

Table 5-5

Educational attainment of research doctorate recipients' parents, by sex, citizenship status, ethnicity, race, and broad field of doctorate: 2021

(Number and percent distribution)

| Demographic characteristic and field | Total (number) | Highest level of parental education (%) | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | All | High school or less | Some college ^a | Bachelor's degree | Master's degree | Professional doctorate ^b | Research doctoral degree |
| Doctorate recipients reporting parental education (number) | 44,784 | 44,784 | 6,675 | 5,846 | 11,692 | 9,869 | 3,908 | 6,794 |
| Highest level of parental education ^c | 44,784 | 100.0 | 14.9 | 13.1 | 26.1 | 22.0 | 8.7 | 15.2 |
| Sex | | | | | | | | |
| Male | 24,187 | 100.0 | 16.3 | 12.2 | 26.7 | 21.3 | 8.6 | 14.9 |
| Female | 20,595 | 100.0 | 13.2 | 14.1 | 25.4 | 22.9 | 8.9 | 15.5 |
| Citizenship status | | | | | | | | |
| U.S. citizen or permanent resident | 29,021 | 100.0 | 11.8 | 13.9 | 23.4 | 24.0 | 10.9 | 16.0 |
| Temporary visa holder | 15,744 | 100.0 | 20.6 | 11.4 | 31.2 | 18.4 | 4.7 | 13.7 |
| Ethnicity and race (U.S. citizens and permanent residents) | | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic or Latino | 2,595 | 100.0 | 23.6 | 17.7 | 21.5 | 17.3 | 7.9 | 12.0 |
| Not Hispanic or Latino | | | | | | | | |
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 85 | 100.0 | D | 25.9 | 17.6 | 20.0 | D | 8.2 |
| Asian | 2,786 | 100.0 | 14.2 | 10.3 | 19.9 | 21.8 | 8.0 | 25.7 |
| Black or African American | 2,140 | 100.0 | 22.2 | 23.6 | 19.3 | 19.5 | 5.4 | 10.0 |
| White | 20,045 | 100.0 | 8.9 | 13.0 | 24.6 | 25.7 | 12.2 | 15.6 |
| More than one race | 1,028 | 100.0 | 9.0 | 13.6 | 21.9 | 24.0 | 13.0 | 18.4 |
| Other race or race not reported | 243 | 100.0 | D | 11.5 | 21.4 | 23.5 | D | 19.8 |
| Ethnicity not reported | 99 | 100.0 | 13.1 | 7.1 | 22.2 | 28.3 | 11.1 | 18.2 |
| Field of doctorate | | | | | | | | |
| Science and engineering | 35,752 | 100.0 | 14.4 | 12.5 | 27.1 | 22.4 | 8.8 | 14.8 |
| Agricultural sciences and natural resources | 1,041 | 100.0 | 16.2 | 13.6 | 25.1 | 22.4 | 7.8 | 14.9 |
| Biological and biomedical sciences | 7,403 | 100.0 | 11.7 | 12.5 | 26.4 | 23.4 | 10.9 | 15.0 |
| Computer and information sciences | 1,819 | 100.0 | 14.8 | 10.2 | 31.6 | 21.9 | 5.8 | 15.7 |
| Engineering | 8,212 | 100.0 | 15.6 | 10.2 | 30.3 | 22.7 | 6.4 | 14.9 |
| Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences | 935 | 100.0 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 26.3 | 22.4 | 10.4 | 14.2 |
| Health sciences | 2,190 | 100.0 | 17.2 | 16.6 | 24.1 | 20.1 | 7.7 | 14.2 |
| Mathematics and statistics | 1,660 | 100.0 | 15.9 | 12.0 | 27.5 | 20.4 | 8.4 | 15.8 |
| Multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary sciences | 1,109 | 100.0 | 14.3 | 11.5 | 26.7 | 21.5 | 7.4 | 18.7 |
| Physical sciences | 4,255 | 100.0 | 15.2 | 12.8 | 29.1 | 21.8 | 7.7 | 13.4 |
| Psychology | 2,949 | 100.0 | 12.1 | 16.2 | 23.0 | 23.7 | 12.6 | 12.5 |
| Social sciences | 4,179 | 100.0 | 15.3 | 12.8 | 23.2 | 22.0 | 10.3 | 16.3 |
| Non-science and engineering | 9,032 | 100.0 | 16.9 | 15.3 | 22.1 | 20.6 | 8.6 | 16.5 |
| Business | 1,085 | 100.0 | 19.5 | 12.2 | 25.6 | 18.3 | 5.8 | 18.5 |
| Education | 3,073 | 100.0 | 19.8 | 19.6 | 21.5 | 19.0 | 5.8 | 14.4 |
| Humanities | 2,603 | 100.0 | 13.9 | 13.1 | 21.2 | 21.9 | 11.3 | 18.6 |
| Visual and performing arts | 651 | 100.0 | 8.9 | 9.4 | 24.1 | 27.2 | 15.2 | 15.2 |
| Other ^d | 1,620 | 100.0 | 17.8 | 15.2 | 21.4 | 20.8 | 8.6 | 16.2 |

D = suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information.

^a Includes those who attended college but did not earn a bachelor's degree.

^b Includes professional doctorates such as MD, DDS, DVM, JD, PsyD, DDiv.

^c Total count excludes those who did not report either parent's education and those who reported "not applicable or unknown" for both parents' education. If a respondent provided data for one parent, that response is used; for respondents who provided data for two parents, the higher attainment is reported in this table.

^d Includes other non-science and engineering fields not shown separately.

Note(s):

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. Beginning in 2021, a modified version of the 2020 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes was used in the survey data collection, and the new broad, major, and detailed fields were used in tables reporting only the most recent data year. Therefore, the field of doctorate data in 2021 may not be comparable to prior years; see the "Technical Notes" for more information, table A-4 for a summary of SED-CIP codes in the new SED field taxonomy, table A-5 for a full list of SED-CIP codes in the new field taxonomy, and table A-6 for the SED-CIP code crosswalk to the historical field taxonomy.

Source(s):

National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, Survey of Earned Doctorates.