

Guide for Public Use Data Files

**National Science Foundation's
FFRDC Research and Development Survey:
Fiscal Year 2025**

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**U.S. National Science Foundation
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This data users' guide provides a detailed description of the public use data files for the fiscal year (FY) 2025 FFRDC Research and Development Survey (FFRDC R&D Survey). The FFRDC R&D Survey is sponsored by the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) within the National Science Foundation. The FFRDC R&D Survey replaced the previous annual collection, the Survey of Research and Development Expenditures at Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC R&D Expenditures Survey), in FY 2010. The second and third sections of this guide provide a detailed description of the public use data files for each version of the survey. Each of these sections includes an overview of the two surveys and a detailed description of each data file structure. For additional information about the survey population and procedures, refer to the FY 2025 Survey Methodology Report and methodology reports from previous collection cycles (available upon request from the NCSES survey manager listed below [4.3]).

1. SURVEY POPULATION AND FRAME

The FFRDC R&D Survey has been an annual census of the population of eligible FFRDCs since FY 2001. Prior to FY 2001, the survey only included FFRDCs administered by academic institutions. The NCSES master list of FFRDCs identifies FFRDCs. NCSES is responsible for maintaining the master list and queries all federal agencies annually to determine changes, additions, or deletions to the list.

The number of FFRDCs included annually in the survey population since 1979 is as follows:

Fiscal Year	Number of FFRDCs
1979 ⁺	19
1980 ⁺	19
1981 ⁺	19
1982 ⁺	19
1983 ⁺	19
1984 ⁺	17
1985 ⁺	17
1986 ⁺	17
1987 ⁺	18
1988 ⁺	18
1989 ⁺	18
1990 ⁺	18
1991 ⁺	19
1992 ⁺	19
1993 ⁺	19
1994 ⁺	18
1995 ⁺	18
1996 ⁺	18
1997 ⁺	18
1998 ⁺	17
1999 ⁺	17
2000 ⁺	16
2001	36

Fiscal Year	Number of FFRDCs
2002	36
2003	36
2004	36
2005	37
2006	37
2007	38
2008	38
2009	39
2010	40
2011	41
2012	40
2013	41
2014	41
2015	42
2016	42
2017	42
2018	42
2019	42
2020	42
2021	43
2022	42
2023	42
2024	42
2025	41

⁺ This year included only FFRDCs administered by academic institutions.

For a complete list of FY 2025 surveyed institutions, see the FY 2025 Survey Methodology Report.

2. FFRDC R&D SURVEY (FY 2010–Present)

2.1. Survey Instrument and Data Availability

With the introduction of the FFRDC R&D Survey in FY 2010, a number of changes were made to the questionnaire. Three new questions were added to the survey, and clinical trials and research training grants were explicitly included in the definition of R&D. In FY 2015, the question requesting federally financed R&D expenditures from ARRA funds was removed from the survey. In FY 2016, NCSSES added a question asking for R&D expenditures funded by seven specific federal agencies. In FY 2019, NCSSES added a question asking which federal agencies not specifically listed in the previous question funded the expenditures. In FY 2022, NCSSES reformatted the questionnaire to combine those two questions (Question 2). In FY 2022, NCSSES also added a question (Question 6) asking for full-time equivalents (FTEs) and headcounts for personnel by R&D function.

2.1.1. Key Variables

The FY 2025 FFRDC R&D Expenditures Survey consisted of six questions requesting information on expenditures from current funds for separately budgeted R&D activities during the organization's 2025 fiscal year.

- **Question 1** requested that organizations report their total current expenditures for separately budgeted R&D by source of funds.
- **Question 2** requested that organizations report their federally financed R&D expenditures by federal agency. This question included a list of seven specific federal agencies and 10 additional spaces to list any other federal agencies funding R&D expenditures and the amount funded.
- **Question 3** requested the amount of federal and nonfederal R&D expenditures that were considered basic research, applied research, and/or experimental development.
- **Question 4** requested that institutions report their total R&D expenditures by type of direct and indirect cost.
- **Question 5** requested the institution's total operating budget, excluding capital construction costs.
- **Question 6** requested FTEs and headcounts for personnel by R&D function.
- **Question 7** requested the month that the FFRDC's fiscal year ended.

2.1.2. Changes to the Survey for FY 2025

There were no changes to the FFRDC survey questionnaire in FY 2025.

2.1.3. Excluded Data

Some data collected as part of the FFRDC R&D Survey are not included in the public use data files. At the discretion of NCSES, information received from individual institutions regarding cost elements of R&D, their total operating budget, their FTEs and headcounts of personnel by R&D function, and their fiscal year end month is not published or released.

