

MEMORANDUM

August 17, 2012

To: Shelly Martinez, Desk Officer
Office of Management and Budget

From: John R. Gawalt, Acting Director
National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics

Via: Suzanne Plimpton, Clearance Officer
National Science Foundation

Subject: Notification of information collection under generic clearance

The purpose of this memorandum is to inform you that the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (NCSES) of the National Science Foundation (NSF) plans to conduct a methodological study to clarify the campuses for which institutional participants reported in the FY 2011 Survey of Science and Engineering Research Facilities under the generic clearance for survey improvement projects (OMB number 3145-0101).

Background

Following extensive Congressional hearings on the research facilities needs of colleges and universities, Congress directed NSF to collect and report data on the status of science and engineering (S&E) research facilities at higher education institutions in NSF's 1986 reauthorization (P.L. 99-159). NSF conducts the Survey of Science and Engineering Research Facilities on a biennial basis to meet this Congressional mandate.

NCSES has determined that uncertainty exists as to how institutions account for S&E research facilities at their campuses and other entities when completing the research space component (part 1) of the FY 2011 Survey of Science and Engineering Research Facilities. Many institutions are comprised of various constituent locations, branches and campuses under a range of administrative structures. Therefore, it is necessary and feasible to clarify this issue through a short, one-time, follow-up questionnaire.

The purpose of this subsequent questionnaire is to understand whether participants report uniformly for their locally administered campuses or whether they report for other campuses in their system, which could create double-counting in the survey. Guidance is currently provided on the survey in this regard to specific institutions with apparent potential problems. This investigation will provide NSF with the information needed to provide proper guidance in the future to all institutions.

Data Collection Procedures

Two hundred and twelve of the 541 institutions that participated in the FY 2011 Facilities Survey from October 2011 to April 2012 were identified as having multiple campuses, locations or other entities through the NCSES Taxonomy of Institutional Names (TIN). The established survey contacts at these 212 institutions will be contacted through e-mail, which will direct them to a

Web form. The Web-based questionnaire will provide with a tailored list of campuses, schools, branches and other entities that are part of their larger institutional structure. Space will be provided for them to name any entities that were not in the provided list. Participants will be asked to clarify whether research space was reported for these entities and why research space was not reported for others through several checkboxes and text fields. Participants will also be able to provide comments on this issue. (See the questionnaire model in attachment A)

Data Collection Instrument

A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.

Confidentiality

Respondents will be informed of their privacy and confidentiality rights, including the right to decline participation altogether. Except for certain sensitive questions on the FY 2011 Facilities Survey, institution-specific responses to the Facilities survey questionnaire are made publically available. The paragraphs below convey the confidentiality information that will be provided to all respondents:

This information is solicited under the authority of the National Science Foundation Act of 1950 as amended, and other applicable federal laws. Your response is voluntary and failure to provide some or all of the requested information will not in any way adversely affect you.

The average time to complete this survey is about 5 minutes. If you wish to comment on the burden of completing this survey, contact Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, NSF, via e-mail at splimpto@nsf.gov or call 1-703-292-7556. Or you may write to the office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (OMB Number 3145-0101), Washington, DC 20503

Burden Information

Based on the limited scope of the questions and the fact that participants are simply clarifying their prior, recent submission, we expect the burden to be approximately 5 minutes per institution. Therefore, the estimated respondent burden is 18 hours. This questionnaire was pretested on 4 institutions, including post-survey interviews. After making some adjustments to clarify language, 4 further institutions were pretested. Post-survey interviews were conducted with 3 of these institutions.

Incentive Payments

There are no incentive payments.

Contact Information

The contact person for questions regarding this data collection is:

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Attachments

- Attachment A: Facilities Campuses Questionnaire
- Attachment B: Facilities Recruitment E-mail

cc: John Gawalt
Frederic J. Wendling
John Jankowski
Stephen H. Cohen