

Table 2-6. Postgraduation plans and employment sector of research doctorate recipients with definite plans in the United States, by trend broad field of doctorate: Selected years, 1995–2025

(Number and percent)

Type of plan, sector, and year	All fields	Science and engineering											Non-science and engineering				
		Total	Agricultural sciences and natural resources	Biological and biomedical sciences	Computer and information sciences	Engineering	Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences	Health sciences	Mathematics and statistics	Physical sciences	Psychology	Social sciences	Total	Business	Education	Humanities and arts	Other non-science and engineering
U.S. definite commitments and reporting type of plan (number)																	
1995	21,854	14,033	523	3,383	523	2,549	322	596	543	2,005	1,954	1,635	7,821	777	4,053	2,412	579
2000	24,255	16,092	547	3,873	541	2,970	398	801	660	2,068	2,183	2,051	8,163	683	4,076	2,798	606
2005	24,446	16,665	530	4,068	641	3,230	431	852	708	2,154	2,014	2,037	7,781	691	3,761	2,661	668
2010	25,790	18,939	543	4,667	880	3,843	507	1,026	880	2,342	2,006	2,245	6,851	753	3,041	2,366	691
2015	24,968	18,967	618	3,976	1,010	4,266	552	1,037	950	2,178	2,023	2,357	6,001	809	2,462	2,120	610
2020	31,821	24,872	795	4,854	1,498	5,981	739	1,489	1,218	2,907	2,566	2,825	6,949	882	2,905	2,318	844
2021	29,739	23,807	769	4,912	1,509	5,757	651	1,368	1,110	2,767	2,441	2,523	5,932	732	2,533	1,888	779
2022	34,666	27,928	872	5,754	1,713	6,970	753	1,542	1,328	3,372	2,621	3,003	6,738	849	2,782	2,178	929
2023	35,272	28,054	893	5,755	1,714	7,049	818	1,481	1,354	3,360	2,598	3,032	7,218	973	2,944	2,316	985
2024	33,734	26,754	843	5,379	1,834	6,527	785	1,457	1,182	3,051	2,668	3,028	6,980	828	2,867	2,285	1,000
2025	32,305	25,640	853	5,087	2,008	6,239	716	1,413	1,154	2,780	2,553	2,837	6,665	816	2,795	2,144	910
Non-postdoc employment commitments (%)																	
1995	70.0	55.6	62.0	19.0	83.2	74.1	47.5	81.9	72.7	34.1	68.9	88.0	96.0	97.6	96.5	94.4	96.2
2000	71.1	59.0	64.2	24.2	91.1	78.7	48.0	82.5	67.4	43.7	63.6	87.6	94.9	96.8	95.9	93.2	93.9
2005	64.1	50.5	57.0	18.6	77.4	65.9	39.0	77.0	57.9	33.0	52.4	85.5	93.0	97.3	94.4	90.0	92.2
2010	57.0	44.8	48.1	18.6	68.5	53.9	37.9	66.7	52.0	25.7	47.4	80.3	90.7	95.6	93.4	86.5	88.4
2015	60.7	52.1	51.3	25.0	79.9	64.7	36.2	68.8	58.6	38.1	42.1	78.5	88.1	95.4	91.2	82.4	85.4
2020	61.4	54.2	53.7	32.7	81.0	64.1	37.5	64.0	62.6	43.6	40.0	75.2	87.3	94.7	90.4	81.8	84.2
2021	58.5	52.0	49.7	34.3	77.9	61.4	34.3	61.4	58.0	40.2	39.7	71.7	84.7	90.7	90.0	76.1	82.5
2022	61.7	56.2	49.9	40.5	79.8	67.2	35.2	65.9	57.2	50.1	39.6	70.3	84.6	91.5	89.1	77.0	82.6
2023	63.7	58.3	54.2	42.2	80.9	70.1	35.8	65.4	60.0	53.5	41.1	71.6	84.6	90.4	88.7	76.9	84.6
2024	60.6	54.3	52.3	35.5	74.9	64.4	39.0	61.3	57.2	45.1	44.3	71.5	85.0	92.6	89.2	78.3	81.7
2025	60.1	53.5	49.0	31.0	78.7	63.6	37.2	64.1	58.5	43.2	42.0	72.2	85.4	93.5	89.5	77.5	84.5
Academe (%)																	
1995	36.7	23.6	25.0	9.3	34.0	14.2	16.8	51.2	51.7	9.1	25.5	61.3	60.3	79.8	46.7	75.4	67.0
2000	34.6	22.3	26.5	10.0	33.3	11.6	19.1	45.6	40.3	7.9	23.1	56.4	58.8	73.8	45.9	72.7	65.0
2005	34.8	22.6	21.7	8.8	35.6	12.2	15.8	51.4	37.7	7.5	25.5	59.9	60.9	75.5	47.4	74.3	68.7
2010	30.0	18.8	19.7	8.2	19.3	9.1	10.1	38.6	29.9	7.5	22.0	54.2	61.0	74.2	49.8	69.9	65.6
2015	29.5	19.1	22.0	9.0	18.6	9.4	12.7	41.5	26.7	8.0	19.2	51.8	62.3	77.1	54.1	64.8	67.0
2020	24.3	15.5	21.1	8.9	18.1	6.6	9.5	33.0	20.6	6.3	16.2	42.2	55.7	73.2	49.3	57.2	55.3
2021	21.0	13.4	14.0	7.7	18.6	7.1	9.2	29.2	17.8	5.0	13.9	34.8	51.4	66.0	48.7	49.3	52.0