2.1.4. Data Imputation

Prior to FY 2025 all FFRDC submitted key survey data and there was no need for imputation of missing data in public use files. For FY 2025 one FFRDC did not respond by the closing date of the survey. For that organization R&D expenditures were imputed by applying inflator and deflator factors to the prior year's key values. The key values were total R&D expenditures and total executed operating budget. Imputation factors were ratios derived from the 2-year trend data of responding organizations with similar characteristics, including sponsoring agency and activity type on the NSF Master Government List of FFRDCs. Other values that were not identified as key values were imputed by applying ratios derived from the organization's previous year data. A status code in the data file indicates if a particular value is imputed. See additional information about the imputation procedures in the FY 2025 Methodology Report.

2.2. Public Use Data Files

After completion of the annual data processing cycle, the collected data are stored in files for public use and archival purposes. These files include any corrections to prior-year data that survey respondents have submitted. For each survey year, the data file contains two types of information: institution characteristics and questionnaire response values. The institutional characteristics provide basic identifying information for a given institution. Apart from alphabetic information (e.g., names of institutions, cities), numeric codes represent most of the identifying information in the survey data files. Questionnaire response values contain the numerical responses to the survey questionnaire items. These records are identified by survey questions and row numbers corresponding to the numbers on the FY 2025 questionnaire. All R&D expenditures data items are expressed in thousands of dollars. For each data line on the questionnaire to which a nonzero response has been received, a data record is present. For total lines in each survey question, a data record is present regardless of whether a zero or nonzero response has been received. Since each survey question can have up to three columns of data, the data record has three columns of responses. A status code associated with each data column indicates the source of and/or special treatment for the data. The allowed values, together with their meanings, and file formats are described below.

COLUMN	CONTENTS
inst_id	ID Code
year	Fiscal Year
ncses_inst_id	NCSES Institution ID
toi_code	Type of Institution = FFRDC
ffrdctype	FFRDC Type 1 = Administered by Academic Institution 2 = Administered by Industrial Organization 3 = Administered by Nonprofit Organization
inst_name_long	Institution Name
inst_city	City Name
inst_state_code	State Abbreviation
inst_zip	ZIP Code
questionnaire_no	Survey Question Number
question	Survey Question Description
row	Survey Question Row Description
column	Survey Question Column Description
data	Questionnaire Response Value

COLUMN	CONTENTS
status	Status Code for Data Blank = Normal Response e = Estimated by NCSES i = Imputed by Computer for Nonresponse n = Data Not Available
othinfo	Other Information Specific Federal Agencies Listed in Survey Question 2 (FY 2019 and later)
standardized_ agency_name	Standardized Name for Specific Federal Agency Listed in Question 2

3. FFRDC R&D EXPENDITURES SURVEY (FY 1979–FY 2009)

3.1. Survey Instrument and Data Availability

3.1.1. Key Variables

The FY 2009 FFRDC R&D Expenditures Survey consisted of two items requesting information on R&D expenditures from current funds for separately budgeted R&D activities during the institutions' 2009 fiscal year:

- **Item 1** requested that institutions report their total current expenditures for separately budgeted S&E R&D expenditures by source of funds.
- **Item 2** requested the amount of total expenditures and federally financed expenditures that were considered basic research, applied research, and/or development.

3.1.2. Historical Changes to the Survey Instrument

The following major changes in the survey data items occurred since 1979, the first year of data included in the accompanying data file.

- From FY 1979–89, the survey requested data on capital expenditures for facilities and equipment for research, development, and instruction. Capital expenditures may include fixed or movable furnishings and scientific equipment, facilities ancillary or integral to R&D efforts, and special separate facilities to house S&E apparatuses. These expenditures may also refer to any article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than 2 years and an acquisition cost of \$500 or more per unit. This survey item was removed from the survey in 1990. Because the classification systems and the methods used to capture capital expenditures differed widely among institutions, data analysts should interpret these data with care.
- In FY 1981, a question about expenditures for research equipment by S&E field (Item 3) was added to the survey. It was removed from the FFRDC survey in 2002.
- Beginning in FY 1996, the survey collected data on funds passed through to subrecipients (Item 1a). This item was removed from the FFRDC survey in 2002.

- In FY 2000, an item asking for funds received as a subrecipient was added to the survey (Item 1b). This item was removed from the FFRDC survey in 2002.
- In FY 2007, the character of work question was expanded on the FFRDC version of the survey to include basic research, applied research, and development.

