

Supporting Statement (3145-0157)

NSF Survey to Measure Customer Satisfaction with the IGERT National Recruitment Program

Section A

Introduction

A.1. Circumstances Requiring the Collection of Data

Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," established a process to require continual reform of government practices and operations. Section 1(b) of this E.O. requires agencies to "survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services" and Section 1(a) requires agencies to "survey front-line employees on barriers to, and ideas for, matching the best in business." These Presidential requirements established an ongoing need for the National Science Foundation (NSF) to engage in an interactive process of collecting information and using it to improve program services and process.

Consistent with E.O. 12862, the purpose of the NSF Survey to Measure Customer Satisfaction with the IGERT National Recruitment Program is to assess customer satisfaction with a component of the Integrative Graduate Research and Traineeship (IGERT) program. The IGERT program, initiated in 1998, awards multi-year grants to universities to support interdisciplinary graduate traineeship projects in NSF-supported fields. The program is managed by the Division of Graduate Education in the Directorate for Education and Human Resources.

One goal of the IGERT program is the recruitment and training of a diverse pool of graduate students and broadening participation of women and underrepresented minorities. In 2002, the NSF awarded a grant for the IGERT National Recruitment Program (INRP), a grant which has since received additional funding. The grantee proposed developing resources and networks to aid IGERT Principal Investigators (PIs) in recruiting graduate students, with special attention on the recruitment of women and underrepresented minorities. Using the NSF funds, the grantee has developed resources and networks including a web site, partner organization, events, recruitment tools, and information for potential students.

The INRP has been in existence a sufficient amount of time for potentially broad usage by IGERT PIs, but the NSF has not conducted a customer usage and satisfaction survey. Since providing support and resources to IGERT projects for recruitment is a priority of the NSF, it is important that a customer satisfaction survey be conducted at this time. It is necessary to get input from a broadly representative sample of PIs in order to accurately identify use and satisfaction. This proposed brief survey will focus on customer use of satisfaction with the INRP, including the web site (<http://www.IGERT.org>), which is the primary mechanism by which IGERT projects access INRP resources and networks.

A.2. Purposes and Uses of the Data

The purpose of the "IGERT National Recruitment Program User Survey" (see Attachment A) is to assess customer satisfaction among IGERT Principal Investigators (PIs) with the INRP web-based resources. The purpose of this survey is to identify if and how PIs are using the resources and whether the resources are effective for the PIs. Results from the survey will be used by the NSF IGERT program staff to improve or refine the process by which IGERT PIs are provided with resources and assistance for the purposes of student recruitment. This process of improvement will enhance NSF's strategic planning, performance planning, and performance reporting efforts as required by the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 and help the NSF advance its goals of broadening participation in science and engineering fields at the graduate level.

A.3. Use of Information Technology To Reduce Burden

There are no legal or technical obstacles to the use of technology in these information collection activities. The "IGERT National Recruitment Program User Survey" will be administered via the Internet, which will allow a quicker and less costly survey administration than a paper survey.

A.4. Efforts To Identify Duplication

The information to be supplied does not duplicate any other information collection. There has not been any comprehensive user feedback to the NSF on the INRP during the life of the IGERT program.

A.5. Small Business

Not applicable.

A.6. Consequences of Not Collecting the Information

If the information is not collected, the NSF will not be able to determine whether the recruitment resources currently provided to IGERT PIs are effective in advancing efforts to broaden participation in science and engineering. The NSF will not be able to fully assess the degree to which projects are meeting goals in this area and the degree to which the INRP is providing PIs with the services required. Moreover, the NSF will be unable to comply fully with the congressional mandate that the Foundation evaluate its education programs.

A.7. Special Circumstances Justifying Inconsistencies with Guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6

Not applicable.

A.8. Consultation Outside the Agency

The agency's notice, as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), was published in the Federal Register on January 24, 2005 at 70 FR 3398. Dr. Dean Gerdeman, a Fellow (non-employee) working with the Division of Graduate Education, served as a consultant for the "IGERT National Recruitment Program User Survey" design, administration and analysis.

A.9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents

Respondents will receive no payments or gifts.

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Respondents to the survey will be anonymous. The NSF will provide survey respondents with an email cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey, the importance of participant input, and the absence of information on specific individuals or personally identifiable characteristics in the survey (see Attachment B). Data collected are available to NSF officials and staff and evaluation contractors. Data are processed according to Federal and State privacy statutes. Detailed procedures for making information available to various categories of users are specified in the Education and Training System of Records (63 Fed. Reg. 264, 272 January 5, 1998). That system limits access to personally identifiable information to authorized users. Data submitted will be used in accordance with criteria established for NSF for monitoring research and education grants, and in response to Public Law 99-383 and 42 USC 1885c. The information requested may be disclosed to qualified researchers and contractors in order to coordinate programs and to a Federal agency, court or party in a court, or Federal administrative proceeding, if the Government is a party.

