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Estimates of academic S&E doctoral researchers and graduate research assistants, by degree field and work activity: 1973–2003

Field	All academic employment		Researchers		Research as primary activity		Research assistants	
	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution
All fields								
1973	118.0	100.0	82.3	100.0	27.8	100.0	35.9	100.0
1975	134.1	100.0	90.6	100.0	30.8	100.0	40.0	100.0
1977	145.4	100.0	85.0	100.0	37.0	100.0	43.7	100.0
1979	155.3	100.0	90.0	100.0	41.3	100.0	49.0	100.0
1981	167.1	100.0	100.7	100.0	46.5	100.0	52.7	100.0
1983	176.1	100.0	104.7	100.0	48.9	100.0	54.9	100.0
1985	190.2	100.0	115.2	100.0	55.9	100.0	61.0	100.0
1987	195.9	100.0	144.0	100.0	66.5	100.0	70.2	100.0
1989	206.6	100.0	151.6	100.0	72.2	100.0	79.0	100.0
1991	210.6	100.0	156.6	100.0	73.9	100.0	85.2	100.0
1993	213.8	100.0	150.1	100.0	80.2	100.0	90.2	100.0
1995	217.5	100.0	153.5	100.0	83.0	100.0	89.9	100.0
1997	232.5	100.0	164.7	100.0	88.6	100.0	88.0	100.0
1999	240.2	100.0	168.1	100.0	91.4	100.0	91.3	100.0
2001	245.5	100.0	172.5	100.0	93.8	100.0	99.9	100.0
2003	258.3	100.0	178.7	100.0	102.9	100.0	114.3	100.0
Physical sciences								
1973	22.1	18.7	16.3	19.8	5.9	21.3	6.3	17.5
1975	23.6	17.6	16.9	18.7	6.4	20.8	6.4	16.1
1977	25.0	17.2	16.3	19.2	7.9	21.3	6.8	15.6
1979	24.6	15.9	15.4	17.1	7.5	18.3	7.8	15.9
1981	25.3	15.2	16.3	16.2	8.0	17.1	8.6	16.3
1983	25.1	14.3	16.1	15.3	7.7	15.9	9.1	16.7
1985	27.0	14.2	17.7	15.4	9.4	16.8	10.3	16.9
1987	27.2	13.9	20.3	14.1	10.2	15.3	11.6	16.5
1989	27.7	13.4	20.8	13.7	10.9	15.1	12.4	15.7
1991	27.7	13.1	20.8	13.3	10.6	14.4	12.2	14.4
1993	28.6	13.4	20.0	13.3	12.0	15.0	12.3	13.6
1995	29.4	13.5	20.6	13.4	12.6	15.2	11.8	13.1
1997	30.2	13.0	21.8	13.2	12.7	14.4	11.3	12.8
1999	30.9	12.9	21.6	12.8	12.2	13.3	11.3	12.3
2001	30.4	12.4	21.0	12.2	11.9	12.7	11.8	11.8
2003	31.5	12.2	22.0	12.3	12.6	12.2	13.5	11.8
Mathematics								
1973	9.7	8.2	6.8	8.3	1.5	5.4	0.7	1.9
1975	11.0	8.2	7.5	8.2	1.5	4.7	0.6	1.6
1977	11.7	8.0	6.8	8.0	1.8	4.9	0.8	1.8
1979	12.2	7.9	6.9	7.7	2.1	5.0	0.8	1.7
1981	12.4	7.4	6.8	6.8	1.9	4.2	0.8	1.4
1983	12.9	7.3	7.2	6.9	2.0	4.0	0.8	1.5
1985	13.6	7.1	7.6	6.6	2.7	4.8	1.0	1.6
1987	13.8	7.1	9.7	6.7	3.2	4.7	1.1	1.6
1989	14.5	7.0	10.2	6.8	3.5	4.8	1.3	1.6
1991	15.2	7.2	10.7	6.9	3.5	4.8	1.4	1.6
1993	15.5	7.2	9.5	6.3	3.4	4.2	1.4	1.6
1995	14.6	6.7	9.4	6.1	3.3	3.9	1.5	1.6
1997	15.6	6.7	10.1	6.2	3.5	4.0	1.4	1.6
1999	15.2	6.3	9.9	5.9	2.9	3.2	1.3	1.4
2001	14.9	6.1	9.8	5.7	3.3	3.5	1.4	1.4
2003	15.4	6.0	9.7	5.4	3.8	3.7	1.8	1.6
Computer sciences								
1973	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.7	1.8
1975	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.7	1.9
1977	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.7	1.7
1979	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.8	1.7
1981	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.2	1.1	2.1
1983	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.4	1.4	2.5
1985	0.8	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.7	2.1	3.4

