

“NICHD Research Partner Satisfaction Surveys”

Supporting Statement

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

This is a request, made by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) renew, under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, a generic clearance for the NICHD to conduct research partner satisfaction surveys as part of their ongoing monitoring of Institute program operations and research-related activities. These efforts are made under P.L. 42 USC 285, and partner satisfaction surveys are administered according to Executive Order 12862, which directs federal agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services. OMB granted approval to the NICHD for a generic clearance on October 31, 2004. The title is: *The NICHD Generic Clearance for Research Partner Surveys*. The OMB Control number is: 0925-0532.

The NICHD was founded in 1963. Its mission is to ensure, through scientific research and research training, the birth of healthy infants and the opportunity for each to reach full potential in adulthood, unimpaired by physical or mental disabilities. The NICHD conducts and supports scientific research and research training surrounding the many factors that protect and enhance the process of human growth and development. The developmental focus of the NICHD means

that its research portfolio is unusually broad. NICHD programs include research on infant mortality, birth defects, learning disorders, developmental disabilities, vaccine development, and demographic and behavioral sciences, among others. In addition to supporting basic research, clinical trials, and epidemiological studies that explore health processes, the NICHD forms partnerships with organizations or institutions to ensure effective use of scientific findings and research products.

Central to the performance of these research-related activities is the Office of Science Policy, Analysis and Communication (OSPAC). Among its roles and responsibilities, OSPAC is the NICHD component that leads and coordinates activities to help the Institute determine its programmatic and scientific objectives and priorities. In addition, the OSPAC has a communications program and supports the development of strategic plans to alert its research partners to new scientific findings and opportunities for research collaboration.

OSPAC also supports trans-Institute planning and policy development, as well as program management, through data collection and program assessments. Some current efforts in this regard focus on interpreting research and training data; reviewing scientific literature; conducting bibliometric analyses; and identifying key scientific advances emanating from different research programs. Using the previous OMB generic clearance to support these efforts and to support program planning and management, the OSPAC conducted several assessments of several major programs or initiatives in the past three years. Some examples of these

programs included the Extramural Associates Research Development Award (EARDA) Program; the National Cooperative Program for Infertility Research (NCPIR) Program; and the Partnerships to Reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American Communities.

These program reviews successfully incorporated direct feedback from NICHD's research partners by means of survey instruments using appropriate modalities to yield quality data while minimizing burden. The NICHD defines its research partners as those individuals who have a direct connection to the operations and outcomes of an NICHD research program or initiative. This direct customer feedback has proved extremely valuable to the NICHD, for both program management and strategic planning purposes. For this reason, the NICHD is applying to renew this generic clearance to support research partner satisfaction surveys. Over the next three years, the NICHD plans to conduct program management and assessment surveys related to several other important policies and programs. These include the Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (MRDD) program; the NIH Pediatric Inclusion Policy; the Reproductive Medicine Research Networks; and NICHD's Institutional Career Development Awards.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The survey response data collected under this generic clearance will augment the NICHD's ongoing efforts to assess research-related activities to improve program

planning and management. The survey questions will be designed to measure two distinct types of opinions held by NICHD research partners:

- Individual Satisfaction Questions: This includes questions that will help the NICHD understand the satisfaction of individual research partners with specific programs or initiatives, particularly with respect to how the scientific aims or operations of a program or initiative directly affects the partner's own research activities.
- Program Assessment Questions: These include questions that will help the NICHD understand how its research partners assess the overall program effectiveness of NICHD programs or initiatives at meeting the program's, or the Institute's, scientific aims or mission and their opinions about how the overall planning and management of those programs can be improved.

Thus, the first set of questions addresses research partners as individual and direct beneficiaries of specific NICHD programs or initiatives, while the second set of questions views partners as general stakeholders or informed experts on NICHD programs or initiatives.

