Request for Approval under the "Improving Customer Experience (OMB Circular A-11, Section 280 Implementation)"
(OMB Control Number: 3245-<mark>XXXX</mark>)

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION: Customer Feedback on the All Small Mentor-Protégé Program

PURPOSE:
What are you hoping to learn / improve? How do you plan to use what you learn? Include any artifacts your team may develop as a result of this collection.

Established in 2016, the All Small Mentor-Protégé Program (ASMPP) is a new program that provides opportunities for small businesses to gain assistance and learn from larger, more experienced firms to improve their standings financially, technically, and administratively. There are also benefits for the mentor firm for participating in the program with respect to the ability to form a Joint Venture (JV) with the protégé and use the protégé's Small Business Administration (SBA) certifications and characteristics to compete for contracts usually reserved for the specific types of small businesses.

The main objective of this data collection is to gather customer feedback on the following questions:
1. Why do firms voluntary withdraw from program enrollment after submitting applications?
2. Why do accepted mentor-protegee teams voluntary terminate program participation?
3. How can the ASMPP improve education, outreach, and intervention to ensure mentor-protégé teams are set up for success in the program?

Understanding why firms withdraw from program enrollment or terminate their program participation would help SBA better educate and assist firms to enroll, participate, and succeed in the program; help firms identify if the program is right for them before they apply; and better prevent program withdrawals and terminations. The results will provide SBA with actionable recommendations for program improvement to better deliver services to the small businesses and improve the customer experience, satisfaction, and benefits from the program

TYPE OF ACTIVITY: (Check one)

[   ] Customer Research
[**x**] Customer Feedback Survey *(if selecting this option, include survey instrument tool with this submission)*
[   ] User Testing of Services and Digital Products

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
     [**X**] Web-based surveys
     [**X**] Telephone interviews
     [   ] In-person
     [   ] Mail

For Customer Feedback Survey:
Explain who will be surveyed and why the group is appropriate for the Federal program / service to connect with. Do you have a list of customers to reach

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS

The data collection will be conducted with the owners or points of contact of the businesses (mentors and proteges that attempted to enroll or participate in the ASMPP. The respondents will not be sampled, rather, the data collection will be conducted with all mentors and protegees that:

1. **Voluntarily withdrew** program enrollment during the application process and before being approved for the program participation (n=33 Mentor-Protégé teams).
2. **Voluntary terminated** program participation after being approved and during the program participation (n=57 Mentor-Protégé teams).

The data collection will involve web-based surveys and semi-structured interviews with the following types of respondents (Table 1).

- **Web-based surveys about voluntary withdrawn program enrollment.** The up to 30minute surveys will be conducted with a total of up to 66 participants, including protegees (up to 33) and mentors (up to 33) that voluntary withdrew program enrollment.
- **Semi-structured interviews about voluntary withdrawn program enrollment.** Up to 30-minute interviews with six mentors and six protegees who voluntary withdrew program enrollment. The respondents will be selected from the case information administrative data that identified 33 Mentor-Protégé teams with withdrawn program enrollment
- **Web-based surveys about voluntary program termination.** The up to 30 minutes surveys will be conducted with up to 114 participants, including protegees (up to 57) and mentors (up to 57) with terminated program participation.
- **Semi-structured interviews about voluntary program termination.** Up to 30-minute interviews with six mentors and six protegees who withdrew from the program after enrolling. The respondents will be selected from the case information administrative data that identified 57 Mentor protégé teams with terminated program participation

For the phone interviews, the data collection will attempt to ensure that both members of the mentor-protegee team are recruited. Neither web surveys nor phone interviews will collect any PII and random number IDs will be used to track individual surveys. All of the collected data will be analyzed in the aggregate and individual answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be reported to SBA or anyone outside of the research team.

DESCRIPTION OF INSTRUMENTS
Generally describe the information collection activity – e.g. will facilitators or interviewers be used? What will respondents be asked? Or, what actions will you observe / how will you have respondents interact with a product you need feedback on?

