

The South African National Survey of Research and Experimental Development

Frequently Asked Questions



GENERAL TOPICS

What is the purpose of the R&D Survey?

The Survey collects data annually on financial and human resource inputs into R&D activities performed in-house in South Africa by firms, universities, science councils/public research institutes, government departments, and NPOs. Data is used across sectors for planning, monitoring and benchmarking purposes. The information it yields is also used by Government to support evidence-informed decision-making on R&D and innovation policy.

Who is responsible for conducting the Survey?

The Survey is administered by the Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (CeSTII), on behalf of the Department of Science and Technology (DST), and with quality assurance provided by Statistics South Africa (Stats SA). CeSTII is a specialised research unit based at the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), with more than 15 years of experience conducting STI surveys in South Africa.

Is the Survey compulsory?

Yes. The R&D Survey is a component of South Africa's Official Statistics, as defined in the Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999 and, as such, your organisation is required to participate.

Are Survey results made publicly available?

Yes. The R&D Survey team produce two reports annually: a statistical report and a main analysis report. Reports are disseminated widely and are also publically accessible on the HSRC website (<http://www.hsrc.ac.za/en/departments/cestii/sa-national-survey-of-research-and-experimental-development>) and the website of the Department of Science and Technology (<http://www.dst.gov.za/publications-policies/r-d-reports>).

In what ways are Survey reports used?

Access to R&D indicators, such as those provided by Survey reports, provide users with a unique ability to benchmark—by sector, nationally and globally. This in turn can assist policy makers to set strategic direction, engage in responsive policy development and organisational planning, as well as to promote competitive advantage. Survey reports are also used for the development of research policy in areas such as the setting of priorities, determining government research funding investment, science education, and the development of incentive schemes for R&D and innovation in the private sector.



PARTICIPATION TOPICS

Is data supplied to the Survey protected and securely stored?

All information supplied to the Survey is incorporated under the same legislation protecting the National Census and similar data initiatives of national importance (Statistics Act No. 6 of 1999). No individual data is shared with any party outside of the immediate Survey Team, and all data are stored on state-of-the art ICT infrastructure, protected by stringent data encryption policies.

How was my organisation chosen to respond to the Survey?

Organisations (public and private) that are known to or likely to perform R&D activities are automatically included as respondents in the Survey.

What types of organisation are required to participate in the Survey?

All organisations in which R&D is performed and that are classified as either Business Enterprises, Higher Education Institutions, Science Councils/Public Research Institutes, Government Departments, or Not-for-Profit organisations.

My organisation is not engaged in R&D activities. Is our participation in the Survey still required?

Yes. If your organisation or business has not performed or funded R&D activities for the survey year in question, please respond to Part 1 of the questionnaire that asks whether or not your organisation performed R&D in the survey year in question. You may then return the questionnaire to our survey team, who will update your R&D status accordingly.

My organisation outsources its R&D. Is our participation in the Survey still required?

Yes. Please participate by completing the information on Outsourcing in the questionnaire.

There is no dedicated department for R&D in my organisation. Is our participation in the Survey still required?

You do not need an R&D department to be able to provide answers for the questionnaire. If your R&D is spread across your whole organisation, please provide estimate answers to the questions in the questionnaire. Our in-house experts are available to assist you in developing estimations.

Who within my organisation is responsible for completing the survey questionnaire?

Questionnaires are typically directed by our research teams to the senior management of an organisation, who may, in turn, wish to appoint a relevant contact person to provide the data and/or coordinate the process of data provision. Usually the heads of R&D departments, human resource managers as well as financial managers would be involved in completing the questionnaires, which is why appointing an in-house coordinator can be a useful approach to getting the job done efficiently and effectively. CeSTII researchers are available to your in-house team to assist in any way possible.

How long does it take to complete the survey instrument?

The length of time to complete this survey questionnaire varies, depending on the size of your company/organisation, the availability of information, as well as the complexity of your entity's R&D operations and records. It is important to note that responding becomes much more efficient once your organisation has previously participated in this survey.

What should I do if the individuals within my organisation do not have access to some of the data being requested in the questionnaire?

Provide your best estimate if accurate data are not available. It is a recommendation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to use estimated data when exact data is not available. CeSTII researchers are available to your in-house team to assist should it be required.

R&D is dispersed throughout our company and employee-base. How do we report this?

If your R&D is spread across your whole organisation, please provide estimated answers to the questions in the survey instrument.

I have lost or misplaced my organisation's questionnaire. What should I do?

If you have lost or misplaced your questionnaire, please email Dr Neo Molotja nmolotja@hsrc.ac.za or call +27 (0)21 466 7818 to request a new one.

Our organisation requires more time to complete the questionnaire. Can we request this?

If you cannot complete the questionnaire by the due date, please email Dr Neo Molotja nmolotja@hsrc.ac.za or call +27 (0)21 466 7818 to discuss your requirement.

How do I return my completed questionnaire?

If submitting electronically, please return your completed questionnaire to your contact person at CeSTII whose details appear on the questionnaire cover. Postal returns should be addressed to: The R&D Survey Team, Private Office Box 15200, Vlaeberg, 8018.



TECHNICAL TOPICS

How often is the Survey issued?

The Survey is performed annually. This means that respondents can, for the foreseeable future, expect to be contacted on an annual basis. All efforts are made to ensure that timelines for completion of questionnaires are appropriate within each organisation surveyed.

What constitutes Research and Experimental Development (R&D)?

The definition of R&D in the R&D Survey is adopted from the OECD, which defines R&D according to the Frascati Manual. **Research:** Creative work and original investigation undertaken on a systematic basis to gain new knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society (Frascati Manual, 2015). **Development:** Application of research findings or other scientific knowledge for the creation of new or significantly improved products or processes (Frascati Manual, 2015). Additional information about the definition of R&D used in the Survey is available on request from CeSTII. The OECD's Frascati Manual is also available for download from the OECD website.

How will the data my organisation provides through the Survey be used by the HSRC?

The data from the Survey is used for policy driven research and academic purposes. Individual data submissions gathered for the purposes of the survey are confidential and are never disseminated.

Is it possible to have access to micro data on which the R&D Survey reports are based?

Micro data are confidential data which contain information about individual statistical units. The current framework enables access to aggregated data only.