In the past three years, the NICHD OSPAC has used this data collection to assess participant satisfaction and to provide information for strategic assessments of several programs. These include the Extramural Research Associates Program, as

well as institutional training programs funded by NICHD at universities around the country. The NICHD has found that our research partners greatly appreciate the opportunity to express their opinions about the overall programs and specific features that might be improved, and we have received valuable information that has helped us improve implementation of our programs. The OSPAC will continue this data collection in order to use the survey findings to improve NICHD's research programs and initiatives in the following ways:

- a) assess the effectiveness and efficiency of program operations;
- b) identify opportunities for improving program performance;
- c) develop plans to incorporate innovations in program management;
- d) measure partner satisfaction and document program outcomes for governmental accountability reporting; and
- e) identify the need for creating new programs or initiatives or restructuring existing ones to respond to emerging scientific opportunities and public health needs.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

Whenever possible, the NICHD will use advanced technology to collect and process data to reduce respondent burden and make data processing and reporting more timely and efficient. The majority of data collections will take place online using automated survey forms. In all data collections, the number of questions will be held to the absolute minimum required for the intended use of the data.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

The NICHD will conduct data collections only after determining that similar information does not exist. This determination will be based on a review of the data in the NIH IMPAC II database and existing Institute records.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

The burden on small businesses or other small entities will be reduced by the voluntary nature of the data collections.

6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

A single questionnaire will be administered once per project per specific respondent group. Any less frequent response would not yield useful data for program planning and management improvements.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5CFR 1320.5

The request fully complies with regulation 5CFR 1320.5.

8. Comments in Response to the *Federal Register* Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

A. As required by 5CFR 1320.8(d), a notice of this proposed data collection appeared in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 142, pg. 40887-40888 on July 25, 2007. There were no public comments.

B. Outside consultation was conducted with two national organizations (the

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation and the American Psychological Association). These three organizations are representative of the diverse groups of NICHD research partners. We contacted the following individuals who provided us with comments and suggestions on the NICHD draft supported statement for expedited generic clearance:

Marina Weiss, Director

March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, District of Columbia Office, 2700 South Quincy Street, Suite 220, Arlington, VA 22206

Telephone: (703) 824-0111

Howard S. Kurtzman, Ph.D. Deputy Executive Director for Science

American Psychological Association. 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242

Telephone: (202)-336-5939

OSPAC staff personally discussed future plans and provided this supporting statement to these contact persons.

9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

In most cases, the NICHD does not plan to offer remuneration. If remuneration is considered critical to successfully field a specific data collection effort, the OSPAC will make a specific request to OMB with ample justification. The request will identify:

- the target audience,
- the rationale for remuneration,

- the dollar value of the individual payment, and
- the total projected cost of remuneration for the specific data collection. This information will be included in the submission package described in 16A.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

In general, partner satisfaction surveys will not collect individually identifiable information. However, it is possible that some data collections (e.g., questionnaires for program-eligible grant applicants or unsuccessful grant applicants) may fall under the Privacy Act. For these data collections, the OSPAC will maintain records in compliance with 09-25-0156, the Privacy Act system of records.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The majority of questions asked will not be of a sensitive nature. However, for certain research-related activities, some research partner surveys may ask questions about general income in relation to debt burden from education, work history, and attitudes and behaviors related to NICHD research activities or programs. To avoid fear of disclosure of sensitive information, participants will be told that their responses will be treated in a confidential manner, and will be reported in terms of aggregate numbers or summary statistics. Respondents will also be informed that they need not answer any question that makes them feel uncomfortable or that they simply do not wish to answer. Interviewers administering telephone surveys and in-person interviews will be trained to ask questions in a sensitive manner and to handle any subsequent discussion skillfully.

12. Estimates of Hour Burden Including Annualized Hourly Costs

A. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours:

| Type of Respondents / Survey Modality | Estimated Number of Respondents | Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent | Average Burden Hours Per Response | Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours Requested |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Web-based | 24,000 | 1 | 0.167 | 4,008.00 |
| Paper Survey | 1,500 | 1 | 0.25 | 375.00 |
| Telephone | 2,000 | 1 | 0.50 | 1,000.00 |
| In-person | 500 | 1 | 1.00 | 500.00 |
| Total | 28,000 | | | 5,883.00 |

B. Estimated Annualized Burden Costs:

An average hourly salary of approximately \$18.62 is assumed for all respondents, based on the Department of Labor (DOL) civilian labor force average wage for 2005 (the latest year these data were available). With a maximum annual respondent burden of 5,883 hours, the overall annual cost of respondents' time for the proposed data collection is estimated to be a maximum of \$109,541.46 (5,883.00 hrs x \$18.62). There will be no direct costs to the respondents other than their time to participate in each study.

13. Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondent or Record Keepers

There will be no capital, operating, or maintenance costs to the respondent.