A.11. Questions of a Sensitive Nature

No questions of a sensitive nature will be asked.

A.12 Estimates of Response Burden

This study involves a one-time survey of 161 PIs from current and former IGERT projects. The total burden estimate for the instrument is 40.25 hours.

A.12.1. Number of Respondents, Frequency of Response, and Annual Hour Burden

There will be a maximum of 161 respondents surveyed once. The annual hour burden is expected to be 1/4 hour per respondent.

A.12.2. Hour Burden Estimates by Each Form and Aggregate Hour Burdens

The estimate of 1/4 hour per respondent yields an aggregate maximum burden of 40.25 hours.

A.12.3. Estimates of Annualized Cost to Respondents for the Hour Burdens

Average time per respondent is based on a fifteen-minute response time and an hourly wage rate of \$52.12; cost is therefore estimated to be \$13.04 per respondent, for a total of \$2099.44. Hour wage rate is calculated from the average salary for full professors at U.S. doctoral universities, according the Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac 2006 ("Average Salaries of Full-Time Faculty Members, 2005-6," <http://chronicle.com>).

A.13. Estimate of Total Capital and Startup Costs/Operation and Maintenance Costs to Respondents or Record Keepers

Not applicable.

A.14. Estimates of Costs to the Federal Government

The estimated annualized cost to the Government for the NSF Survey to Measure Customer Satisfaction with the IGERT National Recruitment Program is about \$2500. This is the estimate is based on the personnel cost for 40 hours of work by NSF program staff to prepare, administer and analyze the survey and the webservice access fee. The average annual salary at NSF staff member is according to the FY 08 budget is about \$99,000.

A.15. Changes in Burden

The number of burden hours of all the surveys included within this generic is 5,250. The NSF Survey to Measure Customer Satisfaction with the IGERT National Recruitment Program involves an estimated 40.25 burden hours. No change sheet (OMB 83-C) is necessary.

A.16. Plans for Publication, Analysis, and Schedule

Reports from this survey will be designed to inform IGERT program staff of IGERT PI use of and satisfaction with the INRP resources. Findings from this survey will be presented internally to NSF staff. A brief summary of aggregate findings will be provided to IGERT PIs.

The survey and analysis are scheduled to be completed within eight weeks, following the schedule below:

| Activity | Time Schedule |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Initial email to PIs | 1 week after OMB approval |
| Follow-up email to PIs | 2 weeks after OMB approval |
| Completed survey administration | 4 weeks after OMB approval |

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Completed internal report on survey | 8 weeks after OMB approval |
| Summary of aggregate findings shared with PIs | 16 weeks after OMB approval |

A.17. Approval to Not Display Expiration Date

Not applicable.

A.18 Exceptions to Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I

There are no exceptions.

Section B

Introduction

B.1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

The NSF Survey to Measure Customer Satisfaction with the IGERT National Recruitment Program will be a census of the 161 Principal Investigators from projects that have received IGERT awards between 1998 and 2005 (excludes redundant renewal projects).

B.2. Information Collection Procedures/Limitations of the Study

A one-time web-based survey will be the data collection tool for this study. NSF will contact each of the 161 IGERT PIs to solicit his/her participation. Each respondent will provide answers only one time.

B.2.1. Statistical Methodology for Stratification and Sample Selection

Not applicable.

B.2.2. Estimation Procedure

Not applicable.

B.2.3. Degree of Accuracy Needed for the Purpose Described in the Justification

NSF will need responses from at least 70 percent of the respondent universe for accuracy. Since the respondents are familiar with NSF needs for customer feedback, NSF expects that an initial solicitation and one follow-up solicitation will yield a response rate greater than 70 percent.

B.2.4. Unusual Problems Requiring Specialized Sampling Procedures

Not applicable.

B.2.5. Use of Periodic (Less Frequent Than Annual) Data Collection Cycles

Not applicable.

B.3. Methods for Maximizing the Response Rate and Addressing Issues of Nonresponse

Each potential respondent will receive an initial email solicitation from the NSF and a follow-up email solicitation. The follow-up email will be sent 1 week after the initial email. Text for these messages are

found in appendix B.

B.4. Tests of Procedures or Methods

NSF staff members and the aforementioned Fellow have reviewed the survey for clarity, errors and omissions.

B.5. Names and Telephone Numbers of Individuals Consulted

Dean Gerdeman, AAAS Fellow at the National Science Foundation (703-292-5089) prepared the OMB package.

NSF staff who provided assistance to Dr. Gerdeman in preparing the package included: Mary Sladek (703-292-5152) and Judith Giordan (703-292-5038).

Dr. Gerdeman will be responsible for data collection and analysis under the direction of Dr Giordan.