

**Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 1525-0012)**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** FY2021 Focus Groups

**PURPOSE:**

This request is for OMB clearance for the United States Mint’s ongoing core focus groups, which are designed to develop an in-depth understanding of various topics that will be used to inform decisions on a range of product and service related issues. This research was conducted in Fiscal Year 2020 under OMB control number 1525-0012.

The purpose of the research is to collect information from United States Mint customers and non-customers on a regular basis, to evaluate current United States Mint products, services, and marketing activities; as well as to obtain feedback and reactions before changing or introducing new products, services, or marketing activities. The information gathered from these focus-group sessions will provide guidance and direction for improving customer satisfaction with products and services in Fiscal Year 2020 to help us better understand and serve the needs of non-customers expressing an interest in our products, and help ensure we carry out our mandate effectively and efficiently.

Part of the United States Mint’s mission is to produce and sell collectible coin products to the American public. Executive Order No. 12862 (September 1993), titled “Setting Customer Service Standards,” establishes a mandate for the government to ensure the kind and quality of services offered are aligned with those the public wants (Section 1b). To effectively accomplish these goals, the United States Mint utilizes a combination of accepted research methods that shed light on the awareness, satisfaction and preferences among the public as they relate to collectible coin products and services. Conducting focus groups in order to receive customer feedback is one element of this research project.

The consequence of not performing this collection is the United States Mint’s diminished ability to attract new customers and maintain service levels that satisfy current customers.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:**

Screeners will be utilized to help recruit and select respondents for focus groups or depth interviews. Lists of potential participants in customer groups are obtained from our customer database. Customer groups are typically segmented based on annual spending on United States Mint products (e.g., high and low spend) and/or tenure levels depending on the research objectives. Customers fitting the segmentation criteria are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached. Also, depending on research objectives, different segments of non-customers interested in collecting or gifting coin products are recruited from local lists and are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached.

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** (Check one)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form          | <input type="checkbox"/> Customer Satisfaction Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software) | <input type="checkbox"/> Small Discussion Group       |
| <input checked="" 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.

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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, will any information that is collected be included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? [ ] Yes [ X ] No
3. If Yes, has an up-to-date System of Records Notice (SORN) been published? [ ] Yes [ ] No

**Gifts or Payments:**

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

Each participant will receive a gift card for his/hers participation

**BURDEN HOURS**

Category of Respondent	No. of Respondents	Participation Time	Burden
United States Mint customers and non-customers	9 per focus Group	120 minutes per group	1,440 hours
<b>Totals</b>	80 groups –		1,440

	720 respondents		hours
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**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is \$797,000

**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?  
 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?

A total of 80 focus groups will be conducted in 20 cities (4 focus groups per location), with approximately 9 participants per group – which will include a combination of customers and non-customers. Screeners will be utilized to help recruit and select respondents for focus groups or depth interviews. Lists of potential participants in customer groups are obtained from our customer database. Customer groups are typically segmented based on annual spending on United States Mint products (e.g., high and low spend) and/or tenure levels depending on the research objectives. Customers fitting the segmentation criteria are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached. Also, depending on research objectives, different segments of non-customers interested in collecting or gifting coin products are recruited from local lists and are selected for recruitment at random until a maximum number of participants are reached.

Focus group discussions are facilitated by a professional moderator and different techniques are used to elicit feedback. A discussion guide will be utilized and serves as an outline, prepared in advance for the respondents, that covers the topics and issues to be explored. The guide is designed with the overall research questions in mind and is constructed to ensure that topics covered in the focus groups relate to these research objectives. The groups typically involve both structured and free flowing discussion exploring specific topics of interest related to our products and marketing activities. Materials are frequently provided to participants to facilitate feedback on the topic at hand.

These qualitative insights are used to understand the range of opinions and concerns that exist on a research topic, not to precisely quantify insights provided by respondents. Reports clearly indicate that the collected information is not generalizable and that it should be used solely to provide directional insights. Focus groups and other qualitative studies are an important complement to our quantitative research in that they provide deep insights into underlying consumer attitudes and preferences and are frequently used both to help explain observable trends and to provide direction for applied research topics. They are an important tool used by the Numismatic and Bullion Directorate to help develop and plan changes to products, policies and marketing activities.

## 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.**

### **Instructions for completing Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback”**

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**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** Provide the name of the collection that is the subject of the request. (e.g. Comment card for soliciting feedback on xxxx)

**PURPOSE:** Provide a brief description of the purpose of this collection and how it will be used. If this is part of a larger study or effort, please include this in your explanation.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:** Provide a brief description of the targeted group or groups for this collection of information. These groups must have experience with the program.

**TYPE OF COLLECTION:** Check one box. If you are requesting approval of other instruments under the generic, you must complete a form for each instrument.

**CERTIFICATION:** Please read the certification carefully. If you incorrectly certify, the collection will be returned as improperly submitted or it will be disapproved.

**Personally Identifiable Information:** Provide answers to the questions. Note: Agencies should only collect PII to the extent necessary, and they should only retain PII for the period of time that is necessary to achieve a specific objective.

**Gifts or Payments:** If you answer yes to the question, please describe the incentive and provide a justification for the amount.

#### **BURDEN HOURS:**

**Category of Respondents:** Identify who you expect the respondents to be in terms of the following categories: (1) Individuals or Households;(2) Private Sector; (3) State, local, or tribal governments; or (4) Federal Government. Only one type of respondent can be selected per row.

**No. of Respondents:** Provide an estimate of the Number of respondents.

**Participation Time:** Provide an estimate of the amount of time required for a respondent to participate (e.g. fill out a survey or participate in a focus group)

**Burden:** Provide the Annual burden hours: Multiply the Number of responses and the participation time and divide by 60.

**FEDERAL COST:** Provide an estimate of the annual cost to the Federal government.

**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.** Please provide a description of how you plan to identify your potential group of respondents and how you will select them. If the answer is yes, to the first question, you may provide the sampling plan in an attachment.

**Administration of the Instrument:** Identify how the information will be collected. More than one box may be checked. Indicate whether there will be interviewers (e.g. for surveys) or facilitators (e.g., for focus groups) used.

**Submit all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.**