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(Number and percent)

Type of plan, sector, and year	All fields	Science and engineering											Non-science and engineering				
		Total	Agricultural sciences and natural resources	Biological and biomedical sciences	Computer and information sciences	Engineering	Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences	Health sciences	Mathematics and statistics	Physical sciences	Psychology	Social sciences	Total	Business	Education	Humanities and arts	Other non-science and engineering
2022	20.1	12.6	13.8	7.6	14.8	6.8	7.4	29.9	15.1	5.4	13.5	32.5	50.9	66.8	47.8	48.6	51.1
2023	21.7	14.1	17.0	9.3	17.5	6.8	9.5	31.3	16.2	6.2	15.7	36.5	51.5	67.2	45.6	52.4	51.9
2024	24.0	16.4	19.9	10.9	20.6	8.9	11.3	31.1	22.1	8.1	17.0	38.4	53.2	70.7	48.6	53.0	52.2
2025	24.0	16.5	20.0	10.8	19.3	8.9	10.9	32.6	22.4	7.8	17.0	39.4	52.7	68.5	46.9	53.1	55.2
Government (%)																	
1995	5.7	6.4	11.3	3.2	3.4	8.1	13.0	6.9	3.1	3.3	10.1	9.1	4.4	2.2	5.8	1.5	9.2
2000	5.2	6.1	9.0	3.7	3.9	7.1	9.8	9.1	2.3	3.0	8.4	8.7	3.6	2.5	4.4	1.8	8.1
2005	4.4	4.9	11.9	2.5	2.7	6.2	7.4	6.3	2.7	2.3	5.1	8.7	3.5	3.5	3.9	2.0	6.6
2010	5.1	5.8	11.4	2.9	4.5	6.9	8.9	6.0	3.5	2.9	7.7	10.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	1.8	7.2
2015	4.3	4.8	7.4	2.4	3.5	6.3	4.9	5.5	2.8	1.8	4.6	9.4	2.9	3.3	3.3	1.7	4.8
2020	4.8	5.0	10.4	2.3	3.3	5.4	9.9	6.2	3.4	2.8	4.1	10.2	3.8	3.3	3.4	2.4	9.2
2021	4.5	4.6	6.9	2.8	2.7	4.4	9.5	5.6	2.4	2.1	4.8	11.3	4.0	4.1	3.8	2.7	8.0
2022	4.2	4.3	7.0	2.6	2.5	4.3	8.9	6.3	2.3	2.0	3.9	9.5	3.7	3.8	4.0	2.2	6.4