Some of the S&E fields in the questionnaire have also been modified:

- Beginning in FY 1980, data were collected separately for the engineering and environmental science specialties.
- In FY 1990, a metallurgical and materials engineering category was added.
- In FY 1997, a bioengineering/biomedical engineering category was added.

3.1.3. Excluded Data

The public use data file does not include some data collected as part of the R&D expenditures surveys. The public use files also do not include institution-level data collected prior to FY 1979 because they have not been integrated with current databases. Due to incomplete data for FY 1996 Item 1a, expenditures passed through to subrecipients, these data are not included in the public use files. The publicly available data also exclude information categorized as confidential. Information received from individual institutions regarding the distinction between separately budgeted institutional funding and unrecovered indirect costs and cost sharing is not published or released; only aggregate totals appear in tabulations. Similarly, institution-level reports of basic, applied, and developmental research expenditures for FY 2009 and earlier years are not released to the public. Also, data that are collected as part of an optional survey are not published or included in public use data files.

3.1.4. Data Element Availability by Year

The following tables list the data variables included in the public use files by survey year and population type. Data cells that were collected but do not correspond to the current files are not included. Availability is indicated by these symbols:

A = All qualifying FFRDCs

— = Not available (in most cases, not collected)

These lists should be used in conjunction with the survey questionnaire.

Item 1. R&D Expenditures by Source

Line	Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 1979–2009
1100	Total	A
1110	Federal government	A
1125	State and local governments	A
1150	Industry	A

Line	Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 1979–2009
1160	Institution funds	A
1175	All other sources	A

Item 1A. R&D Expenditures Passed Through to Subrecipients

Line	Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 1997–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1900	Total	A	—
1910	To higher education subrecipients	A	—
1920	To other subrecipients	A	—

Item 1b. R&D Expenditures Received as a Subrecipient

Line	Source of Funds	Fiscal Year 2000–01	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1600	Total	A	—
1610	From higher education pass-through entities	A	—
1620	From other pass-through entities	A	—

Item 2. R&D Expenditures by Field

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1979	Fiscal Year 1980–89	Fiscal Year 1990–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1400	Total	A	A	A	—
1410	Engineering	A	A	A	—
1411	Aeronautical and astronautical eng.	—	A	A	—
1418	Bioengineering/ biomedical eng.	—	—	A	—
1412	Chemical eng.	—	A	A	—
1413	Civil eng.	—	A	A	—
1414	Electrical eng.	—	A	A	—
1415	Mechanical eng.	—	A	A	—
1417	Metallurgical and materials eng.	—	—	A	—
1416	Other	—	A	A	—

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1979	Fiscal Year 1980–89	Fiscal Year 1990–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1420	Physical sciences	A	A	A	—
1421	Astronomy	A	A	A	—
1422	Chemistry	A	A	A	—
1423	Physics	A	A	A	—
1424	Other	A	A	A	—
1430	Environmental sciences	A	A	A	—
1431	Atmospheric sciences	—	A	A	—
1432	Earth sciences	—	A	A	—
1433	Oceanography	—	A	A	—
1434	Other	—	A	A	—
1441	Mathematical sciences	A	A	A	—
1442	Computer sciences	A	A	A	—
1450	Life sciences	A	A	A	—
1451	Agricultural sciences	A	A	A	—
1452	Biological sciences	A	A	A	—
1453	Medical sciences	A	A	A	—
1454	Other	A	A	A	—
1460	Psychology	A	A	A	—
1470	Social sciences	A	A	A	—
1471	Economics	A	A	A	—
1472	Political science	A	A	A	—
1473	Sociology	A	A	A	—
1474	Other	A	A	A	—
1480	Other sciences, nec*	A	A	A	—

* nec = not elsewhere classified

Item 3. Current Fund Research Equipment Expenditures by Field

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1981–83	Fiscal Year 1984–89	Fiscal Year 1990–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1800	Total	A	A	A	—
1810	Engineering (total)	A	A	A	—

