

Exploring Research and Development Conducted by Nonprofit Organizations in the United States



The Nonprofit Research Activities Survey

Each year, nonprofit organizations perform research and experimental development (R&D) activities that advance knowledge and develop new goods and services that benefit our nation. Nonprofit organizations perform R&D for a range of valuable specialties and fields, including health, psychology, and engineering.

What is the NPRA Survey?

The Nonprofit Research Activities (NPRA) module of the Annual Business Survey (ABS) measures R&D performed or funded by 501(c) nonprofit organizations with at least \$500,000 in annual payroll in the United States. NPRA is developed and cosponsored by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the U.S. National Science Foundation and by the U.S. Census Bureau.

How can I use the NPRA Survey?

Data from the NPRA Survey can answer questions like

- How much did U.S. nonprofit organizations spend on applied research vs. experimental development?
- How much funding does the U.S. government provide for nonprofit R&D?
- What is the largest funding source for R&D at nonprofit organizations?
- Which field has the largest amount of R&D spending?
- Which type of nonprofit has the highest total R&D spending?
- How many employees work on R&D within U.S. nonprofit organizations?



Why is the NPRA Survey important?

The NPRA Survey is the only source of comprehensive information about R&D activity and spending in the U.S. nonprofit sector. Policymakers, organization leaders, and researchers can use this survey data to help make decisions, analyze trends, and compare R&D spending with other U.S. R&D performing sectors, such as business or higher education.

For more information, the [NPRA Survey homepage](https://ncses.nsf.gov/surveys/nonprofit-research-activities) (<https://ncses.nsf.gov/surveys/nonprofit-research-activities>) features additional details about the survey, its questionnaires, and links to related publications and products.



Data details

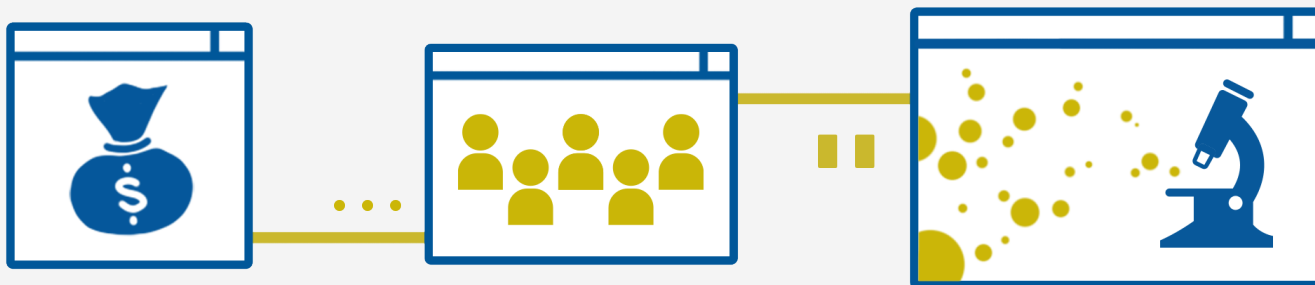
Where can I find NPRA Survey data?

The NPRA Survey data can be found in several places throughout the NCSES website. On the survey's [homepage](#), the Data tab offers data tables that can be downloaded by users, and the Analysis tab chronicles all NCSES publications that use the survey's data.



Nonprofit organizations report information such as

- R&D expenditures by
 - Source of funds
 - Type of R&D (basic research, applied research, and experimental development)
 - Field of R&D
- Headcounts and full-time equivalent counts of R&D personnel
- Headcounts for contract employees and volunteers working on research activities
- R&D funding provided to other organizations, by type of funding



The NPRA Survey is a module of the ABS that focuses on nonprofit organizations. The ABS also collects R&D data on businesses with fewer than 10 employees. See the **Annual Business Survey homepage** (<https://nces.nsf.gov/surveys/annual-business-survey>) for more information.

Products supported by NPRA Survey data

NPRA Survey data are used in NCSES publications, such as analytical reports and data tables. Its data also supplement other NCSES publications such as *National Patterns of R&D Resources* and *Science and Engineering Indicators*.



Survey specifics

Frequency: Annual

Initial survey year: FY 2020

Reference period: Fiscal year

Response unit: Nonprofit organizations

Sample or census: Sample

Population size: Approximately 48,500 organizations

Sample size: Approximately 8,000 organizations



National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES)

For more information about NCSES's products and data collection process, visit <https://nces.nsf.gov>. You can also explore our Surveys page at <https://nces.nsf.gov/surveys> to learn more about NCSES surveys and the NPRA Survey, as well as its methodology, survey design, and questionnaires.