

**Supporting Statement B for:**

**Generic Clearance to Support Programs and**

**Administrative Operations**

**at the National Cancer Institute (NCI)**

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## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 – Examples of Potential Generic Administrative Sub-Projects

Attachment 2 – Request Templates for Future Requests

2A – Generic IC Template

2B – Sub-project Mini-SSA Templates

2C – Sub-project Mini-SSB Templates

Attachments 3 – Sub-project #1\_IMAT Request

3A – Generic IC Form IMAT

3B – Mini-SSA Request IMAT

3C – Mini-SSB Request IMAT

3D – IMAT Survey

3E – IMAT Invite Email

Attachments 4 – Sub-project #2\_DCEG Fellow and Student Application

4A – Generic IC Form DCEG

4B – Mini-SSA Request DCEG

4C – DCEG Fellowship Application

4D – DCEG Student Application

## **B. STATISTICAL METHODS**

Some information collections under this administrative generic collection will not require statistical analysis. This includes data that are collected solely for the purposes of being collected – e.g., to populate a listserv with user’s name, contact information, and preferences or an application to become an advocate. In these circumstances, little if any analysis will be conducted. In other circumstances, instruments will collect information about program monitoring and assessment and performance measurement that will involve statistical methods. The proposed methods that will be undertaken are described below.

### **B.1 RESPONDENT UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING METHODS**

The respondent universe consists of individuals who have had access to, or used, NCI’s materials, services, resources, or programs. It is difficult to define and anticipate the types of potential respondents, but below are descriptions of the people who have and could represent NCI’s respondent universe in this generic submission:

- Cancer researchers and Scientists
- Physicians and other health care providers
- Applicants for funding (grantees, contractors)
- Principal Investigators
- Students, Trainees, Fellows
- General public

The sub-projects that that will be conducted under this generic clearance are not research projects that require large numbers of respondents. NCI conducts these information collections

for the purpose of program monitoring and improvement, performance measurement and to support the administrative activities of a program.

A variety of sampling methods may be employed including, but not limited to: convenience samples, random sampling, or cluster sampling methods. As such, the sampling methods will not be used to generalize information beyond the scope of the sample or to make statement representative of the universe of the project. The methods, however, will ensure that NCI collects enough information to inform decisions and recommendations about programmatic changes. Statistical analysis will include qualitative methods and descriptive statistics. If applicable, specifics about the respondents, universe, and sampling techniques employed will be requested by the program staff individually in the template request for every sub-project **(Attachment 1)**.

## **B.2 INFORMATION COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

Administrative information collections and program assessments involve a wide range of data collection methods, including focus groups, surveys, and individual or group interviews. Each data collection method is described below.

**Focus Groups.** Focus groups serve as a particularly useful medium to collect information from program participants when rich, in-depth information regarding attitudes and reactions to programs, messages and materials is desired. Focus groups traditionally take place in an in-person format, in which a moderator facilitates a discussion regarding a message, issue, or program. Depending on factors such as the geographic distribution and schedules of program participants and on the nature of the program, materials, and messages under investigation, focus

groups may use a variety of technology-based formats, including videoconferencing, Internet, and teleconferencing.

**Surveys.** For each administrative information collection, NCI will employ the survey method that is best suited for the type of information collection. Surveys can be implemented in the following formats:

- Application or Monitoring Forms In certain situation the information collection will involve the addition of a few questions to an existing form such as the PHS 2590 or the Research Performance Progress Report (RRPR). The information collection may also involve increasing the frequency with which existing forms must be completed.
- Written surveys (mail surveys) are distributed to program participants, information recipients, and funding awardees through the mail. Respondents complete the surveys and return them for tabulation and analysis.
- Web based surveys Online or web based surveys are convenient because the respondent can log in and complete the survey at any time. In most cases access to the survey is limited to the study population through the assignment of a username and password. Some primary advantages of a web based survey include: the elimination of routing and looping problems within a paper-and-pencil questionnaire; respondents cannot accidentally skip questions; survey questions are customized to account for personal information provided by the respondent (e.g., age, information from previous questions); software can automatically perform mathematical calculations and tabulations; and software checks for inadmissible or inconsistent responses. A web-based survey eliminates errors that arise from separate data entry.

- Telephone surveys are particularly useful for collecting information in relatively short time frames while maintaining high response rates, with resulting estimates generalizable to the universe of study. Trained interviewers will contact potential respondents to administer a questionnaire over the phone.
- In-person surveys, implemented in a central location by trained interviewers to elicit information regarding certain topics or issues. In-person data collection methods that incorporate CAPI and ACASI technology are described below:
- Computer-assisted personal interviewing (CAPI) technology allows interviewers to ask questions of a respondent using a computer to enter data. Some primary advantages of CAPI include: the elimination of routing and looping problems within a paper-and-pencil questionnaire; respondents and interviewers cannot accidentally skip questions; interview questions are customized to account for personal information provided by the respondent (e.g., age, information from previous questions); software can automatically perform mathematical calculations and tabulations; software checks for inadmissible or inconsistent responses; allows interviewers to administer surveys to respondents without telephones or Internet access, or other difficult-to-reach populations; CAPI eliminates errors that arise from separate data entry.