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Field	All academic employment		Researchers		Research as primary activity		Research assistants	
	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution
1987	1.1	0.5	1.0	0.7	0.7	1.0	2.8	4.0
1989	1.5	0.7	1.3	0.9	0.8	1.1	3.3	4.2
1991	2.0	0.9	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.4	3.6	4.2
1993	2.5	1.2	2.0	1.3	0.9	1.1	3.8	4.2
1995	3.1	1.4	2.4	1.6	1.0	1.3	3.9	4.4
1997	3.3	1.4	2.4	1.5	1.1	1.2	4.0	4.6
1999	3.7	1.5	2.6	1.6	1.1	1.2	4.9	5.4
2001	3.8	1.5	2.6	1.5	1.3	1.4	6.4	6.4
2003	5.2	2.0	3.9	2.2	1.9	1.8	7.5	6.6
Earth, atmospheric, and ocean sciences								
1973	3.4	2.9	2.5	3.0	0.7	2.5	2.6	7.1
1975	3.9	2.9	2.8	3.1	0.8	2.7	2.8	7.1
1977	4.2	2.9	2.9	3.4	1.0	2.7	3.2	7.4
1979	4.2	2.7	2.7	3.0	1.0	2.4	3.6	7.3
1981	4.6	2.7	3.2	3.2	1.4	2.9	3.5	6.6
1983	4.8	2.7	3.3	3.1	1.5	3.0	3.5	6.4
1985	5.2	2.8	3.7	3.2	1.6	2.9	3.7	6.1
1987	5.6	2.8	4.6	3.2	2.1	3.2	3.6	5.2
1989	5.9	2.8	4.9	3.2	2.4	3.3	4.2	5.3
1991	6.0	2.9	5.1	3.3	2.5	3.4	4.4	5.2
1993	6.4	3.0	5.0	3.3	2.7	3.4	4.7	5.2
1995	6.4	3.0	5.1	3.3	2.6	3.1	4.7	5.2
1997	7.3	3.2	5.6	3.4	2.9	3.2	4.3	4.9
1999	7.8	3.2	5.6	3.4	2.9	3.2	4.2	4.7
2001	8.2	3.3	6.3	3.6	3.1	3.3	4.2	4.2
2003	8.8	3.4	6.5	3.7	3.6	3.5	4.6	4.0
Life sciences								
1973	34.9	29.5	26.0	31.6	12.8	46.0	9.4	26.2
1975	39.4	29.4	29.0	32.0	14.5	47.0	11.3	28.2
1977	42.6	29.3	28.7	33.7	16.6	44.7	13.0	29.8
1979	47.0	30.3	32.1	35.6	19.7	47.6	15.4	31.3
1981	51.3	30.7	37.1	36.8	23.2	49.9	16.3	30.9
1983	54.8	31.1	38.3	36.6	24.3	49.7	16.5	30.0
1985	58.7	30.8	41.4	35.9	27.1	48.4	17.9	29.3
1987	61.2	31.3	48.8	33.9	31.5	47.3	20.2	28.7
1989	64.8	31.3	51.8	34.1	33.8	46.7	23.1	29.3
1991	66.9	31.8	53.3	34.1	34.5	46.7	25.8	30.3
1993	68.2	31.9	51.8	34.5	36.0	44.9	28.0	31.1
1995	71.6	32.9	53.8	35.1	37.7	45.3	29.2	32.5
1997	77.3	33.2	57.9	35.2	40.5	45.7	28.6	32.5
1999	81.9	34.1	60.8	36.2	43.2	47.2	28.9	31.7
2001	84.3	34.3	63.1	36.6	43.7	46.6	31.1	31.2
2003	89.2	34.5	65.1	36.4	46.4	45.1	35.5	31.1
Psychology								
1973	12.2	10.4	7.3	8.9	2.0	7.3	1.9	5.4
1975	14.8	11.0	8.5	9.4	2.2	7.1	2.2	5.5
1977	16.2	11.1	7.7	9.1	2.8	7.5	2.3	5.3
1979	17.7	11.4	8.3	9.2	3.4	8.3	2.5	5.2
1981	20.1	12.0	9.9	9.8	4.1	8.8	2.9	5.5
1983	21.0	11.9	10.5	10.0	4.4	8.9	3.0	5.4
1985	23.1	12.1	10.7	9.3	4.6	8.2	3.1	5.0
1987	23.7	12.1	14.3	9.9	5.2	7.8	3.2	4.6
1989	25.0	12.1	14.3	9.5	5.9	8.2	3.8	4.9
1991	25.2	12.0	15.7	10.0	6.2	8.4	4.2	5.0
1993	25.0	11.7	14.9	9.9	6.7	8.3	4.6	5.1
1995	26.1	12.0	15.6	10.1	7.4	8.9	4.6	5.1
1997	27.3	11.7	16.1	9.8	8.0	9.0	4.8	5.4
1999	29.0	12.1	17.2	10.2	8.6	9.5	4.8	5.3
2001	30.4	12.4	18.2	10.5	8.7	9.3	5.0	5.0
2003	31.3	12.1	18.9	10.6	10.0	9.7	5.6	4.9

