

HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE PROTECTED?

The confidentiality of any information provided as part of the SED is safeguarded under the Privacy Act of 1974 and the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended. Staff working with data are required to sign binding confidentiality affidavits with fines up to \$250,000 or imprisonment as punishment for disclosure. In addition, the processing facilities and computer equipment used to store or access data are designed and maintained to ensure confidentiality.

WHY DOES THE SED NEED THE PARTIAL SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (SSN)?

We use the last four digits of the SSN for two reasons:

- to identify duplicate records for doctorate recipients in historical SED data files; and
- to match SED data to information on federal funding support for graduate education.

We will safeguard your partial SSN with the utmost security, and it will not be used for any purpose other than those listed above.

SURVEY SPONSORS



HOW DO I PARTICIPATE?

You can complete the SED at:



<https://sed-ncses.org>

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

**National Science Foundation
National Center for
Science and Engineering
Statistics**

Attention: SED

2415 Eisenhower Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22314

**RTI International -
Project: SED**

Research
Operations Center
5265 Capital Blvd.
Raleigh, NC 27616
877-256-8167
sed@rti.org



YOUR PARTICIPATION COUNTS

WHAT IS THE SED?

The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is an annual census of individuals who were awarded a research doctorate from an accredited U.S. institution.

WHY AM I BEING ASKED TO PARTICIPATE?

As a recipient of a research doctorate, your participation is essential to the federal agencies who sponsor this study to learn more about those who graduate with a research doctoral degree.

WHO IS SPONSORING THE STUDY?

The study is being conducted on behalf of the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics of the National Science Foundation; the National Institutes of Health; the U.S. Department of Education; and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

SED data are being collected under contract by RTI International,¹ a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina.

HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED?

Your information will be combined with that of approximately 55,000 other research doctorate earners from your academic year. These combined data will be used by various entities (e.g., universities, federal and state agencies) to inform governmental policy, evaluate graduate education programs, and make labor force projections. Additionally, graduate deans may receive data on their own graduates, which they agree to use for statistical purposes only.

Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. Only data aggregated to levels that will not allow the identification of individual respondents are released for publication.

FOR EXAMPLE, RECENT SED RESULTS REVEALED:

- Women's share of doctorates awarded has grown over the past two decades in all broad fields of study. In 2019, women earned half or more of the doctorates awarded in life sciences, psychology and social sciences, education, humanities and arts, and other non-science and engineering (S&E) fields.²
- In 2019, Black or African American doctorate recipients were the largest minority population in education and in other non-S&E fields. Hispanics or Latinos and Blacks or African Americans earned a larger proportion of doctorates in psychology and social sciences and in humanities and arts than did other minority groups.³
- In the past 10 years, the overall proportion of S&E doctorate recipients taking postdoctoral researcher (postdoc) positions in the United States immediately after graduation declined from 55% to 46%. The proportions of doctorate recipients taking postdoc positions in life sciences, physical sciences, and earth sciences, mathematics and computer sciences, and engineering declined during this period, while the proportion in psychology and social sciences and in non-S&E fields increased.⁴
- Data from the survey are available on the NSF website and in annual reports published online (<http://nsf.gov/statistics/sed/>).



¹ RTI International is a registered trademark and a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

² National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Science Foundation (NCSES/NSF). 2020. *Doctorate Recipients from U.S. Universities: 2019*. Page 9, figure 11. NSF 21-308. Alexandria, VA. Available at <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf21308>.

³ See (NCSES/NSF 2020, pp. 8–9, fig. 10).

⁴ See (NCSES/NSF 2020, p. 16, fig. 23).