Request for Approval under the "Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback" (OMB Control Number: 3145-0215)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:

Feedback Survey Regarding NSF SBIR/STTR Phase I Proposal Submission Process

PURPOSE:

We are requesting voluntary feedback from NSF SBIR/STTR applicants concerning their satisfaction with the proposal preparation help and submission process. Outreach to new firms has been a priority of the SBIR program in general and specifically at the NSF SBIR/STTR program. In particular, this effort is underpinned by an administrative 3% set aside of the NSF SBIR/STTR budget that is mandated by Congress for outreach activities. We have employed multiple techniques to reach out to and better prepare new proposers. However, we need to better evaluate these efforts to guide future strategy. Participants will be asked to complete a short questionnaire regarding their experience. The questionnaire will be administered after the proposers have submitted, using www.surveymonkey.com.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

The respondents to this query will be applicants who have submitted to the NSF SBIR/STTR Program, specifically in the most recent submission window. There are two submission windows each year, with approximately 1,000 applications to each. The "submission cohort" of the respondents will be known, but the respondents will otherwise be anonymous.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

[ ] Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form   [x] Customer Satisfaction Survey
[ ] Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software   [ ] Small Discussion Group
[ ] Focus Group   [ ] Other:_____

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:
1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does <u>not</u> raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are <u>not</u> intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of <u>substantially</u> informing <u>influential</u> policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name:_____Suzanne Plimpton, NSF Reports Clearance Officer_____

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

Personally Identifiable Information:
1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? [   ] Yes [x] No
2. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974?   [ ] Yes [ ] No
3. If Applicable, has a System or Records Notice been published? [   ] Yes [   ] No

Gifts or Payments:
Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [   ] Yes [x] No

BURDEN HOURS (for each proposal submission window)

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Private Sector	1,000 (every 6 months)	5 minutes	83 hours
Totals	**1,000** (every 6 months)	**5 minutes**	**83 hours**

FEDERAL COST: The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is   __$0____

If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:

The selection of your targeted respondents
Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?

[x] Yes   [ ] No

If the answer is yes, please provide a description of both below (or attach the sampling plan)?   If the answer is no, please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them?

The group of respondents will be known and will consist of the Principal Investigators (PIs) that have submitted a proposal to a particular solicitation submission window for the SBIR/STTR program. We will attempt a census of all applicants. However, we acknowledge that it is likely that not all applicants will respond. There may be selection bias as with any customer satisfaction survey. Those with particularly negative experiences may be more likely to respond to the survey, for example. Another possibility is that we may see more participation from first-time applicants or return applicants. If we see <80% response rate, we will evaluate non-response. One measure will be to compare the reported "age" of the company and previous NSF application history of the respondents to those of the entire population. We know the characteristics of the entire population because of administrative data that we have available at a high response rate via the proposal submission process. We could also explore any relationship between the time of response (e.g., immediately following email receipt versus a month later and/or after a 2nd follow-up email) and responses.

Administration of the Instrument
1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
    [x] Web-based or other forms of Social Media
    [ ] Telephone
    [ ] In-person
    [ ] Mail
    [ ] Other, Explain
2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [   ] Yes [x] No