Questionnaire for Defense Laboratories

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) is responsible for reporting to Congress on federal programs. The Senate Armed Services Committee Report accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2017 directed GAO to conduct a review of hiring at Department of Defense (DOD) laboratories.

Our review is focused on examining the extent to which defense laboratories have used available hiring authorities and other flexibilities to hire laboratory personnel and the extent to which the department's use of hiring authorities and other flexibilities has resulted in expedited hiring of highly qualified candidates at the defense laboratories. This review focuses on the hiring of employees in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields at Science and Technology Reinvention Laboratories (STRL) within the departments of the Air Force, Army, and Navy.

For the purpose of this questionnaire, we consider STEM fields to mean: agricultural sciences; astronomy; biological sciences; chemistry; computer science; earth, atmospheric, and ocean sciences; engineering; material science; mathematical sciences; physics; social sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, cognitive science, economics, behavioral sciences); or technology. Our definition of STEM includes health care professions that primarily involve scientific research; it does not include professions that primarily involve patient care. For this questionnaire, we are interested in hiring for any STEM positions, including but not limited to scientists, engineers, and technicians.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about your laboratory's hiring process, the use of hiring authorities, hiring timeframes, and challenges, if any, experienced during the hiring process. We are asking all of the DOD STRLs to complete this survey. You were identified to us as the point of contact (POC) for your lab because you are the POC on the Laboratory Quality Enhancement Program (LQEP) Personnel Panel. We are asking you to complete this questionnaire on behalf of your STRL (lab). If you are not the appropriate POC for your lab, please let us know as soon as possible. You may not have the answer to every question readily available, so please consult records and consult with others (e.g., laboratory director, human resources manager, or hiring managers) who have the necessary information that will allow you to answer every question as completely and accurately as possible.

Your responses, along with those of other labs, will provide valuable information to the Congress. We will combine your answers with answers from the other labs in a report to the Congress that could prompt changes to the hiring process.

If you have any questions, please contact Serena Epstein at 404-679-1824 or epsteins@gao.gov.

Please complete and return this questionnaire to Serena Epstein at epsteins@gao.gov by Friday, July 21, 2017.

Filling out the questionnaire:

To navigate throughout this questionnaire, please use the tab key, up and down arrow keys, page up and page down keys, or the scroll bar. To select an answer using a check box ☐, simply use the mouse to click in the box. To remove a mark from a check box, simply click in the check box again and the "X" should disappear. To answer a question that requires that you type a comment, please click on the answer box and begin typing. The comment area will expand as you type.

Questions:

1. **What is the name of the lab (or your subordinate lab directorate or division if applicable) you are completing this questionnaire for?**

2. **Overall, since October 1, 2015, how easy or difficult has it been for your lab to fill vacancies with highly qualified candidates for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) positions?** For this questionnaire, we consider STEM fields to mean: agricultural sciences; astronomy; biological sciences; chemistry; computer science; earth, atmospheric, and ocean sciences; engineering; material science; mathematical sciences; physics; social sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology, anthropology, cognitive science, economics, behavioral sciences); or technology. Our definition of STEM includes health care professions that primarily involve scientific research; it does not include professions that primarily involve patient care. For this questionnaire, we are interested in hiring for any STEM positions, including but not limited to scientists, engineers, and technicians. *Please check one box.*

Very easy	Somewhat easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Somewhat difficult	Very difficult	No Opinion
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used a <u>direct hire authority for advanced degrees</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 4*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for advanced degrees</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for advanced degrees</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 4 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>direct hire authority for advanced degrees</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

4. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used a <u>direct hire authority for Bachelor's degrees</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 5*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for Bachelor's degrees</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for Bachelor's degrees</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 5 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>direct hire authority for Bachelor's degrees</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

5. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used a <u>direct hire authority for veterans</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 6*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for veterans</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire</u> highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>direct hire authority for veterans</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 6 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>direct hire authority for veterans</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

6. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the <u>expedited hiring authority (EHA)</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 7*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>EHA</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>EHA</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 7	←	←	←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>EHA</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

7. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the <u>Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) program hiring authority</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 8*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>SMART program</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>SMART program</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 8 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>SMART program</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

8. **This and the next two questions refer to the Pathways program. . . . Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the <u>Pathways Program's student intern hiring authority</u> to successfully fill STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 9*

a. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>Pathways Program's student intern hiring authority</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. **Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>Pathways Program's student intern hiring authority</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>?** *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 9	←	←	←	←	←	←	←

c. **If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>Pathways Program's student intern hiring authority</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it?** *The box will expand as you type.*

9. Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the Pathways Program's recent graduate hiring authority to successfully fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 10*

a. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the Pathways Program's recent graduate hiring authority, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the Pathways Program's recent graduate hiring authority, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire quickly? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please skip to Question 10 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. If your lab did not use the Pathways Program's recent graduate hiring authority to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it? *The box will expand as you type.*

10. Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the <u>Pathways Program's Presidential Management Fellowship Program hiring authority</u> to successfully fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 11*

a. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>Pathways Program's Presidential Management Fellowship Program hiring authority</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>Pathways Program's Presidential Management Fellowship Program hiring authority</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 11 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>Pathways Program's Presidential Management Fellowship Program hiring authority</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it? *The box will expand as you type.*

11. Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used the <u>delegated examining unit authority</u> (i.e., the <u>competitive examining process)</u> to successfully fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to "c"*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 12*

a. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>delegated examining unit authority</u> (i.e., the <u>competitive examining process)</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

b. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used the <u>delegated examining unit authority</u> (i.e., the <u>competitive examining process)</u>, how much, if at all, has the authority hindered or helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Please <u>skip</u> to Question 12 ←			←	←	←	←	←

c. If your lab did <u>not</u> use the <u>delegated examining unit authority</u> (i.e., the <u>competitive examining process)</u> to hire for STEM positions since October 1, 2015, why did you not use it? *The box will expand as you type.*

12. Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used <u>any other hiring authorities than those asked about above</u> to successfully fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 13*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 13*

a. What other hiring authorities has your lab used to successfully fill STEM positions since October 1, 2015? *The box will expand as you type.*

b. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used <u>other hiring authorities</u>, how much, if at all, have the authorities hindered or helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c. Since October 1, 2015, when your lab has used <u>other hiring authorities</u>, how much, if at all, have the authorities helped your lab's ability to <u>hire quickly</u>? *Please check one box.*

Very much hindered	Somewhat hindered	Slightly hindered	Neither hindered nor helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab experienced any barriers to using each of the following hiring authorities for STEM positions? If Yes, please describe the barrier(s).** ***Barriers may include, but are not limited to, limits on the use of each specific hiring authority, guidance within your organization restricting the use of a specific hiring authority, any requirements placed on the use of a specific hiring authority that has limited your ability to use the authority, or a lack of funding.*** *Please complete each row.*

Authority	Experienced a Barrier?	If Yes, what were the barrier(s)?
Direct hire authority for advanced degrees	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Direct hire authority for Bachelor's degrees	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Direct hire authority for veterans	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Expedited hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Science, Mathematics, and Research for Transformation (SMART) program hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Pathways Program's student intern hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Pathways Program's recent graduate hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	

Authority	Experienced a Barrier?	If Yes, what were the barrier(s)?
Pathways Program's Presidential Management Fellowship Program hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	
Delegated examining unit authority (i.e., the competitive examining process)	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	

a. **OPTIONAL: If there is anything else you would like to add to elaborate on the previous question, please write it here.** *The box will expand as you type.*

14. **Since October 1, 2015, has your lab experienced any barriers to using any hiring authorities <u>other than those asked about above</u> when hiring for STEM positions? *Barriers may include, but are not limited to, limits on the use of each specific hiring authority, guidance within your organization restricting the use of a specific hiring authority, any requirements placed on the use of a specific hiring authority that has limited your ability to use the authority, or a lack of funding.*** *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 15*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 15*

a. **In the table below, please list the other hiring authorities your lab has experienced barriers to using for STEM positions since October 1, 2015 and what the barrier(s) to each have been.**

Authority	What were the barrier(s)?