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Field	All academic employment		Researchers		Research as primary activity		Research assistants	
	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution	Thousands	Percent distribution
Social sciences								
1973	23.4	19.8	14.3	17.4	2.8	10.2	4.0	11.1
1975	28.0	20.9	16.9	18.6	3.2	10.2	4.8	12.0
1977	31.1	21.4	13.8	16.2	4.1	11.1	4.9	11.2
1979	33.6	21.6	14.7	16.3	4.2	10.1	5.2	10.6
1981	36.9	22.1	17.6	17.5	4.5	9.7	5.2	9.8
1983	38.8	22.0	17.8	17.0	4.9	10.1	5.0	9.2
1985	41.9	22.0	20.9	18.2	5.7	10.2	5.1	8.3
1987	42.1	21.5	28.5	19.8	7.5	11.3	5.5	7.8
1989	44.5	21.5	30.5	20.1	8.2	11.3	6.2	7.9
1991	44.8	21.3	31.1	19.8	8.4	11.3	6.8	8.0
1993	44.4	20.8	29.3	19.5	10.7	13.4	7.4	8.2
1995	42.5	19.5	28.1	18.3	9.8	11.8	7.2	8.0
1997	44.9	19.3	29.8	18.1	9.8	11.1	6.7	7.7
1999	46.2	19.2	30.9	18.4	11.1	12.1	7.2	7.9
2001	46.9	19.1	31.4	18.2	11.7	12.4	7.8	7.8
2003	48.6	18.8	31.9	17.9	13.0	12.7	8.4	7.3
Engineering								
1973	12.4	10.5	9.0	11.0	2.1	7.4	10.4	29.0
1975	13.4	10.0	9.0	10.0	2.3	7.5	11.0	27.6
1977	14.8	10.1	8.9	10.5	2.9	7.9	11.6	26.6
1979	15.8	10.2	9.8	10.9	3.4	8.2	12.9	26.3
1981	16.1	9.7	9.5	9.5	3.3	7.2	14.4	27.3
1983	18.1	10.3	11.2	10.7	3.9	7.9	15.6	28.3
1985	19.9	10.5	12.5	10.8	4.4	7.9	17.9	29.4
1987	21.2	10.8	16.8	11.6	6.2	9.3	22.2	31.6
1989	22.8	11.0	17.6	11.6	6.9	9.5	24.6	31.1
1991	22.8	10.8	18.2	11.6	7.2	9.7	26.8	31.5
1993	23.1	10.8	17.5	11.7	7.9	9.8	28.0	31.0
1995	23.8	10.9	18.5	12.1	8.7	10.5	27.1	30.1
1997	26.6	11.4	20.9	12.7	10.1	11.4	26.9	30.6
1999	25.5	10.6	19.4	11.6	9.4	10.3	28.7	31.4
2001	26.6	10.8	20.2	11.7	10.1	10.7	32.2	32.2
2003	28.3	10.9	20.7	11.6	11.6	11.3	37.4	32.7

NA = not available

NOTES: Researchers are those reporting basic or applied research, development, or design as either primary or secondary work activity. Graduate research assistants are full-time students with research assistantships as primary mechanism of support. Detail may not add to total because of rounding.

SOURCES: National Science Foundation, Division of Science Resources Statistics, Survey of Doctorate Recipients, special tabulations; and Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering, special tabulations.