**Interviews.** Interviews can be conducted individually, in triads, or in small groups.

Additionally, there are many methods to obtaining information from interviews, some of which require an interviewer and others do not. A variety of formats include:

- Computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) surveys conducted by telephone are well-suited to this technology, which employs automated dialing; schedules unanswered

calls or interrupted interviews for efficient callbacks; randomly selects respondents; uses automated skip patterns and instantaneous out-of-range checks; insertion of information from one question to guide a subsequent question; and the automated generation of databases for subsequent analysis.

- Audio and computer-assisted Self-Interviewing (ACASI) This form of interviewing allows for increased privacy over standard interviewing. Respondents listen to the questions through a head set and respond by typing in their responses or using a touch screen. This form of information collection also provides all of the advantages with regard to the customization of the interview and the automation of the skip patterns that are provided by the CATI, CAPI, and a web-based survey. It also provides all of the advantages of direct data entry.

**Record-keeping Reviews.** Record-keeping reviews may be implemented as a source of information for a program. Examples of when this may occur include, but are not limited to:

- Medical record reviews to confirm that the physicians are following the guidelines, or to track the treatment of specific individuals.
- When NCI requests information from the private sector, either non-profit or for-profit business, to assess their use of a particular service as part of a program.

When necessary, NCI will ensure that industry standards are followed to ensure quality control. All data analysis will be conducted under the advice of an NCI statistician, as needed.

### **B.3 METHODS TO MAXIMIZE RESPONSE RATES AND DEAL WITH NONRESPONSE**

Program staff will ensure that each study population receives numerous requests to enable the highest response rate possible. Again, this will help guarantee that NCI is collecting



enough data to make informed decisions about messages, materials, and programs. In the case of data collection activities that involve interviews or telephone, mail, and in-person surveys, several procedures that have proven effective in previous studies will be used when possible to maximize response rates:

- Potential respondents will be informed about the importance of these information collections and encouraged to participate through a variety of methods, including newsletters from professional associations or community organizations, and letters of support from key individuals.
- Experienced, highly-trained staff will moderate all focus groups and conduct all interviews and surveys.
- Interviewers will participate in thorough training sessions. Training topics will include study objectives, question-by-question reviews of data collection instruments, strategies for engaging respondents, role playing, and techniques for fostering respondent cooperation and survey completion.
- Well-defined conversion procedures will be established. If a respondent for a survey declines to be interviewed, a member of the conversion staff will contact the respondent to explain the importance of their participation. (Conversion staff is highly experienced telephone interviewers whose style and persuasive abilities have demonstrated success in eliciting cooperation. They receive a pay differential to acknowledge these skills, which also serves as an incentive to the interviewer pool, whose completion rates are carefully monitored to assess their qualifications to serve as conversion staff.)
- For telephone interviews, outgoing calls that result in a disposition of no answer, a busy

signal, or an answering machine will be automatically rescheduled for subsequent attempts. Up to 20 outgoing calls to a given number with dispositions of the sort listed will be made before declaring it a non-response.

- Should a respondent interrupt an interview for any reason, such as needing to attend to a personal matter, the interviewer will reschedule or, in the case of telephone surveys, a predictive dialer will automatically reschedule the interview for completion at a later time.
- Fielding for telephone and mail surveys will occur between 4 to 6 weeks. Based on past experience, this time frame will allow the program staff to reach individuals who are on vacation, out of the home during irregular periods, have a temporarily disconnected telephone, or who are not answering the phone for some other reason.
- Interview staff will be able to provide respondents with the name and telephone number of an official at NCI. This official will confirm with respondents the importance of their participation.
- When appropriate, a dedicated toll-free number will be established at NCI to allow potential respondents to confirm a study's legitimacy.

**For mail surveys, a number of techniques will augment response rates:**

- A self-addressed, stamped return envelope will be enclosed with each survey.
- Surveys will be mailed to respondents using stamps instead of metered postage labels.
- Creative and attractive graphics will be used to attract the attention of respondents (e.g., different colored paper for successive survey iterations).
- Hand-signed cover letters will be sent with each survey.

- Follow-up mail or phone contacts will be made to encourage participation.
- Respondents will be allowed the option of completing surveys online or faxing back completed surveys.

**For web-based surveys a couple of techniques will be used to augment response rates**

- Non responders will receive reminder emails containing the link to the survey website
- Non Responders will receive reminder letter containing the link to the survey website
- The link to the survey website will be posted on web pages commonly used by respondents accompanied by a message encouraging those who have been invited to participate to complete the survey.

**B.4 TESTS OF PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE UNDERTAKEN**

Pretesting may be done with internal staffs, a limited number of external colleagues, and customers who are familiar with the programs and products. If the number of pretest respondents exceeds nine individuals, program staff will submit the pretest instruments for review by OMB under a generic clearance.

**B.5 INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED ON STATISTICAL ASPECTS AND INDIVIDUALS COLLECTING AND/OR ANALYZING DATA**

Statisticians will be employed in the development, design, conduct, and analysis of program monitoring and performance assessment instruments, when appropriate. This statistical expertise will be available from NCI statisticians or from contractors. Names and contact information of persons consulted for each sub-project will be submitted at the time of the request.