

Mini Supporting Statement Customer Satisfaction Survey for Applicants

Section A

A.1 Circumstances Requiring the Collection of Data

This survey will help fulfill the requirements of:

- Executive Order 12862, “Setting Customer Service Standards,” which directs Agencies to continually reform their management practices and operations to provide service to the public that matches or exceeds the best service available in the private sector; and
- The March 3, 1998 White House Memorandum, “Conducting Conversations with America to Further Improve Customer Service,” which directs Agencies to determine the kind and quality of service its customers want as well as their level of satisfaction with existing services.

A.2 Purposes and Uses of the Data

The survey data will help determine customers’ satisfaction with various components of the Early Independence Award (EIA) program. It will also indicate areas for improvement.

A.3 Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden

As appropriate, automated information technology will be used to collect and process information for this survey to reduce the burden on the public. The survey will be conducted online to ensure accessibility, security, and confidentiality.

A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication

Users will be asked to complete the survey only once.

A.5. Small Business

N/A

A.6 Consequences of Not Collecting the Information

The survey is considered appropriate to identify gaps and barriers and improve the request for applications next year. If the survey is not conducted, the EIA program will not be adapted to meet the applicants’ needs and the satisfaction with existing components will not be ascertained.

A.7. Special Circumstances Justifying Inconsistencies with Guidelines in 5 C.F.R. 1320.5

This survey will be implemented in a manner that fully complies with 5 C.F.R. 1320.5.

A.8. Consultation Outside the Agency

N/A

A.9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents

No payment or gift will be provided to survey participants

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Individual respondents will not be identified and participation will be strictly voluntary. Respondents will be assured that neither their participation/non-participation nor any responses to items will have any effect on their eligibility for or receipt of grants, contracts, or services.

A.11 Questions of a Sensitive Nature

No questions will be asked of a personal or sensitive nature.

A.12 Estimates of Response of Burden

Estimates of Annual Hours Burden				
Types of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Average Response Time	Annual Hour Burden
Junior scientists (applicants of the Early Independence Award Program)	150	1	15 min	37.5 h (2,250 min)

Annualized Cost to Respondents				
Types of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Response	Hourly Wage Rate	Respondent Cost
Junior scientists (applicants of the Early Independence Award Program)	150	1	\$45.76	\$1,716

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

N/A

A.14. Estimates of Costs to the Federal Government

Cost to the Federal government for the Customer Satisfaction Survey includes \$4,000 for the development of a web-based survey.

A.15. Changes in Burden

N/A

A.16. Plans for Publication, analysis and Schedule

Responses will be tabulated after the completion of the survey. Findings will be published in a report for the NIH Common Fund staff and scientific community within a timely fashion to contribute to the improvement of the Early Independence Award program and the development of future initiatives.

A.17. Approval to Not Display Expiration Date

We are not requesting an exemption to the display of the OMB Expiration date.

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

These surveys will comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.

Section B

B.1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

The customer satisfaction survey was created to obtain information from the junior scientists, applicants of the Early Independence Award program. It will be used to assess junior scientists' satisfaction with various components of the program.

There are 150 individuals in the target population. Given the small size, a census is preferred because it may provide higher quality information with little cost difference from a sample survey of a slightly smaller number of individuals.

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

The customer satisfaction survey will collect all information in a manner that is consistent with the following principles:

- Participation will be fully voluntary, and non-participation will have no impact on eligibility for or receipt of future grants, contracts, or services.
- Collected information will be limited to that which is needed to assess applicant satisfaction.

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

Consistent with sound survey methodology, the design of the online surveys will include approaches to maximize response rates, while retaining the voluntary nature of the effort. We will use the following approaches:

- Participation will be made as easy and non-burdensome as possible by designing each online survey to take no more than an average of 15 minutes to complete.
- The online survey is designed to be clear and easy to navigate. The online survey has skip-patterns so that each respondent is only presented with questions that are relevant to his or her specific situation. Also, the online survey contains multiple choice and close-ended questions.
- The introductory e-mail invitations will inform participants that the purpose is gather opinions about the EIA program. The email will provide a point of contact for additional information. The email will provide a hyperlink to the survey website. Immediately afterwards, in a separate email, a user code will be sent to all participants for them to access the survey online.
- One week after the e-mail invitation, a reminder e-mail will be sent to all non-respondents. The e-mail will encourage those who have not yet logged in to the website to participate in the survey. Immediately afterwards, a separate email containing a user code will be sent to non-respondents for them to access the survey online.
- One week after the first reminder e-mail, a second e-mail reminder will be sent to all non-respondents. The e-mail will reinforce the purpose and relevance of the survey. Immediately afterwards, a separate email containing a user code will be sent to the non-respondents for them to access the survey online.

B.4. Tests of Procedures of Methods

In April-May 2011, a similar version of the survey was administered to applicants under OMB clearance 0925-0476. In February 2012, feedback was solicited to revise the survey. Based on the feedback of fewer than 9 respondents, four questions were slightly changed to increase clarity, and one question was removed._