

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION SUBMISSION

**POST-AWARD FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION SURVEY (OMB No. 3145-0157)**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. CIRCUMSTANCES MAKING COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY

On September 11, 1993, President Clinton issued Executive Order (EO) 12862, “Setting Customer Service Standards,” which clearly defined his vision that 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 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.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Budget Finance and Award (BFA) Division

of Institution and Award Support's (DIAS) main objective is to monitor Federal funding awarded by NSF to ensure that awardees comply with Federal regulations in administering their grants. DIAS uses techniques such as desk reviews and site visits to achieve its objectives. NSF is seeking a new clearance to conduct a survey to evaluate the site review team's performance in carrying out the site visit and related activities. Additionally, this survey will enable NSF to collect and analyze the cost impact of site visit and desk reviews on awardees.

This survey will evaluate the responsiveness and effectiveness of the site visits by collecting awardees' feedback about the process and recommendations. It will also assist NSF in analyzing costs to conduct on-site monitoring including pre-visit and post-visit effort, as well as awardee costs associated with responding to desk reviews. An internet-based survey is being proposed for the data collection.

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

The information will be used by NSF to evaluate the site visit performance of its employees and compile cost data associated with the site visit activities. The online survey will assist NSF with:

- Evaluating the proficiency of its site visit teams
- Compiling site visit cost data
- Assessing awardee satisfaction with NSF site visit teams
- Exploring trends related to costs of site visits, based on type and size of awardee organization.

3. USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information will be collected using a pre-populated internet-based survey system.

Participation will be voluntary for all awardee organizations that were evaluated through the site visits or desk reviews. Results will be kept in a computer based database.

4. EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION

No effort to collect similar data is being conducted within the agency. No similar data collection efforts outside the agency have been made to collect this data.

5. SMALL BUSINESS CONSIDERATIONS

The organizations that will be surveyed are colleges, universities, associations and other recipients of NSF grants. This data collection effort will not have a significant economic impact on small businesses or other small entities.

6. CONSEQUENCES OF LESS FREQUENT COLLECTION

This is a one-time data collection effort based on the occurrence of the site-visit and desk review. If this survey is not conducted, this will negatively affect NSF's ability to evaluate the

performance of NSF site-visit and desk review teams and limit its ability to identify improvement areas of NSF's compliance assistance to awardees. Moreover, it will impact NSF's ability to determine the cost impact of site visits and desk reviews on the awardee community.

7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR COLLECTION

Not applicable

8. FEDERAL REGISTER NOTICE (Include a copy of the Federal Register Notice)

The agency's notice, as required by 5 CFR 1320.5(d), was published in the Federal Register on January 24, 2005, at 70 FR 3398 and no comments were received.

9. OUTSIDE CONSULTATION

NSF hired a consulting firm, Booz Allen Hamilton, which is experienced in managing and conducting surveys and related issues. Issues discussed include availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and record keeping, disclosure, reporting format, and data elements.

10. GIFTS OR REMUNERATION

There is no payment or gift to awardees for completing the survey.

11. ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an important part of any study design. For this study, Booz Allen Hamilton will ensure the confidentiality of all organizations that choose to participate. A pledge of

confidentiality is a major incentive for potential respondents to participate. Any information provided will be treated as confidential under Section 9 of Title 13, U.S. Code. The information will be used only for statistical purposes.

All Booz Allen Hamilton staff have been instructed in confidentiality requirements and signed statements affirming this obligation. All completed surveys will be submitted electronically and kept in a secure database. The data collected might be shared with the federal government and other agencies.

12. QUESTIONS OF A SENSITIVE NATURE

No questions of a sensitive nature will be asked.

13. ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED HOUR BURDEN

The survey will be targeted to approximately 300 respondents annually with an estimated completion burden of 30 minutes per survey. The survey instrument will be tested and adjusted for response time. Exhibit A-1 shows the breakdown, which was used to derive the total burden hour estimate.

Exhibit A-1 Estimated Burden

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	RESPONSE TIME	BURDEN HOURS
Complete survey	300	30 minutes per response	150 hours

14. ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST BURDEN TO RESPONDENTS

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

There may be minor miscellaneous costs such as photocopying, office supplies, and communications.

15. ESTIMATES OF ANNUALIZED COST BURDEN TO THE GOVERNMENT

This survey will be provided to awardees following completion of a site visit or desk review.

The overall cost to plan, design, administer, and analyze survey results is approximately .25

FTE x 12 months, or \$ 23,000 (25% of FTE x 12 months x \$47.88).

16. CHANGES IN BURDEN

This is a new project.

17. DISPLAY OF EXPIRATION DATE

Expiration dates will be displayed on all materials.

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

There are no exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for

Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB Form 83-I.

B. DESCRIPTION OF INFORMATION COLLECTION

1. RESPONDENT UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING PLAN

We will not be implementing a sampling plan. We will solicit feedback from all awardees that have had a site visit or a desk review.

2. DATA COLLECTION

Data will be collected via an internet survey. The target population of the survey includes NSF awardees that will undergo either a site visit or desk review. The frame data will contain information that can be used to identify the awardees and can be used for data analysis. At a minimum, the population data will include the awardee's name, type of organization, awards reviewed, total amount of funding and the site visit date.

The target response for the survey is approximately 300 awardees each fiscal year. Because the survey will be voluntary, we anticipate a participation rate of 60%.

Information collected will be kept strictly confidential. Only aggregate statistical information may be shared with other federal agencies and the government.

NSF will contact awardees to inform them about the optional internet-based survey. Each respondent will be notified in writing one month before the site visit begins, informing them of the purpose of the survey, importance of keeping track of hours of work done specifically for the site visit and costs incurred during the visit process. The survey will also be mentioned

during the site visit by NSF team, informing the awardee of the importance of their input, and urging them to respond. No unusual problems are expected.

This is an annual survey. Subsequent annual cycles will exclude the set up and implementation steps and will only consist of conducting survey, analysis of data and reporting. Exhibit A-3 shows the breakdown of tasks.

3. RESPONSE RATES

Participation will be encouraged by using pre-notification techniques mentioned in section B.2. In addition, the notification letter will contain a phone number and an email address in order for respondents to contact Booz Allen Hamilton representative in case of questions about the survey.

The survey will be structured in a manner that is self-explanatory and easy to complete. A reminder notice will be sent to the awardees that do not submit the survey within the 30 days upon receiving the NSF post site visit letter.

4. CONTACT INFORMATION

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