

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION SUBMISSION**  
**SURVEY OF EFFECTIVENESS OF ENGINEERING RESEARCH CENTER INSTITU-**  
**TIONAL PARTNERS**

**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**

Engineering Research Centers (ERC) involve multiple institutions, structured as necessary to achieve a systems-level vision at the cusp of emerging discoveries in science and engineering.

Complementing the lead institution, an ERC typically has core and outreach affiliate partners as well as relationships with other institutions as appropriate to the research and education mission. The purpose of this survey is to collect customer satisfaction information on the perceived effectiveness of these partnership arrangements. The results of the survey will be used by NSF staff to improve the ERC program. Results will be shared with ERC Principal Investigators and their teams at the annual ERC meeting, to be held December 3-5, 2008. More generally, these results will provide information on best practices for successfully managing partnerships in ERCs.

### **3. USE OF AUTOMATION**

The proposed customer satisfaction survey will be completed electronically, through the Internet. Approximately 100 participants will be selected. These participants will be notified by e-mail and their responses will be kept anonymous. Likewise, prospective responders will be provided with contact information (e-mail and telephone number) for appropriate NSF staff in case there are questions or concerns.

### **4. EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION**

No other federal agency or directorate/division within NSF is involved in an effort to obtain this information from ERCs.

### **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 22, 2008 at 73 FR 3756 and March 28, 2008 at 73 FR 16725 and no substantial comments were received.

#### **OUTSIDE CONSULTATION**

The time required to take the survey is estimated by how long it takes NSF staff to answer the same questions.

#### **9. GIFTS OR REMUNERATION**

Not applicable.

#### **10. CONFIDENTIALITY PROVIDED TO RESPONDENTS**

The survey is intended to be anonymous, and prospective respondents will be notified accordingly.

However, it is possible that some respondents, of their own volition, will provide their names or other self-identifying information. To that end, there will be a statement on the survey that the comments and the respondent's name, if provided, may be made public. This was the advice previously given by NSF's OGC for similar surveys because of FOIA.

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**

The estimated number of respondents is not expected to exceed 100 and each survey is expected to require no more than 30 minutes (½ hour). Therefore the maximum expected burden is  $100 \times \frac{1}{2} \text{ hour} = 50 \text{ hours}$ .

### **ANNUALIZED COST TO RESPONDENTS**

The average respondent is expected to be at the associate professor level. The average annual (9 month) salary for an associate professor of engineering is \$82,857, based on salary information from the American Association of University Professors. The full report is available on the CUPA-HR website (<http://www.cupahr.org>). The hourly rate is estimated as \$57.53/hour. Therefore, the total annualized cost to respondents is estimated as  $\$57.53/\text{hour} \times 50 \text{ hours} = \$2,877$ .

### **13. CAPITAL/STARTUP COSTS**

Not applicable.

### **14. ANNUALIZED COST TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

The preparation and deployment of the survey is estimated at 10 hours of program officer staff, @ \$60/hr or \$600 and 40 hours of science assistant staff @\$40/hr or \$1600. The analysis and presentation of the data is estimated at 20 hours of program officer staff @ \$60/hr or \$1200 and 80 hours of science assistant staff @\$40/hr or \$3200. Total estimated cost is given as  $\$600 + \$1600 + \$1200 + \$3200 = \$6,600$ .

### **15. CHANGES IN BURDEN**

Not applicable.

### **16. PUBLICATION OF COLLECTION**

Not applicable.

### **17. SEEKING APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY OMB EXPIRATION DATE**

Not applicable.

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

There are no exceptions.

**B. STATISTICAL METHODS**

Not applicable.

Attachments