what do you think could be done to make the term and condition more effective?
4. Are there other ways that government funding agencies could help to prevent and address sexual harassment, other forms of harassment, and sexual assault in your organization?
 - a. If so, how?
 - b. If not, why not?

General Questions

1. Do you or your office have a role in any other equity-related activities for the University?
 - a. If so, what are these activities?
 - b. If so, do any of these activities focus on ensuring equitable participation in research?
 - i. If so, what are these activities?
2. Are there any other questions you feel we should have asked or any additional comments you would like to provide?

Conclusion

We appreciate all of the valuable information you've provided during this interview and, again, want to assure you that neither your name nor that of your organization will be connected with any of the findings or recommendations that will be presented to NSF. If you have any questions, concerns, or would like to provide additional information in the future, please feel free to reach out to me at allison@101research.com or (202) 868-2151 at any time. Thank you again.