

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**Paperwork Reduction Act Information Approval Request**  
**To Conduct Customer Satisfaction Research**

**IRS TE/GE Customer Outreach Feedback Survey**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

**1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Tax Exempt and Government Entities (TE/GE) division is conducting a survey to measure satisfaction with outreach events held by the customer education and outreach (CE&O) offices of Employee Plans (EP), Exempt Organizations (EO), and Government Entities (GE). The missions of these three CE&O divisions are to help external customers understand their tax responsibilities by developing and delivering educational outreach programs and products.

Feedback from customers is important to assess the effectiveness of these programs and take improvement actions if necessary. Improvements to outreach events should lead to greater compliance with tax responsibilities.

**2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

The primary goal of this survey is to collect feedback on TE/GE outreach events for the EO, EP, and GE divisions. These divisions can then use this information to consider ways to improve their outreach to key stakeholders.

**3. Consideration Given to Information Technology**

The questionnaire will be offered to all individuals who attend a TE/GE outreach event. The outreach events will include in-person seminars, webinars, and phone forums. A web link will be provided to all participants, giving the entire population of outreach attendees a chance of participating in the study.

**4. Duplication of Information**

This study is the only study conducted by the IRS TE/GE to collect feedback on virtual and in-person outreach events. Any current methods of collecting feedback will be replaced with this survey.

**5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities**

The survey is open to all attendees of any TE/GE webinar/outreach events. These populations include non-profit organizations, retirement plan sponsors, Indian and Tribal Government entities, Federal State and Local Governments, and Tax Exempt Bond community members. All of these communities include small entities and those entities are invited to attend all outreach events. We do not have a way of knowing how many small entities there are as the survey is completely anonymous.

The TE/GE Customer Satisfaction Survey has been designed to minimize burden. The time that a respondent takes to complete the survey has been carefully considered and only the most

important areas are being surveyed. Additionally, since most of the outreach events will be conducted online, hosting the survey on a website should reduce burden. The maximum time for completion of the survey is expected to be 5 minutes. We have made every attempt in designing this survey to maximize the response rate.

#### **6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection**

TE/GE will not be able to fully measure satisfaction with outreach events, particularly as it relates to virtual events such as webinars without implementing this survey. Feedback from customers is important in order to develop service improvement actions.

#### **7. Special Circumstances**

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes.

#### **8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency**

No persons outside the agency will be consulted with regards to their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported

#### **9. Payment of Gift**

No payments or gifts will be made to participants.

#### **10. Confidentiality**

The security of the data used in this project and the privacy of taxpayers will be carefully safeguarded at all times, to the extent allowed by law. Security requirements are based on the Computer Security Act of 1987 and Office of Management and Budget Circular A-130, Appendices A & B. Physical security measures include a locked, secure office. Notes are stored in locked cabinets or shredded. Data security at the C-2 level is accomplished via the Windows NT operating system. Systems are password protected, users profiled for authorized use, and individual audit trails generated and reviewed periodically.

The IRS will apply and meet fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure privacy protection of all taxpayers. This includes criteria for disclosure—laid out in the Privacy Act of 1974, the Freedom of Information Act, and Section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code—all of which provide for the protection of taxpayer information as well as its release to authorized recipients.

Responses will be anonymous to the fullest amount permitted by law. The survey will not contain tax return or taxpayer information. Survey participants will not be identified in any of the documents or files used for this project. We will limit and control the amount of information we collect to those items that are necessary to accomplish the research questions. We will carefully safeguard the security of data utilized as well as the privacy of the survey respondents. We will apply the fair information and record-keeping practices to ensure protection of all survey respondents. The criterion for disclosure laid out in the Privacy Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and section 6103 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the protection of information as well as its releases to authorized recipients.

#### **11. Sensitive Nature**

No questions will be asked that are of personal or sensitive nature.

