Research Training Programs in the Education Sciences and Special Education Research

Since 2004, the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) has invested in increasing the supply of scientists and researchers who are prepared to conduct high-quality education and special education research. The overall purpose of IES’s fellowship training programs is to prepare individuals to conduct rigorous and relevant education and special education research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues important to education policymakers and practitioners. Through its four fellowship training programs administered by the National Center for Education Research and the National Center for Special Education Research, IES seeks to fund new approaches to train and mentor students and researchers from diverse backgrounds in order to encourage their entry into and success in education research careers.

Training for Undergraduate, Post-Baccalaureate, and Masters Students

- The Pathways to the Education Sciences Research Training program was established by IES in 2015 to develop a pipeline of talented education researchers who bring fresh ideas, approaches, and perspectives to addressing the issues and challenges faced by the nation’s diverse students and schools. Pathways Training Program grants are awarded to minority-serving institutions (MSIs) and their partners to create education research training programs (typically 1-year in length) that prepare fellows for doctoral study. The goal is to provide students—especially underrepresented students—with an introduction to education research and scientific methods, meaningful opportunities to participate in education research studies, professional development, and mentoring that lead to doctoral study. Pathways Fellows may include upper-level undergraduates, post-baccalaureate students, or students enrolled in master's degree programs. Pathways Training programs are currently being launched at three Hispanic-Serving Institutions and one Historically Black College and University. For more information, contact Katina Stapleton (Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov) or see https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=95.

Training for Doctoral Students

- The Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training Program in the Education Sciences was established by IES in 2004 to increase the number of well-trained Ph.D. students who are prepared to conduct rigorous and relevant education research. Predoctoral Training Program grants are awarded to institutions of higher education that create cohesive graduate training programs in which fellows receive training in conducting education research while earning their doctorates within a traditional academic discipline. Predoctoral Fellows are trained to develop education interventions (e.g., curricula, professional development) that are grounded in a science of learning; to evaluate education programs, practices, and policies using rigorous and well-implemented experimental and quasi-experimental designs; and/or to employ sophisticated statistical methods to examine large state and local datasets to identify potential solutions to education problems. Since 2004, almost 900 fellows have received training through one of 20 IES-funded predoctoral training programs, and 458 have completed their training. For more information about the 10 currently funded pre-doctoral training programs contact Katina Stapleton (Katina.Stapleton@ed.gov) or see https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=16.

Learn more about the Institute of Education Sciences at IES.ED.GOV
TRAINING FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

- IES established the Postdoctoral Research Training Program in the Education Sciences in 2005 to increase the supply of researchers prepared to conduct rigorous and relevant education research addressing issues that are important to education leaders and practitioners. The Postdoctoral Training Program in the Education Sciences provides funds to groups of trainers who recruit, hire, and prepare postdoctoral researchers to conduct high-quality education research. Since 2005, over 180 postdoctoral fellows have received training through this program, and nearly 150 have completed their training. For more information about the currently funded postdoctoral training programs, contact Meredith Larson (Meredith.Larson@ed.gov) or Corinne Alfeld (Corrine.Alfeld@ed.gov) or see https://ies.ed.gov/ncer/projects/program.asp?ProgID=14.

- The Postdoctoral Research Training Program in Special Education was established by IES in 2008 to train education researchers to conduct high-quality, independent special education and early intervention research that advances knowledge within the field and addresses issues for children and youth with or at risk for disabilities. The Postdoctoral Training Program in Education Sciences provides funds to groups of trainers who recruit, hire, and prepare postdoctoral research to conduct high-quality special education and early intervention research. Since 2008, 53 fellows have received postdoctoral training through this program, and 49 have completed their training. For more information about the currently funded special education postdoctoral training programs, contact Katherine Taylor (Katherine.Taylor@ed.gov) or see https://ies.ed.gov/ncser/projects/program.asp?ProgID=57.

ABOUT IES

The Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is the nation’s engine for independent, non-partisan research, evaluation, and statistics related to education in the United States. IES funds research on new, practical, and innovative approaches that can help schools successfully meet 21st-century challenges. Every year, educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public use IES resources to improve education outcomes for all students.

IES is composed of four centers – the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE), National Center for Education Research (NCER), and National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER). Through its four centers, IES provides a foundation for the use of evidence to improve education in the United States.

ABOUT NCER

The National Center for Education Research supports rigorous research that addresses the nation’s most pressing education needs, from early childhood to adult education. For more information, see IES.ED.GOV/NCER.

ABOUT NCSER

The National Center for Special Education Research supports a comprehensive program of education research designed to expand knowledge and understanding of infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities and those at risk for disabilities. For more information, see IES.ED.GOV/NCSER.