The data collection will collect information regarding customer experience and satisfaction with the program, program expectations, application experiences, reasons for declining program enrollment and difficulties with the program participation. The topics of data collection are focused on customer experience and are built upon the existing SBA program experience and satisfaction questions. This data collection augments and expands the information currently collected by the SBA to provide more details regarding the reasons and rationale for voluntary program withdrawals. (see Appendix).

The data collection will cover the following topics.
- ***Surveys of protegees and mentors that voluntarily withdrew from enrollment***. The key topics include: the stage of the business formation at withdrawal; the party initiating the program enrollment withdrawal; the reasons for withdrawal; the ratings of various aspects of the MP partnership quality and effectiveness; the ratings of assistance provided by the mentor, protegee, and SBA during the application process.
- ***Surveys of protegees and mentors that voluntarily terminated participation***. The key topics include: the party initiating the termination; the stage of the business formation at termination; the reasons for voluntary termination; the ratings of various aspects of the MP partnership quality and effectiveness; and the ratings of assistance provided by the mentor, protegee, and SBA during the program participation.
- ***Interviews with protegees and mentors that voluntarily withdrew from enrollment***. The key topics include: the detailed reasons and rationale for declining program enrollment; barriers and facilitators to program enrollment; and ratings of the assistance the mentor, protegee, and SBA provided during the application process.
- ***Interviews with protegees and mentors that voluntarily terminated participation***. The key topics include: detailed reasons and rationale for voluntary termination; barriers and facilitators to program participation; and ratings of the assistance the mentor, protegee, and SBA provided during the program participation.

In addition to the interview guides and the web surveys, the data collection materials will include (see Appendix):
- the official SBA invitation letter and email
- the participant interview schedule
- the informed consent
- the follow-up recruitment email and phone call script to web survey non-respondents
- the follow-up recruitment email and phone call script for interviews
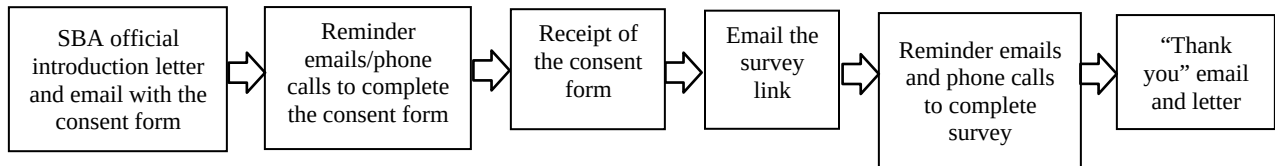- the "thank you" email and letter.

DESCRIPTION OF RECRUITMENT APPROACHES

The data collection materials will be tailored to recruit mentors and protegees for completing the web surveys and phone interviews (Appendix). Due to the differences in the informed consent and the mode of data collection, different approaches will be implemented for the web surveys and phone interviews (Exhibit 2).
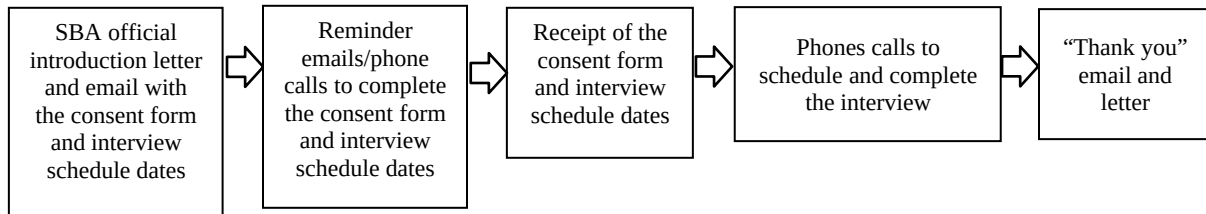
1. The web surveys will be self-administered using the individualized web survey link unique to each respondent. Multiple email and phone follow-ups will be used to improve the response rates, with the option of interviewer-guided web survey administration.
2. The semi-structured interviews will be administrative via phone after the receipt of the signed consent form. Multiple email and phone follow-ups will be used to schedule and recruit respondents. Experienced and trained data collectors (a senior researcher and an assistant for notes taking) will administer the phone interviews in groups of two. The interviews will be audio recorded with the permission of the respondents or will be documented via detailed notes.