2023	4.3	4.5	7.4	3.0	2.4	4.3	7.8	5.4	3.3	2.6	5.4	8.8	3.7	3.1	3.7	2.4	7.3
2024	4.6	4.9	7.5	3.1	1.9	4.6	10.2	5.1	2.5	2.9	6.0	10.2	3.3	3.5	3.0	2.5	5.9
2025	4.3	4.4	6.0	2.6	2.8	4.3	8.2	5.9	3.2	2.0	4.8	8.8	4.1	4.0	3.8	2.8	8.1
Industry or business (%) ^a																	
1995	15.2	20.0	21.4	4.8	42.6	49.0	14.3	13.6	16.0	19.9	15.7	8.8	6.5	12.9	5.8	4.8	10.2
2000	18.5	24.4	23.6	8.0	50.6	57.3	16.8	15.2	21.1	30.6	14.2	11.8	6.9	16.8	5.5	6.0	9.4
2005	14.6	19.0	18.5	5.8	37.1	45.3	12.8	11.6	15.4	21.7	10.9	8.8	5.2	14.3	3.8	3.8	8.8
2010	13.3	16.2	12.5	5.6	41.7	34.7	17.2	12.2	14.7	13.5	9.6	8.0	5.3	11.8	4.2	4.2	6.4
2015	19.7	24.1	18.9	11.3	54.8	46.6	15.9	9.6	26.5	26.6	10.7	9.5	5.7	12.0	4.1	4.7	7.5
2020	24.6	29.2	17.2	18.8	56.5	49.3	15.4	15.0	36.0	32.6	11.8	13.8	8.1	13.9	6.8	6.0	12.3
2021	25.3	29.4	24.1	20.9	53.8	46.5	12.6	15.5	34.7	31.0	14.2	16.2	8.9	16.5	7.3	6.7	12.6
2022	29.7	34.6	24.3	26.9	58.8	53.0	15.5	18.4	35.8	40.2	15.1	18.7	9.8	16.6	7.7	8.4	13.0
2023	29.8	34.9	23.7	26.0	56.8	55.8	15.2	18.0	37.7	42.5	13.7	16.6	9.6	15.6	8.6	7.0	13.2
2024	24.5	28.5	20.2	18.4	49.0	47.8	14.5	16.1	28.3	32.0	14.1	13.3	9.3	14.7	7.6	8.0	12.8
2025	24.1	28.2	17.6	14.9	54.1	47.5	14.9	14.5	30.2	30.7	13.6	14.6	8.4	15.6	6.9	6.2	11.6
Nonprofit organization (%)																	
1995	4.4	3.6	2.1	1.4	2.3	1.6	2.2	7.9	1.1	0.6	12.2	4.8	5.9	1.5	4.9	8.6	7.6
2000	4.2	3.6	2.9	1.2	D	1.4	D	9.1	1.5	0.9	10.4	6.6	5.4	1.8	4.4	7.0	7.9
2005	3.4	2.8	3.4	1.1	1.2	1.5	2.1	7.0	1.3	0.8	6.9	5.4	4.7	1.9	4.0	6.1	6.0
2010	3.0	2.4	2.8	1.2	1.3	1.7	1.6	7.7	1.5	0.7	4.4	4.8	4.5	2.7	4.2	5.3	5.2
2015	3.7	3.1	2.1	1.7	2.2	2.0	2.4	10.7	1.7	0.8	5.2	6.0	5.5	2.0	5.3	7.3	5.1

