

Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 0651-0080)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Pro Se Education and Customer Service Feedback

PURPOSE: To obtain feedback from pro se applicants regarding their experience prosecuting their application at the USPTO on their own (i.e. pro se). Information collected from the participants will assist the USPTO agency wide, as well as improve educational resources and customer service for all applicants filing patent applications for examination and for all examiners examining applications filed by applicants without legal representation before the USPTO.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS: Respondents are randomly selected applicants who filed a non-provisional utility patent application without legal representation with the USPTO.

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer Satisfaction Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software) | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Discussion Group |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Focus Group | <input type="checkbox"/> 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 not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential 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.

Business Unit Certification: _____/Darnell Jayne/_____

OCIO Certification: _____

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

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? Yes 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

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
Individuals	1000	15 minutes (.25 hours)	10,000 minutes (250 hours)
Totals	1000		250 hours

The agency expects that 95% of respondents will submit their feedback electronically.

FEDERAL COST:

The estimated annual cost to the Federal Government is \$2,260.67

(1000 responses x .033 hours = 33.33 hours; 33.33 hours x \$67.82 = \$2,260.67)

The USPTO estimates that it takes a GS-14 step 1, 2000 minutes (33.33 hours) for data analysis and reporting.

The hourly rate for a GS-14, step 1, is currently \$52.17 according to the U.S. Office of Personnel Management’s (OPM’s) 2016 wage chart, including locality pay for the Washington, DC area. When 30% is added to account for a fully loaded hourly rate (benefits and overhead), the rate per hour for a GS-14, step 1, is \$67.82 (\$52.17 + \$15.65).

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

1. 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?

We plan to survey approximately 1500 pro se applicants in the pilot as well as 1500 pro se applicants in the control group. All respondents are applicants who have filed applications for patent determined to be filed without legal representation (pro se). Approximately 4000 nonprovisional utility applications were randomly identified. Half of the applications were placed in a pilot participant grouping, and half were placed in a control grouping. The control grouping serves as “representative” of current procedure prior to or without benefit of the pro se assistance program (i.e. normal operations prior to implementation of the pilot). These applications were all reviewed manually and applications were removed if it was determined that a legal representative was associated with the application prior to examination, resulting in a ~30% removal rate. Additionally, approximately 200 non-provisional utility applications filed between May 2015 and December 2015, that were determined to be pro se and which received a

notice of missing parts for certain specific reasons, were selected. Half of these applications were addressed by the AU pilot and the other half were put in a NMP control grouping. The majority of the participants filed a nonprovisional utility application with the USPTO between January 2013 and December 2015. We plan to send two identical letters each with a unique link to the survey to the address of record in the applications.

For control group: http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ProSe_CTR

For pilot group: http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ProSe_PLT

The two links correspond to two separate collectors within the same survey instrument. We will evaluate the results to compare responses from the two groups. The letter will include notice that a link will additionally be sent to the applicant's email address if there is one on file in the application. Applicants will also have the opportunity to call the office and complete the survey verbally using a customer service representative who will go through the questions with the applicant.

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
 - Web-based or other forms of Social Media
 - Telephone
 - In-person
 - Mail
 - Other, Explain

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? Yes No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.