

**Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization
OMB 2900- New (Post-Engagement)**

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection of information.

The National Veterans Small Business Engagement (NVSBE) attracts thousands of Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (VOSB) to connect with federal agencies, commercial corporations, and prime contractors, among other partners that seek government and commercial business opportunities. The Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) is accountable for this event success, to include the return on investment (ROI) it provides to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and to its attendees. The ROI and satisfaction measures to be gathered will provide valuable guidance for planning future event, and will set expectations on the attendees.

The NVSBE directly connects VOSB with procurement decision makers (PDM) from the Department of Veterans Affairs, other federal agencies, state government, as well as large firms with small business needs—and provides training opportunities to improve the capabilities of small businesses to successfully compete for procurement contracts. NVSBE also enables VA PDMs to engage with a large number of VOSBs in a short period of time, facilitating market research in support of meeting VA socioeconomic goals. More information is available at <http://nvsbe.com/>.

This Post-Engagement survey measures the ROI of the NVSBE through the number of significant connections with potential partners and clients made, whether attendees learned about procurement opportunities they are ready to fulfill and to bid on these. It also evaluates the different activities such as learning sessions (training), business opportunity sessions (upcoming procurement opportunities are presented), networking roundtables (vendors present their capabilities), senior leaders roundtables, plenary luncheon, receptions to specific socio-economic groups, and the Expo Hall (where businesses have their booths). Other logistics or administrative areas are also assessed such as the registration process, schedule, communications, NVSBE Mobile App, food, or assistance from the on-site conference staff.

The Post-Engagement survey measures ROI differently that the Awards & ROI survey in that the Post-Engagement survey collects satisfaction data, some of the most important measures being the number of significant connections made and the willingness of bidding on procurement opportunities learned at the event. The Awards & ROI survey seeks to determine the number of attendees who actually submitted proposals on those procurement opportunities and if the contract was awarded.

The collection instrument was internally tested on VA OSDBU employees for the 2014 NVSBE. The duration was approximately seven minutes to complete. The results from 2014

NVSBE were evaluated and displayed a median time of nine minutes and two seconds. A 30-day Federal Register Notice (Vol. 80, No. 157) was posted showing an estimated average burden per respondent of 7 minutes and an estimated annual burden of 117. The hour burden of the collection was recalculated presenting nine minutes and 150 hours.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purposes the information is to be used; indicate actual use the agency has made of the information received from current collection.

This information will be used by VA, other federal agencies, small and large business attendees, to include commercial corporations and prime contractors. Survey information was collected after the 2014 NVSBE, when the instrument was cleared by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) through the fast track/generic process. OSDBU now wants to get a regular OMB clearance and to share its quantitative aspect with potential attendees; this will allow them to make informed decisions regarding their participation and role at NVSBE.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g. permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

An electronic survey will be emailed to all NVSBE attendees. The email message will include a link to the survey, which will be in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act, Section 508. An electronic submission of responses was selected due to the fact that it is the fastest and most cost-effective way to gather the required information. Electronic submissions allow attendees to submit responses at their convenience, from all over the nation. Over 90 percent of the questions are close-ended, which reduces the burden to participants.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.

As the NVSBE is an annual effort, OSDBU needs to collect information after each event in order make improvements for the following year's event. No information regarding the NVSBE ROI has ever been disseminated among potential participants.

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

The burden consists of the collection of information which is essential to determine the satisfaction levels and ROI that attendees experience by attending the NVSBE; small business owners are part of the attendees. In order to minimize the burden, respondents will be contacted via email and asked to volunteer on this collection.

6. Describe the consequences to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

OSDBU needs to collect information that measures NVSBE success to determine whether goals are been achieved and the expected ROI is received. One of the NVSBE main goals is to provide attendees access to procurement opportunities, OSDBU needs to learn from them how are these goals been accomplished. Once this information is collected, this information will then be communicated to potential attendees to alert them about the ROI they may experience if attending next year's event.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted more often than quarterly or require respondents to prepare written responses to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; submit more than an original and two copies of any document; retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study and require the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB.

There are no special circumstances that require the collection of information to be conducted in a manner that is inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

8. a. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the sponsor's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the sponsor in responses to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

The notice of Proposed Information Collection Activity was published at 80 FRN 26640 on May 8, 2015; no comments were received.

b. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, clarity of instructions and recordkeeping instructions, recordkeeping, disclosure or reporting format, and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed or reported. Explain any circumstances, which preclude consultation every three years with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained.

VA OSDBU collected this information after the 2014 NVSBE that was cleared though the Fast Track/Generic process in Dec. 10, 2015; however, feedback from attendees is needed after each event. This will allow organizers to compare the performance throughout the years.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payments or gifts will be provided to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis

for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

The survey is anonymous, which is explained at the beginning of the questionnaire. No personally identifiable information (PII) is collected. A space is provided for companies that voluntarily want to provide their Dun & Bradstreet's DUNS numbers. It is explained that this information will be used for companies' demographic analyses and that no PII will be associated to the responses.

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; include specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of the hour burden of the collection of information:

Number of respondents is estimated at	1,000
Frequency of response is annually	1
Average estimated response time is	9 minutes
Annual burden is estimated at	150 hours

b. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB 83-I.

This request for approval does not cover more than one form.

c. Provide estimates of annual cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included in Item 14.

The cost to the respondents for completing this form is \$3,320 (150 hours x \$22.13 per hour. *Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm>*).

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in Items 12 and 14).

a. There is no capital, start-up, operation, maintenance costs, or costs associated to the request to provide information.

b. Cost estimates are not expected to vary widely.

14. Provide estimates of annual cost to the Federal Government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operation expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information. Agencies also may aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

VA has a fixed cost contract for survey services. The table below shows the annual costs for collecting, analyzing and reporting results.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Yearly Cost</u>
Survey Vendor Cost per 10 Hours	\$ 1,063
VA Administrative Cost -6 hours	\$ 270
Total Annual Cost	\$ 1,333

15. Explain the reason for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of OMB 83-I

This is a new information collection.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.

Frequency and cross tabulations are the analysis planned to be conducted. Some information will be posted at the 2015 NVSBE website (<http://nvsbe.com/>) in October 2015, when the registration for this year's NVSBE will open. The following are examples of the information: the percentage of attendees stating to have made new and valuable connections, type of connections with greatest ROI potential, value of procurement opportunities learn at the event, and overall ROI.

17. If seeking approval to omit the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

VA will include the expiration date for OMB approval on the form.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," of OMB 83-I.

There are no such exceptions.

