

**U.S. Department of Commerce  
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)  
Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Program  
Advanced Manufacturing Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge  
Client Impact Survey  
OMB Control No. 0693-XXXX**

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

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

The objective of the Advanced Manufacturing Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (AMJIAC) is to provide strategic, catalytic funding for competitive, high-potential regional partnerships that have the potential to accelerate innovation and strengthen capacity in advanced manufacturing. The objectives of the challenge are to support job creation, encourage economic development, and enhance the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturers in regions across the country.

The AMJIAC is a partnership among the U.S. Department of Commerce's (DOC) Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration (DOL-ETA), the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), and the National Science Foundation (NSF).

Ten (10) Competitive Award Recipients were selected through a competitive multi-agency grant process announced in May 2012 (submitted as part of this collection) to support initiatives that strengthen advanced manufacturing at the local level. This announcement is part of the submission package. The funds will help the ten partnerships support local efforts to spur job creation through a variety of projects, including initiatives that connect innovative small suppliers with large companies, link research with the start-ups that can commercialize new ideas, and train workers with skills that firms need to capitalize on business opportunities. The partners are located in Pennsylvania, California, New York, Oklahoma, Washington, Michigan, and Tennessee.

The information collected from the companies served by the ten AMJIAC Competitive Award Recipients will provide all of the agencies with information about the outcomes and impacts of the AMJIAC program on U.S. manufacturers. Obtained from the companies, this information will include quantified impacts on their sales, cost savings, employment growth, and additional investment. These figures will be used to determine the effectiveness of the project work and to gauge the overall success of the AMJIAC project.

The information collected for the AMJIAC project is very similar to the information collected previously approved by OMB - the MEP Center Operations survey (OMB Control No. 0693-0021); and the MEP Expanded Services Client Impact Survey - eCAR (Cooperative Agreement Recipient) survey (OMB Control No. 0693-0060).

**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 collected annually from Competitive Award Recipient clients. It is used for the following purposes:

- Program Accountability
- Analysis and Research
- Reports to Stakeholders
- Continuous Improvement
- Knowledge Sharing
- Identification of Distinctive Practices
- Award Recipient Evaluation

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

Collection of this information will be done through a web-based survey instrument. Respondents will be sent their login information and a link to the survey via email. MEP uses a 3<sup>rd</sup>-party survey vendor to manage the survey process. The process is outlined below.

- A list of the award recipient's clients is sent to the 3<sup>rd</sup> party survey vendor by MEP.
- The survey vendor sends emails to the clients with a url to access the survey
- Clients access the survey via email link in the email
- 3<sup>rd</sup>-party survey vendor sends reminder emails on a weekly basis to clients that have not completed the survey
- Reminder emails can be sent more frequently if requested by award recipients

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

Due to the unique partnership relationship between AMJIAC partners and the Competitive Award Recipients and their clients, comparable data are not collected from manufacturers. Consultation with other offices within the Department of Commerce (DOC) have been used to gather background information about topics and about previously used approaches to increase knowledge base for the local Competitive Award Recipients. As a result, the information to be collected through this system will not duplicate any existing collection efforts.

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

This collection does involve small businesses and questions have been kept to a minimum in an effort to decrease the overall burden. Also, all questions are multiple choice or binary. There are no required open questions.

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

The data collected will help NIST MEP monitor and evaluate the Competitive Award Recipients' participation in the program and to provide Congress with quantitative information that it requires from government-supported programs. This data will be collected on a quarterly basis and will enable NIST MEP to identify Competitive Award Recipients in need of immediate assistance. Less frequent collection of data would result in the unacceptable situation of making significant policy decisions on the basis of obsolete and potentially misleading information. It might also delay the provision of assistance to the Competitive Award Recipients.

If the information is not collected, the partnership staff will be unable to monitor Competitive Award Recipient performance and ensure that the AMJIAC project is meeting the goal of “providing strategic, catalytic funding for competitive, high-potential regional partnerships that have the potential to accelerate innovation and strengthen capacity in advanced manufacturing.”

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

Not applicable.

**8. Provide information of the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that 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 June 7, 2013 (Vol.78, page 34346).

One (1) public comment was received on June 11, 2013 from “Jean Public” in response to the notice. No action was taken regarding this comment. The public comment has been included in this request.

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

Not applicable.

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

No assurance of confidentiality is given. Data collected will only be used in aggregate. There is no intent to publish or distribute the information collected, and the information collected will be used for only internal deliberations, except as required by Federal law, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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

Not applicable.

**12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.**

200 respondents annually x 15 minutes per respondent = 50 burden hours.

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).**

Not Applicable.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

The annual cost of \$20,000 is based on an estimate of hosting the new survey on internal server, as well as additional man-hours needed to administer the survey, including programming and help desk activities, which includes the cost of analyzing and compiling the data.

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

This is a new information collection request.

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

The data will be collected for internal review purposes and to monitor the Competitive Award Recipients, as well as for reporting to Congress. Reports dealing with the characteristics and performance of the Competitive Award Recipients will include trends, benchmarks, statistical

tables and charts generated from the database. Information will be presented in the following methods:

- Promotional/marketing brochures
- Competitive Award Recipient Reports
- Internal Reports
- Presentations to MEP and other agency stakeholders
- Competitive Award Recipient Reviews
- Reports to State Legislatures

**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 statement.**

Not applicable.