14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The approximate annualized cost to the government for this data collection effort is \$465,371.80. Total government personnel costs will be \$14,786.80, assuming a median GS-14 annual salary of \$106,331 for an NIH professional to govern and guide the projects, and a median GS-11 annual salary of \$63,135 for administrative and technical support in processing individual survey instruments through clearance. Salaries are based on the January 2007 General Schedule (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/07tables/html/dcb.asp>). Details are provided in the table below.

Contractor support will be required to carry out the data collection efforts. A typical project costs \$150,000, of which \$90,000 is devoted to survey activities. The OSPAC anticipates undertaking no more than 5 projects in 12 months.

Mailing costs for paper surveys total \$585 assuming a US Postal rate of \$0.39 per ounce.

| Activity | Cost |
|---|-------------|
| Administration of the Clearance | |
| NIH expertise - 5% FTE @ \$106,331/yr | \$5,316.55 |
| Administrative support - 15% FTE \$63,135/yr | \$9,470.25 |
| Contract Support for Data Collection | |
| 5 projects per year @ \$90,000 per project | 450,000.00 |
| Mailing Cost for Paper Surveys | |

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1,500 surveys x \$0.39 | 585.00 |
| | |
| Total | \$465,371.80 |

15. Changes in Hour Burden

This is a renewal for NICHD’s generic clearance authorization. The burden hours have increased somewhat under this renewal application. Because the program has been so successful, the NICHD is looking to apply the customer satisfaction surveys to a wider variety of programs within the Institute.

16. Plans for Tabulation, Publication, and Project Time Schedule

A. Time Schedule

The OSPAC will assume responsibility for compliance with all criteria associated with clearing individual partner satisfaction surveys and for working with all parties who have responsibility for OMB clearance at the NIH and within the NICHD. Working with the NICHD program directors, the OSPAC has identified candidate programs for review, such as the NICHD Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Program, Reproductive Medicine Research Networks, and the Learning Disabilities Centers Research Program. For all major projects, the OSPAC will work closely with the director of the program or initiative to conduct feasibility and methodological design studies; develop proposals to obtain funds; and prepare statements of work for hiring contractor support. Once an experienced firm has been contracted, the OSPAC’s professional and program staff will work with the

firm to:

- choose appropriate survey modalities for proposed data collections;
- develop and pilot test survey questions that are appropriate for the target audience and the survey modality;
- design survey instruments to include the OMB clearance number, expiration date, and burden disclosure information; and
- process the survey instruments through clearance to obtain expedited approval from OMB.

A sample survey questionnaire is provided is attached. Survey instruments will be submitted for approval in a package containing the documents set forth below:

| Document | Contains at minimum |
|----------------------|--|
| Cover Memo | NICHD letterhead Date Routing information "NICHD Research Partner Satisfaction Surveys" Title of the Project |
| Submission Form | Date Title of the Project OMB Clearance number Survey instrument titles Internal control numbers for each survey instrument Burden hours requested for each survey instrument Total burden hours for the project |
| Project Plan Summary | Synopsis or outline of the project plan Sampling plan, if applicable Analysis plan, if applicable |
| | Statement of compliance with Privacy Act, if applicable Justification for sensitive questions, if applicable Justification for remuneration, if applicable |
| Survey Instrument(s) | OMB Clearance number in upper right Expiration date in upper right Internal control number Survey questions Burden disclosure information at bottom |

The OSPAC will publish the procedures for using the generic clearance on the NICHD Intranet.

B. Publication

Study results will be used internally by the OSPAC to fine-tune program objectives and scientific priorities for the Institute and improve program management.

Executive summaries, overview reports, articles, and presentations may be developed for decision-makers and the Institute's advisory council, and distributed as appropriate to share certain findings among NIH's other Institutes, Centers, and

Offices.

C. Analysis Plan

Each survey instrument will be administered as part of an overall plan for a particular research-related activity. It is conceivable that several surveys will be administered in varied modalities during the course of a single project. Therefore, the analysis plan for the survey data will be incorporated into the overall analysis of that activity. Analysis plans developed by contractors will be reviewed by contract specialists from the OSPAC. A summary will be provided to OMB in the submission package described in 16A.

17. Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate

No exemption is requested.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

This data collection has been designed in accordance with the requirements specified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I. No exceptions to certification are requested.

