

Supporting Statement
U.S. Department of Commerce
Minority Business Development Agency
National Minority Enterprise Development Week Awards Program Requirements
OMB Control No. 0640-XXXX

A. JUSTIFICATION

This is a new information collection.

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

The mission of the Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) is to enhance the growth and expansion of minority business enterprises. The MBDA is the only federal agency created to foster the establishment and growth of minority-owned businesses in America. It actively promotes the growth and competitiveness of large, medium, and small minority business enterprises by offering management and technical assistance through a network of regional and local business centers throughout the United States.

One of MBDA's largest initiatives is the annual National Minority Enterprise Development (MED) Week Conference. The conference recognizes the role that minority entrepreneurs play in building the American economy through the creation of jobs, products and services, in addition to supporting their local communities. The MED Week awards program is a key element in the conference as it celebrates the outstanding achievements of minority entrepreneurs. In the past, the MED Week Awards Program did not accept nominations from the general public, but instead relied on an internal nomination process. While the program was always competitive and fair, the voluntary collection of information from the public will enhance the program and allow for more candidates to have an opportunity to participate.

The awards are commemorative and will be given in the following categories:

1. Minority Construction Firm of the Year;
2. Minority Manufacturer of the Year;
3. Minority Retail or Service Firm of the Year;
4. Minority Technology Firm of the Year;
5. Minority Supplier Distributor of the Year;
6. Advocate of the Year;
7. Media Award;

8. Distinguished Supplier Diversity Award;
9. Access to Capital Award;
10. Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award; and
11. Abe Venable Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Regional Awards will be given in all categories, except the Ronald H. Brown Leadership Award and the Abe Venable Legacy Award for Lifetime Achievement, in ceremonies in MBDA's Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, New York and San Francisco regions, respectively. The National MED Awards, which include all of the awards referenced above, will be given at the annual MED Week Awards Gala held in Washington, D.C.

Nomination packages are distributed by MBDA to MBDA funded organizations, non-governmental organizations and to other interested parties. The nominations may be submitted by individuals or organizations in any category applicable and may be submitted for more than one award category; self-nominations are also permitted. In addition, nominations may be submitted by MBDA staff or by representatives of MBDA-funded projects. However, nominations may not be submitted by members of the regional or headquarters review panels or by MBDA Selecting Officials.

The nomination package includes the: (1) nomination form; (2) narratives addressing the specific evaluation criterion; and (3) biography of the nominee or an overview of the organization (as applicable).

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.

The information will be used by MBDA's headquarters and regional offices to determine those applicants best meeting the pre-announced selection criteria. MBDA must collect two kinds of information: (a) information identifying the nominee and nominator, and (b) information explaining why the nominee should be given the award. The use of a nomination form standardizes and limits the information collected as part of the nomination process. This makes the competition fair and eases any burden on applicants and reviewers alike. Participation in the competition is voluntary.

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

The MED Week Awards Package is available for printing and downloading (.pdf file format) on MBDA's website at www.mbda.gov or at the MED Week website at www.medweek.gov. Nomination packages may be submitted by electronic mail to the applicable MBDA contact listed in the package. Alternatively, an applicant may mail the application to the applicable MBDA Regional or Headquarters Office as provided in the package. While electronic use may be easier, it is not necessary to own a computer or to have access to the Internet in order to participate in the MED Week Awards Program. Interested parties may request a paper copy of the application by contacting MBDA.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

MBDA is unaware of any duplication with respect to this information collection.

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

It is anticipated that the majority of the nominations will come from non-governmental organizations and representatives of large corporations who will nominate minority businesses which often include small businesses. The only burden would be on small businesses who want to self-nominate for the awards. In this case, the burden of self-nomination is not substantial.

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

If the information is not collected MBDA would be unable to determine which nominees meet the award criteria. MBDA would not be able to open its awards program to the public, which would diminish the pool of available candidates and would prevent the public from having an opportunity to participate. The MED Week awards program is MBDA's most prominent way to honor successful minority entrepreneurs and all should have access.

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

This information collection is consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to submission to the OMB. Summarize the public comments receive in response to the 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 comments was published on December 22, 2008 (Vol. 73, pg. 78291). No comments were received.

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

The MED Week Program presents each winner with an award which is determined each year. It may be a plaque, decorative bowl, statuette, etc. The awards are strictly honorary.

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

There are no assurances of confidentiality. However, MBDA treats nominees' admissions with care. In no event is proprietary information disclosed or released.

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

None of these collections of information include information of a sensitive nature.

12. Provide an estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The estimated burden hours have been determined based on discussions with individuals who have submitted applications for MBDA's awards program in the past. Experience has shown that nomination process requires 2 hours to complete.

100 application packages X 2 hours = **200 hours**

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information (excluding the cost of any hour burden shown in Question 12).

Not Applicable.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government.

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is based on salary and time spent evaluating applications. Based on past evaluations, it has been determined that it will require three MBDA employees to process the applications at \$37 per employee, per hour. Therefore, MBDA estimates that there will be 100 nominations. Using these estimates, the total cost to the federal government would be \$37 x 100 applications x 3 MBDA employees = **\$11,100 and \$5,000** budget for the awards presented to winners.

TOTAL FEDERAL GOVERNMENT COST = \$16,100.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

This is a new collection and there are no program changes or adjustments.

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

Specific details of the information collected from respondents will generally not be published. However, some of the information collected from the selected awards winners, such as biographical information and achievements, may be published in the MED Week Program booklets and on the MBDA and MED Week websites.

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 for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions" statement.

No exceptions are requested.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

This information collection does not employ statistical methods. MBDA is not aware of any statistical sampling methods that might reduce burden or improve the accuracy of results.