



**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

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National Institutes of Health  
Center for Scientific Review  
Office of the Director  
6701 Rockledge Dr., Rm. 3016  
Bethesda, Maryland 20892-7776

April 25, 2013

To: Office of Management and Budget (OMB)

Through: Reports Clearance Officer, DHHS  
Project Clearance Chief, NIH

From: Dr. Mary Ann Noecker Guadagno, Health Scientist Administrator  
Office of Planning, Analysis and Evaluation  
Center for Scientific Review (CSR)

Subject: Center for Scientific Review (CSR),  
2012 IRG Stakeholder Survey (OMB Control Number: 0925-0474)

**Circumstances Requiring the Survey:** The Center for Scientific Review (CSR) is the portal of the NIH peer-review system. Its mission is to ensure NIH research grant applications receive fair, independent, expert and timely scientific review. A critical aspect to CSR's operations is the systematic review of Integrated Review Groups (IRGs) to assess the ability of study sections to identify and prioritize applications with the most promising science. To assess peer review operations in the "Population Sciences and Epidemiology (PSE) IRG," CSR proposes to examine study sections within the context of CSR's mission. The assessments of study section performance will include a survey of stakeholders regarding operational changes resulting from the recent NIH Enhancing Peer Review initiative. One of CSR's goals is to shift the current model of IRG evaluation away from reliance on self-evaluation toward more independent estimates of study section performance using select metrics. The proposed model for IRG evaluation at CSR is a two-phase approach: Phase 1 – acquisition of quantitative information through targeted surveys, and Phase 2 – face to face discussions informed by Phase 1. CSR Advisory Council (AC) members and community experts will be invited to the Phase 2 meetings. CSR proposes to conduct a survey using a modified IRG evaluation approach under OMB control number 0925-0474, with an expiration date of 10/31/2014.

**Purposes and Uses of the Data Collection:** The survey will assess the satisfaction of key constituents regarding CSRs' efforts to engage the best reviewers, train study section reviewers and chairs, manage study section meetings, and produce quality peer review outcomes for applicants. It will allow reviewers, NIH Program staff, CSR supervisors, and Scientific Review officers, to identify key factors contributing to the level of satisfaction they experienced. The information collected from the survey will help refine and improve the quality of CSR's review operations.

To reduce the burden on Reviewers and to assure confidentiality, automated information technology will be used to collect and process data for this survey. Participants will be provided with a unique code and password to access and conduct a secure online survey specific to the IRG study section they participate in. Participation in the survey will be strictly voluntary and individual respondents will not be identified. CSR will not provide payment or other forms of remuneration to respondents in collecting feedback. Respondents will be assured that neither their participation/non-participation nor any responses in the survey will be linked to their identity and will have any effect on their services at CSR. All responses will be secure to the extent permitted by law.

Estimates of Burden Hours

Types of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Frequency of Responses per Respondent	Average Response Time (in hours)	Total Burden Hours
Randomly selected reviewers from IDM and BCMB IRGs	90	1	15/60	23

There are no additional costs to the respondent other than their time.