

Date: August 16, 2013

To: Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Through: NIH Project Clearance Officer, OPERA, OER, OD

From: Ravi Basavappa, Ph.D.  
Director of the NIH Early Independence Award Program  
Office of Strategic Coordination  
Office of the Director, NIH

Subject: Process Evaluation of the NIH Director's Early Independence Award Program (EIA). OMB Control Number 0925-0665. Expiration Date 12/31/2015.  
Request: 1) modify some questions for two online surveys: Survey for Point of Contact at EIA Host Institution; and Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Versions A&B) and 2) increase the number of respondents for surveys.

The OMB clearance for the process evaluation of the NIH Director's Early Independence Award program was granted on December 13, 2012. Below are the two requests:

**1) Modify some questions for two online surveys to be administered in the second year of the award**

In our approved package, we planned for phone interviews for the first year of award and online surveys for the second year of award. We successfully conducted the phone interviews with the points of contact at EIA host institutions and the Early Independent Principal Investigators for the first year of award. Based on the information gathered in the interviews, we propose some minor changes to the approved online surveys for the second year of award. This approach is consistent with the original package that was submitted for clearance, in which we noted that the evaluation served to provide lessons learned to the NIH, and we are using the lessons learned from the interviews to make the surveys shorter. These proposed modifications do not change the purpose and objectives of the process evaluation. Below are the proposed modifications:

**1.1 Survey for Point of Contact at EIA Host Institution**

The approved online survey for the Point of Contact at the EIA Host Institution consisted of 16 questions. The proposed modifications will result in only eight questions. As a result, the estimated burden for the survey will be decreased from 60 to 20 minutes. Attachment 1 contains the approved Survey for Point of Contact at EIA Host Institution with tracked changes to show the questions to be removed, added, and reworded. Attachment 2 contains the proposed survey. Below are the proposed revisions:

- 1) Remove nine questions. Since this survey is a follow up to the phone interviews conducted in the first year, these questions are not needed in the second year.
- 2) Reword five questions. These questions are reworded to reflect that they are follow-up questions.

3) Add one question. The purpose of the new question is to provide an opportunity for the point of contact to share any additional comments about the Early Independence Award program or the Principal Investigator.

### **1.2 Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Version A)—for those who have NOT changed host institutions**

The approved online survey for the Early Independent Principal Investigator (Version A) consisted of 34 questions. The proposed modifications will result in only 22 questions. As a result, the estimated burden for the survey will be decreased from 60 to 45 minutes. Attachment 3 contains the approved Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Version A) with tracked changes to show the questions to be removed, added, and reworded. Attachment 4 contains the proposed survey. Below are the proposed modifications:

- 1) Remove 13 questions. Since this survey is a follow up to the phone interviews conducted in the first year, these questions are not needed in the second year.
- 2) Reword 12 questions. These questions are reworded to reflect that they are follow-up questions. Also, some questions were combined for simplicity.
- 3) Add two questions. The purpose of these new questions is to determine the PI's title in the second year and to obtain information about the collaborations that the PI is involved in.

### **1.3 Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Version B)—for those who have changed host institutions**

The approved online survey for the Early Independent Principal Investigator (Version B) consisted of 36 questions. The proposed modifications will result in only 23 questions. As a result, the estimated burden for the survey will be decreased from 60 to 45 minutes. Attachment 5 contains the approved Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Version B) with tracked changes to show the questions to be removed, added, and reworded. Attachment 6 contains the proposed survey. Below are the proposed modifications:

- 1) Remove 13 questions. Since this survey is a follow up to the phone interviews conducted in the first year, these questions are not needed in the second year.
- 2) Reword 11 questions. These questions are reworded to reflect that they are follow-up questions. Also, some questions were combined for simplicity.
- 3) Add one question. The purpose of the new question is to obtain information about the collaborations that the PI is involved in.

### **2) Increase the number of respondents for data collection activities**

As reported in the Biomedical Workforce Working Group Report ([http://acd.od.nih.gov/Biomedical\\_research\\_wgreport.pdf](http://acd.od.nih.gov/Biomedical_research_wgreport.pdf)), a working group of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD) was tasked with developing a model for a sustainable and diverse U.S. biomedical research workforce. Based on this analysis and recognizing that there are limits to NIH's ability to control aspects of the training pipeline, the working group was asked to make recommendations for actions that NIH should take to support a future sustainable biomedical research infrastructure. The recommendation presented to Dr. Collins, NIH Director, was to increase the number of awards for the NIH Director's Early Independence Award Program. In anticipation that this recommendation will be implemented, we revised Table A.12.1: Annualized Estimate of Hour Burden. In this table, we have increased the number of awardees (respondents) and decreased the average time per response to reflect the changes to the

online surveys mentioned in Item 1 above. The burden increased by 25 hours. The average number of respondents has increased by 80 respondents.

A.12.1: Annualized Estimate of Hour Burden				
Type of Respondents	Number of Respondents (Average) <sup>1</sup>	Frequency of Response	Average Time per Response (in hrs.)	Annual Hour Burden
Editorial Board Reviewers (paper survey)	15	1	15/60	4
<b>Applicants</b>				
Principal Investigators (online survey)	150	1	15/60	38
Officials of Host Institutions (online survey)	150	1	15/60	38
<b>Awardees</b>				
Early Independence Principal Investigator (paper survey – beginning of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. of award)	24	1	30/60	12
Early Independence Principal Investigator (phone interview – end of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. of award)	24	1	1	24
Early Independence Principal Investigator (online survey version A and version B– end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. of award)	40	1	45/60	30
Point of Contact at Host Institution (phone interview – end of 1 <sup>st</sup> yr. of award)	24	1	1	24
Point of Contact at Host Institution (online survey – end of 2 <sup>nd</sup> , and 3 <sup>rd</sup> yr. of award)	40	1	20/60	13
<b>Total</b>				<b>183</b>

<sup>1</sup> Note that the number of respondents is the average number over the 3 years of the OMB clearance.

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed changes.

**List of Attachments:**

**Attachment 6:** Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator (Version A) with Track Changes. Approved December 13, 2012 (Versions A and B)

**Attachment 6:** Proposed Final Survey for Early Independence Principal Investigator –Clean Version (Versions A and B)

**Attachment 8:** Survey for Point of Contact at EIA Host Institution with Track Changes. Approved December 13, 2012

**Attachment 8:** Proposed Final Survey for Point of Contact at EIA Host Institution