



MEMORANDUM

ATTN: Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation

FROM: Emily R. Miller, PhD, Vice President Research and Institutional Policy,
Association of American Universities (AAU)

DATE: July 2, 2025

Re: AAU supports the continuation of the proposed information request - [the Higher Education Research and Development Survey](#)

On behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU), we appreciate the opportunity to share comments with National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation (NSF) regarding the [Higher Education Research and Development Survey](#) (HERD Survey).

AAU wholeheartedly supports the continuation of the HERD Survey as it is the primary source of data on research and development (R&D) expenditures at U.S. higher education institutions.

The survey collects information by source of R&D funding (e.g., federal government, state and local government, business, nonprofit, institutional, and other); field and type of research (e.g., basic research, applied research, and experimental development); as well as headcounts of personnel (e.g., researchers, technicians). The survey also requests total R&D expenditures funded from foreign sources, R&D within an institution's medical school, clinical trial expenditures, R&D by type of funding mechanism (contracts vs. grants), and R&D by cost category (salaries, equipment, software, etc.).

This annual census of U.S. college and university R&D expenditures is incorporated into the [Science and Engineering Indicators](#) and informs many other classifications (e.g., Carnegie Classification) and rankings. In addition, NCSES publicly publishes data from this survey annually in detailed tables and analytic reports available at the [HERD Survey page](#). This information is extremely valuable to the higher education community and the public.

AAU's 69 U.S. member universities conduct cutting-edge scientific research, make critical discoveries, and develop new innovations that help drive our nation's global economic, health, and national security. The HERD Survey is an important national resource that helps to inform

polymakers and guide future U.S. science funding and policy decisions. The continuation of the HERD Survey will ensure high-quality quantitative information on R&D expenditures is collected to document the state of the U.S. research enterprise.

We welcome opportunities to continue to engage with NCSES to support and strengthen the collection of information to measure America's progress in science, technology and innovation.

DRAFT