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1981–83	Fiscal Year 1984–89	Fiscal Year 1990–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1811	Aeronautical & astronautical eng.	A	A	A	—
1818	Bioengineering/biomedical eng.	—	—	A	—
1812	Chemical eng.	A	A	A	—
1813	Civil eng.	A	A	A	—
1814	Electrical eng.	A	A	A	—
1815	Mechanical eng.	A	—	A	—
1817	Metallurgical & materials eng.	—	—	A	—
1816	Other	A	—	A	—
1820	Physical sciences (total)	A	—	A	—
1821	Astronomy	A	—	A	—
1822	Chemistry	A	A	A	—
1823	Physics	A	A	A	—
1824	Other	A	A	A	—
1830	Environmental sciences (total)	A	A	A	—
1831	Atmospheric sciences	A	A	A	—
1832	Earth sciences	A	A	A	—
1833	Oceanography	A	A	A	—
1834	Other	A	A	A	—
1841	Mathematical sciences	A	A	A	—
1842	Computer sciences	A	A	A	—
1850	Life sciences (total)	A	A	A	—
1851	Agricultural sciences	A	A	A	—
1852	Biological sciences	A	A	A	—
1853	Medical sciences	A	A	A	—
1854	Other	A	A	A	—
1860	Psychology (total)	A	A	A	—
1870	Social sciences (total)	A	A	A	—
1871	Economics	A	A	A	—
1872	Political science	A	A	A	—

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1981–83	Fiscal Year 1984–89	Fiscal Year 1990–2001	Fiscal Year 2002–09
1873	Sociology	A	A	A	—
1874	Other	A	A	A	—
1880	Other sciences, nec* (total)	A	A	A	—

* nec = not elsewhere classified

Capital Expenditures by Area

Line	Field of S&E	Fiscal Year 1979–89
1700	Total	A
1710	Engineering	A
1720	Physical sciences	A
1730	Environmental sciences	A
1740	Mathematical & computer sciences	A
1750	Life sciences	A
1760	Psychology	A
1770	Social sciences	A
1780	Other sciences, nec*	A

* nec = not elsewhere classified

3.2. Public Use Data Files

After completion of the annual data processing cycle, the collected data are stored in files for public use and archival purposes. These files include any corrections to prior-year data that survey respondents have submitted. For each survey year, the data file contains two types of information: institution characteristics and questionnaire response values. The institutional characteristics provide basic identifying information for a given institution. Apart from alphabetic information (e.g., names of institutions, cities), most of the identifying information in the survey data files is represented by numeric codes. Questionnaire response values contain the numerical responses to the survey questionnaire items. These records are identified by line numbers corresponding to the line numbers on the FY 2009 questionnaire. It should be noted that although the meaning of some line numbers changed during the period from FY 1972 to FY 2009, the line references for these years have been made consistent with the FY 2009 format to facilitate data trend analyses. All data items are expressed in thousands of dollars. For each data line on the questionnaire to which a nonzero response has been received, a data record is present. For total lines (i.e., line numbers that end in “00”) in each questionnaire item, a data record is present, regardless of whether a zero or nonzero

response has been received. Since each questionnaire line can have up to nine columns of data, the data record has nine columns of responses. A status code associated with each data column indicates the source of and/or special treatment for the data. The data file format is as follows:

COLUMN	CONTENTS
fice	ID Code
fice_combined	Combined ID (“000000” if not to be combined)
year	Fiscal Year
toi_code	Type of Institution 3 = FFRDC
ffrdctype	Type of FFRDC 1 = Administered by Academic Institution 2 = Administered by Industrial Organization 3 = Administered by Nonprofit Organization
inst_name_long	Institution Name
inst_city	City Name
inst_state	State Abbreviation
inst_zip	ZIP Code
questionnaire_no	Survey Question Number
question	Survey Question Description
row	Survey Question Row Description
column	Survey Question Column Description
data	Data
status	Status Code for Data Blank = Normal Response e = Estimated by NCSES i = Imputed by Computer for Nonresponse n = Data Not Available

4. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

4.1. Publications

The data from this survey are summarized in an *InfoBrief* and are published annually in the detailed statistical tables. Data for FY 2008–24 of the FFRDC R&D Survey are available at <http://nces.nsf.gov/surveys/ffrdc-research-development/>. Data from FY 2008 and prior years of the FFRDC R&D Expenditures Survey are included in the Academic R&D Expenditures series of detailed statistical tables, available by fiscal year at <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/rdexpenditures/>.

Data for major elements are available, starting in 1972.

Information from the survey is also included in the series *Science and Engineering Indicators* and *National Patterns of R&D*.

4.2. Electronic Access

All data from this survey are available on the NCSES website. Selected aggregate data are provided in public use data files upon request. Special-purpose data files with selected data variables can be produced to meet particular analytical needs. Individuals interested in special-purpose files should contact the NCSES survey manager.

4.3. Contact for More Information

Learn additional information about this survey by contacting:

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