Authority	What were the barrier(s)?

15. **What additional hiring authorities, if any, would help facilitate the hiring process for STEM positions at your lab? This includes authorities that do not currently exist as well as authorities that exist but are not currently available for your lab to use. If no additional authorities, please skip to the next question. For any authorities you list, please explain how that authority would help facilitate the hiring process for STEM positions at your lab.** *The boxes will expand as you type.*

Additional authority	How would this authority help facilitate the hiring process for STEM positions at your lab?

16. Since October 1, 2015, has each of the following been a challenge to your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? For any that have been a challenge, how much if at all, has it hindered your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions? *Please complete each row.*

Potential Challenge	Was this a challenge since Oct 1, 2015?	How much, if at all, did this challenge hinder your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates?				
		Not at all hindered	Slightly hindered	Somewhat hindered	Very much hindered	Don't know
Statutory limits on the number of hires that can be made using a specific hiring authority in a given year based on percentage of total workforce	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Candidates do not qualify for the requirements of the hiring authority	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Finding highly qualified candidates	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Discouraged by leadership at <u>any</u> level (e.g., from directorates through DOD) from using any <u>specific</u> hiring authorities	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Potential Challenge	Was this a challenge since Oct 1, 2015?	How much, if at all, did this challenge hinder your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates?				
		Not at all hindered	Slightly hindered	Somewhat hindered	Very much hindered	Don't know
Total length of the hiring process, from initiation of request for personnel action to making a firm offer to the candidate	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Delays with processing of security clearances	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Delays with processing the personnel action by external HR office (e.g., Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC), Office of Civilian Human Resources (OCHR), Human Resources Office Operations Centers, Human Resources Offices (HRO), etc.)	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Potential Challenge	Was this a challenge since Oct 1, 2015?	How much, if at all, did this challenge hinder your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates?				
		Not at all hindered	Slightly hindered	Somewhat hindered	Very much hindered	Don't know
Cannot extend firm job offer until final transcript is received	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government-wide hiring freeze	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
DOD, service, command, or lab-specific hiring restrictions (e.g., a 1:6 hiring ratio)	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Losing quality candidates to private sector	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Losing quality candidates to federal agencies outside DOD	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Losing quality candidates to other military laboratories	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Geographic proximity to organizations competing for your candidates	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Potential Challenge	Was this a challenge since Oct 1, 2015?	How much, if at all, did this challenge hinder your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates?				
		Not at all hindered	Slightly hindered	Somewhat hindered	Very much hindered	Don't know
Location of the laboratory	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Restrictions on use of permanent appointments	Yes ☐ ➔ ➔ No ☐ ➓ Don't know ☐ ➓	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other challenge(s) (please specify below)						
		☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	

a. **OPTIONAL: If there is anything else you would like to add to elaborate on the previous question, please write it here.** *The box will expand as you type.*

17. Since October 1, 2015, which of the potential challenges below has hindered your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions the most, which challenge has been the second biggest hindrance, and which challenge has been the third biggest hindrance? *Please rank the challenges by checking only one box for each column.*

Potential Challenge	Biggest hindrance (Check only one)	Second biggest hindrance (Check only one)	Third biggest hindrance (Check only one)
Statutory limits on the number of hires that can be made using a specific hiring authority in a given year based on percentage of total workforce	☐	☐	☐
Candidates do not qualify for the requirements of the hiring authority	☐	☐	☐
Finding highly qualified candidates	☐	☐	☐
Discouraged by leadership at any level (e.g., from directorates through DOD) from using any specific hiring authorities	☐	☐	☐
Total length of the hiring process, from initiation of request for personnel action to making a firm offer to the candidate	☐	☐	☐
Delays with processing of security clearances	☐	☐	☐
Delays with processing the personnel action by external HR office (CPAC, OCHR Ops Centers, HRO, etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Cannot extend firm job offer until final transcript is received	☐	☐	☐
Government-wide hiring freeze	☐	☐	☐
DOD, service, command, or lab-specific hiring restrictions (e.g., a 1:6 hiring ratio)	☐	☐	☐
Losing quality candidates to private sector	☐	☐	☐
Losing quality candidates to federal agencies outside DOD	☐	☐	☐
List continues on the next page			