#### **12. Burden of Information Collection**

The TE/GE Outreach Survey has been designed to minimize burden. The time that a respondent takes to complete the survey has been carefully considered and only the most important areas are being surveyed. The total number of customer contacts at outreach events in the next year is expected to be 68,700 (1,200 EO, 40,500 EP, and 27,000 GE). There will be no screening of participants. All attendees will be invited to participate in the survey. The estimated burden time for the invitation for each participant is 30 seconds. We estimate a 15% response rate resulting in 10,305 responses. Survey completion time for these responses is 3 minutes each. The burden times for all invited participants as well as the respondents for each unit (EO, EP, & GE) are presented below.

**Estimated Response Rate: 15%**

Category of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Participation Time (in minutes)	Burden (in hours)
All Invited Participants	68700	0.5	573
EO Respondents	180	3	9
EP Respondents	6075	3	304
GE Respondents	4050	3	203
<b>Totals Burden Hours</b>			<b>1089</b>

**13. Costs to Respondents**

There is no cost for participants to complete this survey.

**14. Costs to Federal Government**

The survey will be conducted electronically using [www.cvent.com](http://www.cvent.com), a survey tool already procured by TE/GE Research & Analysis. There will be no additional cost.

**15. Reason for Change**

No change is being requested. This is a new information collection request.

**16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, and Analysis Plans**

The individual responses of participants will be aggregated for analysis. Responses will be analyzed separately for the EP, EO, and GE CE&O offices. TE/GE Research and Analysis will conduct the data analysis and provide the results to the respective offices.

With regard to the low response rate, the IRS will assume that all data collected from this survey is **qualitative in nature**, and that no critical decisions will be made by this office solely from the analysis of data from this survey. The results from this survey are simply one piece of a larger set of information needed to assess the needs related to services provided by the IRS. IRS will hold the identities of respondents anonymous to the extent permitted by law.

**17. Display of OMB Approval Date**

IRS is seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval, as this is a one-time, limited-duration collection

**18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

These activities will comply with the requirement in 5 CFR 1320.9.

## **19. Dates collection will begin and end**

April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018

## **B. STATISTICAL METHODS**

Data collection methods and procedures will vary; however, the primary purpose of these collections will be for internal management purposes; there are no plans to publish or otherwise release this information. The purpose of the survey is to evaluate outreach events conducted by TE/GE. The results may be used to make improvements to outreach programs. The survey questions utilize a 5-point rating scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There will also be several open-ended questions to obtain more detailed responses.

### **1. Universe and Respondent Selection**

All taxpayers that attend TE/GE outreach events will be asked to take the survey at the conclusion of the event.

### **2. Procedures for Collecting Information**

TE/GE Research and Analysis will be responsible for collecting the data and conducting data analysis. At the conclusion of the outreach event participants will be provided an event number and web link and asked to participate in a survey. For some outreach events, where participants provide their email address upon registration, they will be emailed a link to the survey. They will then proceed to the survey tool and enter their event number and provide their responses to the questions electronically. In either situation, the script/message will be identical (this script is also included in the survey attachment):

The IRS is committed to delivering quality customer service. You can help in this important mission by completing this survey about the IRS outreach event you recently attended. This voluntary survey takes less than three minutes to complete and your responses will be anonymous.

You will be asked for an event number. Your event number is [insert number]

To complete this survey click [here](#) (Note: this link will take to actual survey once it is active).

### **3. Methods to Maximize Response**

IRS will attempt to achieve an overall 15% response rate in the surveys. IRS TE/GE outreach events are moving more towards a web-based format. With participants in front of a computer for the outreach event, hosting the survey online should make the survey easier to complete. The greater ease of completing the survey should maximize the response rate.

### **4. Testing of Procedures**

The survey will be tested by IRS TE/GE employees to ensure there are no errors or bugs in the survey design. The survey will not be pilot tested on the public.

### **5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection**

For questions regarding the study, questionnaire design or statistical methodology, contact:

Scott Leary  
Social Scientist  
Internal Revenue Service, Tax Exempt & Government Entities  
Research & Analysis  
Scott.P.Leary@irs.gov  
202-317-8767