

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)**  
**Information Seeking Behaviors and Preferences of Summer Undergraduate**  
**Research Fellowship (SURF) Students**  
**OMB CONTROL NO. 0693-XXXX**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

There has been a huge shift in how information is delivered and used. Much of what is driving that shift is the demand for new or interactive information sources by individuals who have “grown up” using information technology in hi-tech ways.

This study will determine how the next generation of scientists, frequently referred to as the ‘Millennial Generation,’ will seek scientific information in their research. This generation was born between 1982 and 2000. For the National Institute of Standards and Technology’s (NIST) Information Services Division (ISD) to anticipate the next generation of scientists’ information needs, ISD must study the information seeking behaviors and preferences of the millennial generation. Each summer, undergraduates participate in NIST’s Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) Program, ISD plans to use them as the test population. This study will give ISD a better understanding of millennials’ information needs and habits and allow ISD to plan the content and technology to deliver scientific information in the future. General studies show this population has technological preferences for receiving and integrating content, and this study is to learn if this extends to the scientific content among young scientists. It will identify most useful (and most desired) devices and formats, so that the ISD can plan to serve this generation.

The findings will impact how digital scientific content is harvested, identified using metadata, stored, accessed, and disseminated. The project will identify young scientists’ preferences for content format and ease of assimilation into current processes. Specifically the project aims to learn: (1) which library resources and information services are most valuable and why, and (2) what scientific library resources do not exist that could, or are not yet robust enough to be valuable. Further the study aims to learn: (3) in what specific ways are commercial Internet tools both successful and unsuccessful in helping find answers, (4) which platforms and devices are most helpful and why, and (5) which technologies help support collaboration with peers.

The survey is voluntary, and all information gathered will be carefully safeguarded.

**2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.**

This information will be used primarily for strategic planning by ISD. This information is also of interest to other scientific and technical libraries. Hence ISD plans to publish aggregate findings and trends that can help other scientific and technical libraries in their strategic planning. Such publications will comply with the Information Quality Guidelines because each manuscript for publication first undergoes the NIST agency internal review process. This process involves the Washington Editorial Review Board (WERB) or Boulder Editorial Review Board (BERB). In this case, the WERB process will be followed.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.**

An electronic survey tool will be used to automatically record and aggregate responses. The survey submitted as part of the information collection request is taken from the electronic version and is unable to show the following choices –

Under Question 10:

**Value drop down menu is:**

Excellent  
Very high  
High  
Moderate  
Low  
Very Low  
Nothing  
Unknown

**Comparison drop down menu is:**

First  
Second  
Third  
Fourth  
Fifth  
Sixth  
Last  
Never

Under Question 16:

**Value drop down menu is:**

No value  
Little value  
Some (moderate) value  
Much value  
Most valuable  
Don't know

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

Some general studies of this nature have been conducted. This study focuses on scientists' information seeking behavior. ISD needs to learn what millennial generation scientists need and how they seek information, before making decisions about acquiring new products, services, or content delivery mechanisms.

**5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize burden.**

No small businesses or other small entities will be affected.

**6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

If the survey is not conducted, ISD will not have a basis for understanding the changing customer requirements of the next generation of scientists, who will be part of the NIST workforce in two to four years, and to adequately prepare to meet their needs,.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

No special circumstances.

**8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

A Federal Register Notice soliciting public comment was published on March 21, 2007. No comments were received.

**9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

The respondents will not be given payments or gifts.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

The survey is anonymous. The individual's survey results will not be shared.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

No questions of a sensitive nature will be required.

**12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.**

ISD estimates 100 respondents X 20 minutes = 33 hours.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in #12 above).**

ISD estimates no annual cost burden for record keeping, since the software automatically tallies each response, aggregates them, and generates totals and averages.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

No annualized cost burden to the Federal Government.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB 83-I.**

This is a new collection thus no program changes or adjustments.

**16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.**

The results of this survey are for management decision making. This type of data/information collection, results, and trends is of interest to the library/information communities.

ISD plans to publish and present the process used, and the aggregate results and trends. The actual information collected will not be published except in aggregate form.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.**

Not Applicable.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I.**

No exceptions to the certification statement.

**B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods**

Not Applicable.