Potential Challenge	Biggest hindrance (Check only one)	Second biggest hindrance (Check only one)	Third biggest hindrance (Check only one)
Losing quality candidates to other military laboratories	☐	☐	☐
Geographic proximity to organizations competing for your candidates	☐	☐	☐
Location of the laboratory	☐	☐	☐
Restrictions on use of permanent appointments	☐	☐	☐
Other challenge(s) (please specify below)			
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

a. **OPTIONAL: If there is anything else you would like to add to elaborate on the previous question, please write it here.** *The box will expand as you type.*

18. **Since October 1, 2015, how much, if at all, has each of the following incentives helped your lab's ability to hire highly qualified candidates for STEM positions?** *Please check one box in each row.*

Incentive	Lab did not use this incentive since Oct 1, 2015	Not at all helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
Pay setting under Lab Demonstration Project ("lab demo")	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recruitment Bonuses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Relocation Bonuses	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Incentive	Lab did not use this incentive since Oct 1, 2015	Not at all helped	Slightly helped	Somewhat helped	Very much helped	Don't know
Student Loan Repayment Program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Opportunities for educational advancement, other than Student Loan Repayment, for example, tuition assistance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sabbaticals (authorized absences from duty for study or work experience)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Government benefits package	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Annual leave credit for prior work experience	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paid travel for candidates for job interviews at lab	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other incentive(s) (please specify below)						
		☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	
		☐	☐	☐	☐	

a. **OPTIONAL: If there is anything else you would like to add to elaborate on the previous question, please write it here.** *The box will expand as you type.*

19. The next two questions ask about term appointments and modified term appointments. By "modified term appointment" we mean an appointment used to fill positions for a period of not more than <u>five</u> years. By "term appointment" we mean an appointment used to fill positions for a period of not more than <u>four</u> years. . . . . Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used <u>modified term</u> appointments to fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 20*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 20*

a. For what purpose(s) has your lab used <u>modified term</u> appointments since October 1, 2015 to fill STEM positions? *The box will expand as you type.*

b. What, if any, positive outcomes related to hiring for your lab have resulted from using the <u>modified term</u> appointment authority since October 1, 2015? *The box will expand as you type.*

c. What, if any, negative outcomes related to hiring for your lab have resulted from using the <u>modified term</u> appointment authority since October 1, 2015? *The box will expand as you type.*

20. Since October 1, 2015, has your lab used <u>term</u> appointments to fill STEM positions? *Please check one box.*

Yes ..... ☐ ➔ *Please continue to "a"*

No ..... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 21*

Don't know ... ☐ ➔ *Please skip to Question 21*

a. For what purpose(s) has your lab used <u>term</u> appointments since October 1, 2015 to fill STEM positions? *The box will expand as you type.*

b. **What, if any, positive outcomes related to hiring for your lab have resulted from using the term appointment authority since October 1, 2015?** *The box will expand as you type.*

c. **What, if any, negative outcomes related to hiring for your lab have resulted from using the term appointment authority since October 1, 2015?** *The box will expand as you type.*

21. **If you would like to tell us more about anything covered in this questionnaire (e.g., hiring processes, timeframes, challenges, etc.), please type it here.** *The box will expand as you type.*

22. **Who, if anyone, did you consult with to answer any of the questions in this questionnaire?** *Please complete each row.*

Consultation conducted	Yes	No	Not Applicable
Staff at my STRL's headquarters	☐	☐	☐
Staff from my STRL's directorates or other organizations subordinate to my STRL's headquarters	☐	☐	☐
I did not need to consult with anyone else to answer all questions accurately and completely	☐	☐	☐

Thank you very much for your time and assistance!