

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program
OMB Control No. 0648-0432

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

Abstract

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program provides support for master's and doctoral degrees in oceanography, marine biology, or maritime archaeology—this can include but is not limited to ocean and/or coastal: engineering, social science, marine education, marine stewardship, resource management disciplines—and particularly encourages women and members of minority groups to apply. The scholarship supports independent graduate level research through financial support of graduate degrees in such fields.

NOAA recognizes the student's need to ensure that scholarly research, which is often hypothesis based, addresses critical gaps in knowledge about ecological processes, physiological mechanisms, evolutionary underpinnings, human behaviors, preferences and values, and related areas. The nature of the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries' research, as well as interactions with sanctuary staff and partners with similar goals, can help students fulfill their degree requirements through work benefiting not only national marine sanctuaries, but marine conservation more broadly and ecosystem science as a whole. In addition to natural resource studies, scholars may investigate socioeconomic, maritime archaeological and maritime heritage resource studies in national marine sanctuaries.

Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program is authorized at 16 U.S.C. 1445c-1 and 16 U.S.C. 1445c to recognize outstanding achievement in master's and doctoral degrees in oceanography, marine biology, or maritime archaeology. The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program was introduced in Congress and signed into law on November 13, 2000. The program is administered through the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and is funded annually with 1% of the amount appropriated each fiscal year to carry out the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program anticipates that each year approximately 2-4 scholarships will be awarded. The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program provides yearly support of up to \$42,000 per student (a 12-month stipend of \$30,000 in addition to a tuition allowance of up to \$12,000) and up to \$10,000 support for a 4-6 week program collaboration at a field office of the National Marine Sanctuary System or other NOAA facility.

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

The NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is seeking applications for the Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program from individuals, particularly women and minorities, who, due to financial constraints, may otherwise not be able to pursue an advanced degree in oceanography, marine biology, maritime archaeology, and all other science, engineering, social science, and resource management disciplines involving ocean and coastal areas.

Each application package must include Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance, General Information Sheet, Statement of Intent, Transcripts, Enrollment Verification or List of Graduate Schools Applied, Research Proposal, Two Letters of Recommendation, Statement of Financial Need, and Declaration.

Applications are solicited through a competitive funding announcement or a Notice of Funding Opportunity. Applications can be submitted through Grants.gov electronically or by mail with a hard copy. The collected information is used to determine the eligibility of the applicant and their ranking and score during the review period.

Once an applicant is selected and funded, the grantee is asked to complete a voluntary exit evaluation, once, and a voluntary alumni evaluation, which is requested every two years after graduation.

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.

Application packages are available through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) and must be submitted through Grants.gov. Grants.gov requires applicants to register with the system prior to submitting an application. All applications are then transferred over to the NOAA Grants Online system which stores the applications in a secured system.

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 Question 2

There are no other Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Programs. Applications submitted are solely for the purpose of this program. In addition, the exit survey and alumni survey do not duplicate any other reporting requirements for the scholars.

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

The collection of this information does not impact small businesses.

6. Describe the consequence 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.

The Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program is authorized by law. Scholarships are determined solely on the information provided by the applicant. Without the collection of this information, the Program would not be able to determine eligibility of the individual or determine which applicant to select in the

competitive process.

Once the award is received, the scholar is asked to provide voluntary information upon graduation to assist the Program Managers in assessing the impact of the program on career goals and research interests. The information collected in the exit survey and the alumni survey help us to determine the success of the program.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

This collection will be conducted in a manner consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publications in the Federal Register of the agency'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 agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

A notice was published in the Federal Register on July 7, 2020 (85 FR 40620). One comment was received but the comment did not address (a) whether the proposed information collection is necessary for the proper functions of the Department, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of our estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection, including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the reporting burden on those who are to respond, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Therefore, this comment is not addressed.

Additionally, NOS reached out to Dr. Foster Scholarship Program alumni to obtain 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. No responses were received.

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

The Nancy Foster Scholarship program does not provide any payments or gifts to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy. If the collection requires a systems of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.

Personal Identifiable Information is collected, but only name, address, email address and phone number. These documents are collected through the NOAA Grants Online system, a secure system developed by NOAA to track and manage awards. Federal Program Officers are collecting this information.

This information is collected, maintained, and disseminated under SORN OPM GOVT-1, General Personnel Records. Grants Online is an application located within the boundary of NOAA1101 and a current PIA is on record with Department of Commerce.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the 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 asked that have a sensitive nature, including sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, or other private matters. Race/ethnicity and gender are asked, because the scholarship was intentionally established to support minorities and women, but is optional to respond to these questions.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Information Collection	Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondents/year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hrs / Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hrs (e) = (c) x (d)	Hourly Wage Rate (for Type of Respondent) (f)	Total Annual Wage Burden Costs (g) = (e) x (f)
Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program Application Form and Transcripts	Student	200	1	200	8 Hrs	1,600	\$10	\$16,000
Letters of Recommendation	Atmospheric, Earth, Marine, and Space Sciences Teachers, Post Secondary	400	1	400	0.75 hr	300	\$49.37	\$14,811
Biographical Sketch and Photograph – Awardees	Student	6	1	6	1 Hr	6	\$10	\$60
Program Participants' Annual Progress Reports	Student	6	1	6	4 Hr	24	\$10	\$240
Program Participants' Pre- or Post-Evaluations / Exit Interview	Student	6	1.5	9	10 Min	2	\$10	\$20
Totals				621		1,932		\$31,131

***The student rate is based upon a stipend. The rate for the Post-Secondary teachers was calculated using BLS's *Occupational Outlook Handbook* - <https://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm>**

13. Provide an estimate for 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 already reflected on the burden worksheet).

Information Collection	# of Respondents/year (a)	Annual # of Responses / Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Cost Burden / Respondent (h)	Total Annual Cost Burden (i) = (c) x (h)
Dr. Nancy Foster Scholarship Program Application Form and Transcripts	200	1	200	\$20.00	\$4,000
Letters of Recommendation	400	1	400	0	0
Biographical Sketch and Photograph - Awardees	6	1	6	0	0
Program Participants' Annual Progress Reports	6	1	6	0	0
Program Participants' Pre- or Post-Evaluations / Exit Interview	6	1.5	9	0	0
TOTALS	600 unique respondents		621		\$4,000

***There are no capital costs or operating and maintenance costs associated with this information collection.**

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

Cost Descriptions	Grade/Step	Loaded Salary /Cost	% of Effort	Fringe (if Applicable)	Total Cost to Government
Program Administration	ZA-3	\$119,835	20 %		\$23,967
Website Maintenance	ZP-4	\$171,635	1 %		\$1,716
Application Review	ZA-4	\$169,457	14 %		\$23,724
Contractor Cost		\$60,000	100%	N/A	\$60,000
Travel					0
Other Costs: Materials					\$3,000
TOTAL					\$112,407

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in ROCIS.

There are no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

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.

The information collected will not be published.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in “Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.”

The agency certifies compliance with [5 CFR 1320.9](#) and the related provisions of [5 CFR 1320.8\(b\)\(3\)](#).