

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION SUBMISSION

WEBSITE FOR DIVISION OF CHEMISTRY STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS PROJECT

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. CIRCUMSTANCES MAKING COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY

On September 11, 1993, President Clinton issued Executive Order 12862, "Setting Customer Service Standards," which clearly defined his vision that the Federal agencies will put the public first. To accomplish this, President Clinton called for a "revolution within the Federal government to change the way it does business." He expected this process to require continual reform of government practices and operations to the end that, "when dealing with the Federal agencies, all people receive service that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector."

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 processes.

2. HOW, BY WHOM, AND PURPOSE FOR WHICH INFORMATION IS TO BE USED

This past February, the Chemistry Committee of Visitors recommended that the Division of Chemistry develop strategic directions to guide our service to the community and to the nation over the next five years. This report to the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Advisory Committee (MPS-AC) is available at http://www.nsf.gov/mps/advisory/covdocs/CHEcov_07.pdf. We view the Committee of Visitors report as the first input to this important process. In August 2007, we held a Town Hall at the National Meeting of the American Chemical Society in Boston, and received comments from the community.

We would like to post a website to receive input from the Chemistry Community for the Strategic Directions Project. The purpose of the information gathering is for continuous improvement of the performance of the NSF Division of Chemistry.

NSF's strategic plan addresses priorities in discovery, learning, research infrastructure, and stewardship. We need the Chemistry community's insights into the Division of Chemistry's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and barriers to fully meeting these goals. The comments can be anonymous or signed. The proposed website will be open for comments until November 30, 2007. We plan to distill the comments, identify critical issues and address goals and objectives in a report to the MPS-AC. This report will be posted for public comment in early 2008 for two months and then revised and finalized. The community may also send input of a general nature to chemplans@nsf.gov.

3. USE OF AUTOMATION

Pending approval, our plan is to post the enclosed pages as a website linked from our homepage at <http://www.nsf.gov/chemistry>. Input to the website from the community will be downloaded to a spreadsheet and an internal committee will analyze it to identify critical issues that the Divi-

son will address by setting goals, objectives and tactics. Respondents will be invited to participate via a Dear Colleague Letter that contains the Web site link. The Letter will contain a phone number and email address in order for respondents to contact the Division of Chemistry in case of questions about the survey. This Letter will be emailed to 9000 scientists who have applied to the Division of Chemistry for grants in the past 6 years.

4. EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION

The website seeks input from the community about the NSF Division of Chemistry. No other agency has sought this information.

5. SMALL BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

Not applicable.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF LESS FREQUENT COLLECTION

Not applicable.

7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR COLLECTION

Not applicable.

8. FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE.

The agency's notices, as required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), were published in the *Federal Register* on January 24, 2005, at 70 FR 3398 and April 1, 2005 at 70 FR 16875 and no substantial comments were received.

OUTSIDE CONSULTATION

We arrived at the estimate of the burden on respondents' time by having internal staff members answer the questions and timing them.

9. GIFTS OR REMUNERATION

Not applicable.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS

There will be a statement on the website that the comments and the respondent's name, if provided, may be made public. This was the advice of NSF's OGC because of FOIA. Respondents will have the option of providing their names or not. All NSF staff are trained in confidentiality requirements. All completed surveys will be submitted electronically and kept in a secure database.

11. QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE

No questions of a sensitive nature will be asked.

12. ESTIMATE OF BURDEN

13. The survey will be targeted to approximately 9000 respondents with an estimated completion time of 60 minutes per survey. The expected response is low - around 10% or less, since this involves a population that may not still be interested in the NSF (in any one year, we receive 1600 proposals and there are approximately 1400 active awards in the Division of Chemistry, making the active community around 3000. We estimate that one third of this group may respond.)

ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS

The burden to respondents who participate will be in terms of their time only.

14. CAPITAL/STARTUP COSTS

Not applicable.

15. ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The production of the website and the downloading of the information is estimated at 100 support staff (computer specialist, science assistant) hours or \$3000. The analysis of the data will take 200 professional staff (program officer) hours or \$12,000.

16. CHANGES IN BURDEN

Not applicable.

17. PUBLICATION OF COLLECTION

Not applicable.

18. SEEKING APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY OMB EXPIRATION DATE

Not applicable.

19. EXCEPTION(S) TO THE CERTIFICATION STATEMENT (19) ON OMB 83-I

There are no exceptions.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

Not applicable.

Attachments