The Survey of Earned Doctorates is conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for these federal agencies:

NSF
The National Science Foundation
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

NIH
The National Institutes of Health

USDA
The U.S. Department of Agriculture

The National Endowment for the Humanities

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration

More Information Available
Publications from the Survey of Earned Doctorates use aggregated data in which a person cannot be identified.

If you have any questions or concerns about the survey, please contact:
National Science Foundation
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)
4201 Wilson Blvd., Room 965
Arlington, VA 22230
p. 703-292-8780

For information on completing the survey, please contact:
Kristy Webber
NORC at the University of Chicago
55 East Monroe Street, 30th Floor
Chicago, IL 60603

SED
Survey of Earned Doctorates

How the SED Keeps Your Information Strictly Confidential

Sponsored by:
NSF, NIH, USED
USDA, NEH, NASA
Your information is kept strictly confidential.

Privacy Policy

The information provided on the Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) questionnaire remains confidential and is safeguarded in accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and the NSAct of 1950, as amended. The survey data are reported only in aggregate form or in a manner that does not identify information about an individual.

The federal agencies and the data collection contractor for the SED take the strongest measures to safeguard respondent confidentiality. All staff members sign binding confidentiality pledges. All processing facilities and computer systems are carefully designed and continuously tested to safeguard the information provided by institutions and respondents.

Social Security Number

In response to privacy concerns, only the last four digits of your Social Security Number are requested. Additionally, we would like to reassure you that even your partial SSN information is kept strictly confidential and is not used outside the project under any conditions. The purpose of the partial Social Security Number is for survey quality control by the contractor (NORC) and for statistical purposes in program evaluation by the SED Federal sponsors.

We ask for your partial SSN for three specific purposes:

1. The major Federal agencies that sponsor the SED use the partial SSN to match the SED data to information on Federal funding support for graduate education. Congress and the Federal agencies require that information on the effectiveness of Federal programs be used in the funding process for these programs. Federal programs conduct program evaluations by using the SED to determine, for example, the percent of participants in a program such as the NSF Graduate Fellowship Program who have completed the doctorate. The U.S. Department of Education has used the SED to evaluate several graduate student aid programs, and the National Institutes of Health has used it to evaluate its graduate trainee programs.

2. The National Science Foundation conducts a follow-up survey of a sample of doctorate recipients, the Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR), and the partial SSN may be used to find the mailing addresses of sampled individuals two or more years after they completed their doctoral programs. This follow-up survey is completely voluntary.

3. We use the partial SSN number to make sure that we do not have duplicate records for any doctorate recipient in the historical data file. Each year we receive several questionnaires from individuals who had completed the SED in an earlier year, when they had expected to graduate. The partial SSN is the best way to locate such matching records across survey rounds, as well as to cross-reference individuals completing a second research doctorate.

Legally, your Social Security Number is solicited under the National Science Foundation Act of 1950, as amended; provision of it is voluntary.