

Pilot Study of the Emerging Frontiers in Research and Innovation (EFRI) Program's Monitoring System

Client: National Science Foundation

Project Overview

The Emerging Frontiers in Research and Innovation (EFRI) Program promotes innovative interdisciplinary initiatives in engineering research and education. The EFRI office pursues research projects that embrace new frontiers in engineering research and provides important support for those projects that develop transformative ideas in areas where there is a demonstrated need. The goal of this initiative is to create a new outcome monitoring system to streamline the data collection process and to provide clear measures of how the funding program continues to meet the goals of EFRI.



The National Science Foundation (NSF) contracted with Insight to launch a new survey on key program outcomes for past, present, and future EFRI grantees. NSF expects to field the survey over several waves. To establish a valid and reliable survey, Insight has provided an evaluation of the program goals and logic model, reformulation of survey questions to meet program objectives, internal checks for redundancy with other NSF databases, and cognitive interviews on survey logic in addition to pre-testing on the survey instrument. The project will conclude with a new program monitoring system, data collection from all EFRI grantees, and a report and briefing on the results of the first administration of the new EFRI survey.

Insight has undertaken the following tasks to establish a reliable survey monitoring system for EFRI grantees:

- Logic model assessment and refinement, targeting measurable outcomes for the program
- Review and refinement of the existing survey instrument
- In-depth interviews with NSF staff members to identify existing data sources and key items for data collection
- Cognitive interviews with a targeted sample of EFRI grantees and transcription and coding of completed interviews
- Online data collection with EFRI principal investigators, co-investigators, and students
- Collection of the first wave of survey results as well as an assessment of survey and item response rates

Core Activities

Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis; Cognitive Interviews; Web Survey; Data Collection; Report Development and Presentation

Products

- Report on cognitive interview results
- Creation of an online survey instrument
- Database housing the first wave of EFRI grantee responses
- Final report summarizing survey results and future data collection recommendations