

**IRIS: Institute for Research on Innovation and Science**

**Jason Owen-Smith, Executive Director**

Program in Innovation, Networks and Knowledge (INK)

The Univ of Michigan Inst for Social Research Survey Research Center

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INSTITUTE FOR  
RESEARCH ON  
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April 29, 2016

Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Compliance Officer

National Science Foundation

4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1265

Arlington, VA 22230

Via: [splimpton@nsf.gov](mailto:splimpton@nsf.gov)

Dear Ms. Plimpton:

I am pleased to provide comments on the planned information collection registration (ICR) announced by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in the Federal Register on April 8, 2016 regarding the extension of the Higher Education Research and Development (HERD) Survey.

As a Professor of Sociology who has spent his whole career studying the social and economic impact of academic research, I have long used and benefited from this important data collection effort. In my current role as executive director of the Institute for Research on Innovation and Science (IRIS), my staff and I make extensive use of data from the HERD survey to provide context for and help validate administrative data on sponsored project expenditures provided by our university members. I believe that these rich data will continue to prove useful for many academic and policy purposes.

As the NSF works to extend this important efforts, I strongly suggest that the relevant participants consider the potential benefits of using administrative data drawn from universities to deepen and extend the information collected in the survey. As the membership of IRIS, a national consortium of 24 universities that together account for \$15 billion in academic R&D spending (about 23% of the total), grows it may be possible to use some of these administrative data in ways that also reduce burden for HERD respondents who are also IRIS memberships. IRIS seeks to create and maintain a national dataset that is comprehensive and linkable to federal and other data resources including the economic and demographic data maintained by the U.S. Census Bureau. For more information on IRIS please see (<http://iris.isr.umich.edu>).

I would be exceptionally pleased to discuss the possibilities for integrating administrative data maintained by IRIS into this very important data collection effort. Please do not hesitate to contact me directly ([jdos@umich.edu](mailto:jdos@umich.edu), 734-936-0463).

Sincerely Yours,

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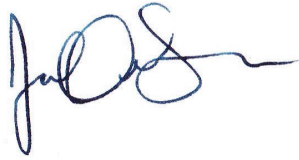
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