

TABLE 8-2

Changes in career aspirations of early career doctorates, by position type, employment setting, and doctoral degree characteristics: 2017

(Percent distribution)

Selected characteristic	Number of early career doctorates	Same career aspirations as when doctorate awarded ^a	Different career aspirations than when doctorate awarded
All early career doctorates	186,700	66.1	33.9
Position type ^b			
Faculty	125,600	68.8	31.2
Tenured faculty	27,300	72.6	27.4
Tenure-track faculty	58,500	76.4	23.6
Non-tenure track faculty with rank	13,000	56.4	43.6
Other faculty, no rank or tenure	26,800	54.2	45.8
Postdoctoral scholar	36,400	65.8	34.2
Research scientist or nonfaculty researcher	10,900	56.4	43.6
Other positions	13,800	50.2	49.8
Employment setting			
Academic institution ^c	178,900	66.3	33.7
Very high research activity university	83,000	67.8	32.2
High research activity university	27,500	66.1	33.9
Other college or university	68,500	64.7	35.3
FFRDC	7,800	60.8	39.2
Doctoral degree type			
Professional degree or doctoral equivalent ^d	15,700	62.0	38.0
Research degree	171,100	66.5	33.5
Years since doctoral degree			
1 year or less	36,900	73.3	26.7
2–5 years	82,800	66.0	34.0
6–10 years	67,000	62.3	37.7
Origin of doctoral degree			
U.S. degree	161,800	65.4	34.6
Non-U.S. degree	24,900	70.6	29.4
Field of doctoral degree			
Science and engineering	112,600	66.5	33.5
Biological, agricultural, and environmental life sciences	28,900	61.3	38.7
Agricultural and environmental life sciences	3,900	59.4	40.6
Biological and biomedical sciences	24,900	61.6	38.4
Engineering	17,200	68.2	31.8
Mathematics and computer sciences	12,100	71.9	28.1
Computer and information sciences	5,900	68.2	31.8
Mathematics and statistics	6,200	75.3	24.7
Multidisciplinary fields and science and engineering related fields	2,600	71.8	28.2
Physical sciences, geosciences, atmospheric sciences, and ocean sciences	20,600	65.2	34.8
Psychology and social sciences	31,200	68.7	31.3
Psychology	8,700	64.6	35.4

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(Percent distribution)

Selected characteristic	Number of early career doctorates	Same career aspirations as when doctorate awarded ^a	Different career aspirations than when doctorate awarded
Social sciences	22,400	70.3	29.7
Health	13,400	56.7	43.3
Non-science and engineering	60,700	67.4	32.6
Education	21,100	65.2	34.8
Humanities	15,700	65.1	34.9
Other non-science and engineering	23,900	70.9	29.1
Position tenure			
1 year or less	25,700	66.0	34.0
More than 1 year but less than 5 years	108,600	66.3	33.7
5 years or more	52,400	65.7	34.3

FFRDC = federally funded research and development center.

^a Indicates that the early career doctorate selected the same response option in two different questions on career aspirations; one at the time they completed their degree and the other at the time they completed the survey.

^b Other faculty, no rank or tenure, positions includes all other faculty positions such as instructors, lecturers, and adjuncts. Postdoctoral scholar positions are temporary positions in academe, industry, government, or a nonprofit organization primarily for gaining additional education and training in research. Other positions are diverse but are typically university administrators and staff.

^c Academic institutions include U.S. academic institutions in the Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering that grant master's and doctorate degrees in science, engineering, and health-related fields.

^d Includes medical and related degrees, such as Medical Doctors (MD), Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD), and other professional degrees such as Doctor of Education (EdD).

Note(s):

Counts are rounded to the nearest 100. Percentages are calculated from unrounded counts and rounded to the nearest 10th of a percent. Details may not add to totals because of rounding.

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Early Career Doctorates Survey, 2017.