

## 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](mailto:sed@rti.org)

A background image showing graduates in blue and maroon gowns with orange stoles, standing in front of a building with classical columns.

# 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,<sup>1</sup> a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina.

## HOW WILL MY INFORMATION BE USED?

Your information will be combined with that of approximately 57,000 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 their own graduates' data, 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:

- Overall, 46% of all doctorates in 2021 were awarded to women. Since 2002, women have earned just over half of all research doctorates awarded to U.S. citizens and permanent residents and more than 30% of research doctorates awarded to temporary visa holders.<sup>2</sup>
- Compared to 2019, before the pandemic started, the proportion of doctorate recipients with definite commitments in 2021 increased in all fields except in mathematics and statistics and in social sciences, which declined by 3.2 percentage points and 1.3 percentage points, respectively.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2021, 36% of doctorate recipients with definite non-postdoc employment commitments in the United States reported that their principal job would be in academe, down from 48% in 2001.<sup>4</sup>
- The COVID pandemic disrupted many aspects of the higher education and training of doctorate recipients. The most frequent impact of COVID-19, mentioned by 48% of doctorate recipients, was a disruption of their research; nearly 39% indicated that the pandemic delayed the timeline for completing their doctoral degree.<sup>5</sup>
- Data from the survey are available on the NSF website and in annual reports published online: (<https://nsf.gov/statistics/sed/>).

<sup>1</sup> RTI International is a registered trademark and a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, National Science Foundation (NCSES/NSF). 2022. *Doctorate Recipients from U.S. Universities: 2021*. Figure 4. NSF 23-300. Alexandria, VA. Available at <https://nces.nsf.gov/pubs/nsf23300>.

<sup>3</sup> See (NCSES/NSF 2022, figure 20).

<sup>4</sup> See (NCSES/NSF 2022:29).

<sup>5</sup> See (NCSES/NSF 2022, figure 26).