

## MEMORANDUM

Date: August 12, 2010

To: Shellie Wilkie Martinez, Desk Officer  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Lynda T. Carlson, Director  
Science Resources Statistics Division

Via: Suzanne Plimpton, Clearance Officer  
National Science Foundation (NSF)

Subject: Notification of data collection under generic clearance

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you of NSF's plan to conduct a brief survey of workshop participants under the generic clearance for survey improvement projects (OMB #3145-0174). This activity is associated with the NSF Microbusiness Innovation Science and Technology Survey.

### **Background**

The Division of Science Resources Statistics (SRS) of NSF is broadly tasked with measuring the role of science and technology (S&T) in the United States' economy and abroad. A major component of this activity is its sponsorship of the Business Research and Development (R&D) Innovation Survey (BRDIS) (previously Survey of Industrial R&D), which collects information annually on research and development and related activities performed within the United States by industrial firms. However, businesses with fewer than five employees are excluded from this survey.

The National Academy of Sciences' Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT) reviewed NSF's portfolio of R&D surveys and in 2004 recommended that NSF explore ways to measure firm innovation and investigate the incidence of R&D activities in growing sectors, such as small business enterprises, not currently covered by BRDIS.

As a result, NSF has decided to undertake a survey of R&D and other innovation-related items among very small (i.e., micro), independent U.S. businesses with fewer than five employees. In addition to general business information -- primary business activity (NAICS code), year business was formed, and number of employees -- this survey proposes to collect data on R&D, innovation funding, employment, related activities (such as sales of significantly improved goods and services; operating agreements and licensing activities; technology transfer; patents and intellectual property; and sources of technical knowledge), measures of these small firms' entrepreneurial effectiveness, and demographic characteristics of the entrepreneur.

NSF has completed significant work towards the development of a questionnaire. As a result of the CNSTAT recommendation, NSF conducted cognitive interviews in 2008 with 25 U.S. based small businesses that had fewer than five employees. The objective of these interviews was twofold: 1) determine the respondent's ability to answer core R&D related questions extracted from questions asked on NSF's Survey of Business R&D and 2) test a limited set of innovation-related questions (under OMB Control Number 3145-0174).

The next step is to conduct a data user workshop. The objectives of the data user workshop are twofold: (1) gain a better perspective on data user needs and priorities of needs among users and (2) understand how microbusiness data will be used.

The data users' workshop will be held in Arlington, VA on September 29, 2010. Approximately 40 individuals from the federal, state and local government, academic, and private sectors will be invited to attend this one-day workshop on data needs. In order to better inform the workshop discussion areas, we would like to send the workshop invitees the attached brief survey regarding their data use and needs. It will be sent three weeks prior to the workshop.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

An e-mail form will be used to collect data from the 40 workshop invitees. The e-mail will ask respondents to complete an attached questionnaire asking about their data needs. A copy of the instrument is attached as Appendix A.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

As soon as clearance is obtained, we will e-mail the questionnaire to the workshop invitees with a request for response by September 15, 2010.

### **Burden Information**

We expect an 80 percent response rate to the e-mail questionnaire, which equals roughly 32 individuals. We expect each response to require 30 minutes. Therefore, we estimate a total of approximately 16 hours of respondent burden (i.e.,  $32 * 30 \text{ minutes} = 960 \text{ minutes}$  divided by 60 minutes = 16 hours).

### **Incentive Payments**

There are no incentive payments.

## **Contact Information**

The contact person for questions regarding this data collection is:

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Attachments

cc: Fran Featherston