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		Total	Agricultural sciences and natural resources	Biological and biomedical sciences	Computer and information sciences	Engineering	Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences	Health sciences	Mathematics and statistics	Physical sciences	Psychology	Social sciences	Total	Business	Education	Humanities and arts	Other non-science and engineering
2020	3.7	3.0	3.4	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.4	8.3	1.1	1.4	4.9	6.1	6.3	1.9	5.8	8.8	5.6
2021	3.9	3.2	2.9	2.2	1.9	2.3	1.8	8.9	2.0	1.4	4.4	6.7	6.9	2.5	5.8	9.7	7.6
2022	4.0	3.3	3.6	2.6	2.3	2.0	2.3	9.0	2.1	1.7	4.2	6.8	7.3	1.9	6.7	9.9	7.8
2023	4.1	3.5	4.1	3.1	2.7	2.3	2.2	8.5	1.7	1.5	4.2	7.2	6.8	2.3	6.9	8.4	7.5
2024	3.9	3.1	3.8	2.5	2.3	1.9	2.2	6.7	2.3	1.5	4.1	6.8	7.0	1.8	7.5	8.4	6.8
2025	4.1	3.2	3.9	2.1	1.4	2.1	2.7	9.3	1.6	1.7	4.3	6.9	7.4	3.1	6.9	10.2	6.2
Other sector or unknown (%) ^b																	
1995	8.0	2.0	2.1	0.4	0.8	1.2	1.2	2.3	0.7	1.1	5.4	4.0	18.8	1.2	33.4	4.1	2.2
2000	8.5	2.6	2.2	1.3	D	1.1	D	3.5	2.3	1.3	7.5	4.0	20.2	1.9	35.6	5.8	3.5
2005	6.9	1.3	1.5	0.4	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.6	0.8	0.6	4.1	2.8	18.7	2.0	35.2	3.8	2.1
2010	5.7	1.7	1.7	0.6	1.7	1.5	0.2	2.1	2.5	1.0	3.7	3.3	16.8	3.7	31.9	5.3	4.1
2015	3.6	1.0	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.4	0.4	1.4	0.8	0.8	2.4	1.9	11.6	1.0	24.3	3.9	1.0
2020	4.0	1.4	1.5	0.9	1.5	0.7	1.4	1.5	1.5	0.6	3.0	3.0	13.4	2.3	25.0	7.4	1.8
2021	3.8	1.4	1.8	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.1	2.2	1.1	0.7	2.4	2.8	13.4	1.6	24.4	7.7	2.4
2022	3.7	1.5	1.3	0.7	1.4	1.0	1.1	2.3	1.7	0.9	2.8	2.8	12.9	2.5	22.9	7.9	4.3
2023	3.7	1.3	1.9	0.8	1.5	0.9	1.1	2.2	1.2	0.8	2.1	2.6	12.9	2.3	24.0	6.7	4.7
2024	3.6	1.4	0.9	0.5	1.1	1.1	0.8	2.2	2.0	0.7	3.1	2.7	12.1	1.9	22.5	6.4	4.0
2025	3.6	1.2	1.5	0.6	1.1	0.8	0.4	1.8	1.0	1.0	2.3	2.4	12.9	2.3	24.9	5.2	3.4
Postdoctoral training commitments (%)																	
1995	30.0	44.4	38.0	81.0	16.8	25.9	52.5	18.1	27.3	65.9	31.1	12.0	4.0	2.4	3.5	5.6	3.8
2000	28.9	41.0	35.8	75.8	8.9	21.3	52.0	17.5	32.6	56.3	36.4	12.4	5.1	3.2	4.1	6.8	6.1
2005	35.9	49.5	43.0	81.4	22.6	34.1	61.0	23.0	42.1	67.0	47.6	14.5	7.0	2.7	5.6	10.0	7.8
2010	43.0	55.2	51.9	81.4	31.5	46.1	62.1	33.3	48.0	74.3	52.6	19.7	9.3	4.4	6.6	13.5	11.6
2015	39.3	47.9	48.7	75.0	20.1	35.3	63.8	31.2	41.4	61.9	57.9	21.5	11.9	4.6	8.8	17.6	14.6
2020	38.6	45.8	46.3	67.3	19.0	35.9	62.5	36.0	37.4	56.4	60.0	24.8	12.7	5.3	9.6	18.2	15.8
2021	41.5	48.0	50.3	65.7	22.1	38.6	65.7	38.6	42.0	59.8	60.3	28.3	15.3	9.3	10.0	23.9	17.5
2022	38.3	43.8	50.1	59.5	20.2	32.8	64.8	34.1	42.8	49.9	60.4	29.7	15.4	8.5	10.9	23.0	17.4
2023	36.3	41.7	45.8	57.8	19.1	29.9	64.2	34.6	40.0	46.5	58.9	28.4	15.4	9.6	11.3	23.1	15.4
2024	39.4	45.7	47.7	64.5	25.1	35.6	61.0	38.7	42.8	54.9	55.7	28.5	15.0	7.4	10.8	21.7	18.3
2025	39.9	46.5	51.0	69.0	21.3	36.4	62.8	35.9	41.5	56.8	58.0	27.8	14.6	6.5	10.5	22.5	15.5
Academe (%)																	
1995	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
2000	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
2005	29.6	40.7	35.3	69.6	17.3	27.7	46.6	18.2	39.3	54.9	34.3	12.7	5.7	2.7	3.9	8.9	6.3

