Supplemental Methods

The NSF Survey of Graduate Students and Postdoctorates in Science and Engineering (GSS) is an annual census of U.S. research institutions granting advanced degrees in science and engineering [http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvygradpostdoc/#sd](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvygradpostdoc/#sd). The GSS tabulations for biological and medical sciences used in this analysis were generated from the [WebCASPAR](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvygradpostdoc/#sd) system and combine the “biological sciences” and “health sciences” using the “standardized variables” to facilitate cross-survey comparisons. As a result, they will differ slightly from the tabulations generated using “survey specific variables.”

The Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) is an annual census of all individuals receiving a research doctorate from an accredited U.S. university [http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctorates/](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctorates/). The SED tabulations were generated using the [WebCASPAR](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctorates/) system and (for years after 2007) the SED Tabulation Engine using a selection of “biological” and “health sciences” fields consistent with the original WebCASPAR taxonomy.

The Survey of Doctorate Recipients (SDR) is a biennial survey based on a sample of science and engineering doctorate earners [http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctoratework/](http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/srvydoctoratework/). The SDR tabulations of the unemployment rates were produced by NORC, the NSF survey contractor for the SDR, and are based on a selection of fields designed to replicate those included in the GSS tabulations: biological and life sciences and other life sciences (excluding agricultural and environmental sciences) and health sciences.

Unemployment rates were computed using the same definitions used by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Persons are classified as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior 4 weeks, and are currently available for work. The unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the number of unemployed by the number in the laborforce (currently working or seeking work).