FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & PUBLIC POLICY

FSU Joins the Atlanta Federal Statistical Research Data Center Consortium!

- **What is the Atlanta Research Data Center (ARDC)?**

The ARDC is Federal Statistical Research Data Center (FSRDC), a secure lab where researchers can access confidential, otherwise unavailable, economic, demographic, and public health microdata provided by either the U.S. Census Bureau or one of more than 10 partner agencies including the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).[1]

- **What are the benefits of FSU's membership in the ARDC consortium?**

Membership in the consortium means any FSU faculty member, graduate student, or affiliated researcher can make use of the ARDC's restricted-access microdata for approved research projects without paying an individual out-of-pocket fee.[2] The quality of the restricted-use microdata available in the ARDC is unparalleled. The data will allow FSU researchers to conduct innovative projects of tremendous scientific merit that would not be possible with publicly available data, will make them sought after co-authors, will allow graduate student researchers the opportunity to showcase valuable skills, and will be a powerful recruiting tool for the University.

- **What is the ARDC research environment like?**

The ARDC is a controlled environment located at the Federal Reserve Bank in Atlanta. It is designed to ensure the confidentiality of the data while still giving researchers the tools they need to conduct their analyses. The lab meets strict physical and information security requirements and is monitored by a Census Bureau employee. The computing capabilities in the lab are controlled by the Bureau. Researchers have access to a powerful Linux server with the ability to process large datasets and perform complex calculations. Standard statistical and programming software (such as SAS, Stata, MATLAB, R, etc.) is available. There is no access to outside information (i.e., the internet) while in the lab, and all research output produced must pass a disclosure review before it can be released.

- **How does one gain access to the ARDC?**

For a researcher to gain access to ARDC data, she must first submit a proposal to the Census Bureau. The proposal details the project, its scientific merits, the benefits it will provide to the Bureau, and any potential disclosure risks inherent in the project. The proposal process is guided by the ARDC Administrator. Next, the researcher must pass a background check and obtain Special Sworn Status with the Bureau. Doing so requires passing a background check and making a sworn statement about upholding the confidentiality of the data. Finally, the researcher must wait for her proposal to be reviewed and approved. This process usually takes about six months.

For More Information

Visit	**Contact**
Census Webpage: www.census.gov/ces/rdcresearch	Melissa Banzhaf, ARDC Administrator, Melissa.R.Banzhaf@census.gov
ARDC Webpage: http://acrdc.gsu.edu/	Christopher Clapp, FSU Department of Economics, cclapp@fsu.edu

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[1]For a complete list of partner agencies and available datasets, visit the Census webpage at www.census.gov/about/adrm/fsrdc/federal_partners.html.

[2]Researchers not affiliated with an ARDC institution pay a $20,000 per year, per project fee. Health agencies may still assess and administer fees for use of health data.