

May 9, 2022

Suzanne H. Plimpton
Reports Clearance Officer
National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1265
Arlington, VA 22230

RE: *Federal Register* notice dated March 30, 2022, for the National Science Foundation's Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey and Federally-Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) Research and Development Survey (OMB Number: 3145-0100)

Dear Ms. Plimpton:

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) strongly supports the continued collection of data by the National Science Foundation (NSF) on two survey instruments, the *Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey* and the *FFRDC Research and Development Survey*. The data collected on these forms are crucial to key components of BEA's economic statistics, particularly in BEA's estimates of research and development (R&D) investment and output.

BEA's national income and product accounts (NIPAs), industry economic accounts (IEAs), and gross domestic product (GDP) by state estimates rely on data from the HERD and FFRDC surveys. Expenditures for R&D were recognized as fixed investment in the calculation of GDP in the following major BEA updates: the 2013 comprehensive revision of the NIPAs, the 2014 comprehensive revision of the IEAs, and the 2014 comprehensive revision of GDP by state. Academic R&D expenditures from NSF are the starting point for estimating investment in intangible R&D assets for private nonprofit universities and for public universities. A list of items used by BEA is attached.

Though the U.S. Census Bureau is BEA's primary source of data for the benchmark input-output accounts, it does not survey private non-profit universities or public universities. Consequently, these NSF surveys are BEA's main source of output measures for these significant performers of R&D and extremely important to BEA.

For additional information, please contact Tiffany Burrell, Source Data Coordinator, at 301-278-9618 or by email at Tiffany.Burrell@bea.gov. Should you need assistance in justifying this form to the Office of Management and Budget, please do not hesitate to contact BEA.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Fixler
Chief Economist

Attachment

Attachment

Items Used by BEA from R&D surveys for Universities and Colleges and FFRDCs

| Universities and Colleges: | Description of BEA's Use: |
|---|---|
| Question 1 – Current funds expenditures, by source of funds | Used to estimate research and development output by funder |
| Question 3 – R&D funding by type of agreement | Used to understand the level of R&D funding by type of agreement |
| Question 8 – R&D expenditures passed through to sub-recipients | Used to avoid double-counting of performer-based estimates |
| Questions 9A – 10 – R&D expenditures funded by federal agency sources | Used to gain information on the federal government agency composition of R&D funding |
| Question 13 – R&D expenditures by type of cost | To develop price measures to estimate the real volume of output |
| Questions 15A – 15K – Expenditures on equipment by science and engineering field | Total is used to separate equipment expenditures from gross output of research and development activity |
| Detail for above items on sources of funding, type of institution (private, public, federal), geographic location | To allocate expenditures to industry sectors and to states |
| FFRDCs: | Description of BEA's Use: |
| Question 1 – Current funds expenditures, by source of funds | Used to estimate research and development output by funder |
| Question 4 – R&D expenditures by type of cost | To develop price measures to estimate the real volume of output |