Exhibit 2. The recruitment approaches

Mentor and Protegee Web Survey Recruitment

SBA official introduction letter and email with the consent form → Reminder emails/phone calls to complete the consent form → Receipt of the consent form → Email the survey link → Reminder emails and phone calls to complete survey → "Thank you" email and letter

Mentor and Protegee Phone Interview Recruitment

SBA official introduction letter and email with the consent form and interview schedule dates → Reminder emails/phone calls to complete the consent form and interview schedule dates → Receipt of the consent form and interview schedule dates → Phones calls to schedule and complete the interview → "Thank you" email and letter

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

BURDEN HOURS
The number of respondents and the anticipated respondent burden for each respondent contact and type of data collection are described in Table 3.

Table 1. The data collection burden by each respondent contact

Respondent contacts	Number of Respondents	Number of contacts	Estimated Burden per Respondent (in Hours)	Estimated Maximum Burden (in Hours)
Phone Interviews About Denial				
Invitation letters and emails	6 mentors 6 protegees	up to 3	0.1	3.6
Follow-up emails and phone calls to schedule an interview	6 mentors 6 protegees	up to 9	0.1	10.8
Sign informed consent	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.1	1.2
Semi-structured phone interviews about denial (30 minutes)	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.5	6
Thank you email and letter	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.05	0.6
Web Surveys About Denials				
Invitation emails and letters	27 mentors 27 protegees	up to 3	0.1	16.2
Follow-up emails and phone calls to non-respondents	16 mentors 16 protegees	up to 9	0.1	28.8
Sign informed consent	27 mentors 27 protegees	1	0.1	5.4
Quantitative Online Surveys About Denials (30 minutes)	27 mentors 27 protegees	1	0.5	27
Thank you email and letter	27 mentors 27 protegees	1	0.05	3.2
Phone Interviews about Terminations				
Invitation letters and emails	6 mentors 6 protegees	up to 3	0.1	1.2
Follow-up emails and phone calls to schedule an interview	6 mentors 6 protegees	up to 9	0.1	10.8
Sign informed consent	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.1	1.2
Semi-Structured Interviews about Terminations (30 minutes)	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.5	6
Thank you email and letter	6 mentors 6 protegees	1	0.05	0.6
Web Surveys about Terminations				
Invitation emails and letters	51 mentors 51 protegees	up to 3	0.1	30.6
Follow-up letters, emails and phone calls to non-respondents	29 mentors 29 protegees	up to 9	0.1	52.2
Sign informed consent	51 mentors 51 protegees	1	0.1	10.2
Quantitative Online Surveys about Terminations (30 minutes)	51 mentors 51 protegees	1	0.5	51
Thank you email and letter	51 mentors 51 protegees	1	0.05	5.1
TOTAL	**180**			**0**

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:
1. The collections are voluntary;
2. The collections are low-burden for respondents (based on considerations of total burden hours or burden-hours per respondent) and are low-cost for both the respondents and the Federal Government;
3. The collections are non-controversial and do not raise issues of concern to other Federal agencies;
4. Any 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 near future;
5. Personally identifiable information (PII) is not collected;
6. Information gathered is intended to be used for general service improvement and program management purposes
7. Upon agreement between OMB and the agency all or a subset of information may be released as part of A-11, Section 280 requirements on performance.gov. Summaries of customer research and user testing activities may also be included in public-facing agency publications.

Name: _____

Title: _____

APPENDIX: Data Collection Materials and **Preliminary Version of Interviews and Surveys**