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		Total	Agricultural sciences and natural resources	Biological and biomedical sciences	Computer and information sciences	Engineering	Geosciences, atmospheric, and ocean sciences	Health sciences	Mathematics and statistics	Physical sciences	Psychology	Social sciences	Total	Business	Education	Humanities and arts	Other non-science and engineering
2010	35.1	44.9	41.4	70.0	25.6	36.6	47.5	26.5	43.9	58.7	35.2	17.6	7.9	3.6	4.9	12.3	10.6
2015	31.4	38.0	39.6	62.9	15.2	28.2	49.3	25.8	37.7	48.9	34.4	18.7	10.4	3.8	7.1	16.3	12.1
2020	29.8	34.9	37.7	53.6	14.2	27.4	44.9	28.9	32.8	42.4	35.1	22.4	11.5	4.8	8.1	17.0	14.7
2021	32.9	37.7	42.9	53.5	18.5	30.2	49.3	31.1	36.7	46.8	36.8	25.7	13.8	8.7	8.4	22.4	15.8
2022	30.2	34.1	40.7	48.1	16.7	25.6	48.1	27.5	38.1	37.5	36.5	27.0	14.0	7.8	9.3	21.4	15.9
2023	28.5	32.3	36.7	46.5	14.8	23.5	47.7	28.3	34.7	35.0	34.8	26.1	13.9	9.0	9.3	21.6	14.3
2024	31.7	36.5	37.8	53.6	21.4	28.6	45.0	31.2	38.7	42.7	35.0	26.1	13.4	6.4	8.9	20.2	16.5
2025	32.6	37.7	44.3	59.6	16.5	29.7	49.4	30.1	37.1	45.5	34.8	25.4	12.8	5.8	8.7	20.5	13.7
Outside of academe or unknown (%) ^c																	
1995	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
2000	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na	na
2005	6.4	8.7	7.7	11.8	5.3	6.3	14.4	4.8	2.8	12.1	13.4	1.8	1.3	0.0	1.7	1.1	1.5
2010	7.9	10.3	10.5	11.4	5.9	9.5	14.6	6.8	4.1	15.7	17.4	2.1	1.4	0.8	1.7	1.2	1.0
2015	7.9	9.9	9.1	12.1	4.9	7.1	14.5	5.4	3.7	13.0	23.5	2.8	1.5	0.7	1.7	1.3	2.5
2020	8.8	10.9	8.6	13.6	4.8	8.5	17.6	7.1	4.5	14.0	24.9	2.4	1.3	0.6	1.5	1.2	1.1
2021	8.6	10.4	7.4	12.2	3.6	8.5	16.4	7.5	5.3	13.1	23.4	2.7	1.5	0.5	1.6	1.6	1.7
2022	8.1	9.7	9.4	11.4	3.5	7.2	16.7	6.6	4.7	12.4	23.9	2.7	1.5	0.7	1.6	1.6	1.5
2023	7.8	9.4	9.1	11.3	4.3	6.4	16.5	6.3	5.2	11.5	24.1	2.3	1.5	0.5	2.0	1.5	1.1
2024	7.7	9.2	9.8	10.9	3.7	7.0	16.1	7.5	4.1	12.1	20.7	2.4	1.7	1.0	2.0	1.5	1.8
2025	7.3	8.8	6.7	9.3	4.8	6.7	13.4	5.7	4.4	11.3	23.1	2.4	1.7	0.7	1.8	2.1	1.8

D = suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information. na = not applicable; sector for postdoctoral training commitments was not collected prior to 2004.

^a Industry or business includes self-employment.

^b Other sector or unknown is mainly composed of elementary and secondary schools.

^c Outside of academe includes industry or business, government, nonprofits, other and unknown.

Note(s):

Percentages are based on the number of doctorate recipients with definite commitments in the United States and with a known type of commitment (postdoc or employment). Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100. The survey data collection for the field of study changed in 2021, which may affect the data comparison across years. This table uses a trend field taxonomy that facilitates trend comparisons with prior years (see table A-5). For more information about the field taxonomy changes, see the "Technical Notes."

Source(s):

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