

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)**  
**Organization of Scientific Area Committees (OSAC) Membership Application**  
**OMB Control No. 0693-0070**

**A. JUSTIFICATION**

This is a request to revise and extend the current Office of Management and Budget approval for this collection of information.

**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.**

NIST has established an Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) to enable a coordinated U.S. approach to development of scientifically sound forensic science standards that includes broad participation from forensic science practitioners, researchers, metrologists, quality assurance experts, defense, and prosecution. NIST works with professional forensic science societies and science societies to inform their members of the OSAC application (self-nomination) in order to identify those interested and qualified to contribute.

The information will assist NIST to determine who wants to serve on the OSAC, which of the over thirty organizational components of the OSAC they are interested in working on, the experience that they bring to the OSAC so those selected for the OSAC will reflect a balance of perspectives. NIST works with the Forensic Science Standards Board (the Executive Board of OSAC) to place appropriate participants into the different roles within the leadership positions of the multiple tiers of OSAC (structure chart included with this request).

It is important to note that the OSAC addresses key aspects of a Forensic Science Standards Program that have not previously existed in the United States, including:

- Seven Scientific Area Committees (SACs) with an underlying structure of twenty-two discipline-specific Subcommittees that develop and identify appropriate standards, provide common web access to standards and best practices, and monitor for duplication and inactivity within the organization;
- Three Resource Committees that provide advice and intellectual resources to the SACs and Subcommittees, composed of Legal Resources, Quality Infrastructure, and Human Factors Committees; and
- A Forensic Science Standards Board to resolve overarching issues and to address expectations that span all SACs.

For NIST to continue in the role of administering OSAC, it must be able to identify new OSAC participants to fill new positions created within OSAC and to replace positions vacated by

resignation or rotation of more than 550 current members.

**2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.**

Self-nominations will be open continuously throughout the year and provide the OSAC with the information needed to identify interested and qualified respondents with the ability to participate. The collection information will enable OSAC to fill vacancies through directed requests to meet specific balance requirements caused by resignation or rotation of appointees. NIST does not intend to disseminate the information that is collected.

**3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.**

The collection will rely on a web-based application for interested participants to include multiple choice response options and one brief narrative. The application will be posted on the existing NIST website: <https://www.nist.gov/osac> and the electronic OSAC membership application form can be found at the website: <https://www.nist.gov/osac-application-form>

**4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

There is no other information collection of this type as the OSAC is the only organization soliciting applications for membership to support the coordinated U.S. approach for developing scientifically sound forensic science standards.

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

While this collection is not focused on small entities, we expect individuals who are part of small entities to respond. By conducting the collection via a web-based tool, focusing the questions on specific interests in order to fill the positions available on the OSAC, and by limiting the length of any narrative response request, we have minimized burden on the respondents.

**6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.**

Without this collection, NIST will not be able to fill vacancies with appropriate qualified applicants and assure the public that a balanced composition has been maintained in OSAC. The need for balance in an organization such as OSAC was a major conclusion of the National Academy of Science inquiry into forensic science in the United States. Without assurance that the OSAC has maintained balance, the Federal government will not be able to make a credible response to these concerns. Furthermore, qualified applicants who are interested in membership will be denied access without the collection being conducted.

Since OSAC's inception, NIST has worked with OSTP and the Department of Justice to advance the state of forensic science in the U.S. OSAC is the key component to ensuring scientifically sound forensic science standards are developed and adopted in support of the criminal justice system.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.**

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

**8. Provide information of the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency 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.**

A 60 Day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting public comments was published on January 14, 2021, Vol 86, No. 9, page 3120. No comments were received.

A 30 Day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting public comments was published on March 29, 2021, Vol. 86, No. 58, page 16324.

**9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

There will be no payments or gifts associated with this questionnaire.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

PII such as name is collected in this IC. Data is retrieved by a personal identifier; therefore, this is a Privacy Act System of Records. A Privacy Act Statement is provided on the instrument and an appropriate SORN is uploaded as a supplementary document.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.**

No questions of a sensitive nature will be included.

**12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.**

NIST is estimating that 1,000 respondents may participate per year. The application takes approximately 5 minutes per response for an estimated total of 84 annual burden hours.

1,000 Respondents x 5 minutes per response = **84 Burden Hours.**

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).**

There are no costs to the respondents.

**14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.**

The OSAC Application does not require manual manipulation by a federal employee for an application to be accepted into the data collection system. OSAC applications are downloaded monthly from the application system by a NIST employee (ZA-III) and provided to the OSAC units to determine if any applications fill open OSAC positions. This activity requires approximately 30 minutes of labor per month for a total of 6 hours annually. The approximate cost for this download and sharing activity by a ZA-III is \$50.00 per hour totaling \$300.00 annually.

**15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.**

The changes since the previous approval have all been to streamline and simplify the application process. Specifically, reduction of open text responses to multiple choice questions. The time for response per application has been reduced from 30 minutes to 5 minutes per response. This creates less of a burden for applicants and for program staff that is reviewing the applications as they come in.

**16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.**

Results will not be published.

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

The expiration date for the OMB approval will be displayed.

**18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

## **B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS**

No statistical methods are employed.