

# Request for Approval under the “Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback” (OMB Control Number: 0651-0080)

**TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:** G320: STEPP Evaluation Survey 2021

**PURPOSE:** The Stakeholder Training on Examination Practice and Procedure (STEPP) program provides to members of the public a better understanding of the examiner’s role in the examination process. STEPP courses are led by USPTO trainers and based on material developed for training new patent examiners. The information collection items included in this Fast Track request - an initial interest form, a needs assessment survey, and a course satisfaction survey - allow the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) to gauge the interest from potential course attendees in a given course and to determine the successes/shortcomings of an offered course following a stakeholder’s completion of the class.

**DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:**

The STEPP courses are open to all members of the public. Approximately 70% of registrants are registered practitioners and the remainder are inventors or individuals interested in intellectual property.

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

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

**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.

Business Unit: Office of Patent Stakeholder Experience (OPSE)

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

**Personally Identifiable Information:**

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected?  Yes (Interest Form only)  No
  - 1a. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974?  Yes  No
2. If applicable, has a System of Records Notice been published?  Yes  No  N/A

**Gifts or Payments:**

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

**BURDEN HOURS**

<b>Information Collection</b>	<b>Type of respondent</b>	<b>No. of Respondents</b>	<b>Participation Time</b>	<b>Burden</b>
STEPP Interest Form	Private Sector	1,300	5 minutes	104
---	Individuals and Households	100	5 minutes	8
STEPP Needs Assessment Survey	Private Sector	90	5 minutes	7
---	Individuals and Households	10	5 minutes	1
STEPP Evaluation Survey	Private Sector	400	5 minutes	32
---	Individuals and Households	50	5 minutes	4
STEPP International Evaluation Survey	Private Sector	75	5 minutes	6
STEPP Overall Evaluation & Future Advanced Courses	Private Sector	400	5 minutes	32
---	Individuals and Households	50	5 minutes	4
<b>Totals</b>		<b>2,475</b>		<b>198 hours</b>

The USPTO estimates that 100% of the forms and surveys will be conducted online.

**FEDERAL COST:** The estimated 3-year cost to the Federal government uses the combined hourly rate of \$37.45 per hour for a GS-9 step 10 (\$37.45) + \$11.24 (30%) which totals an hourly rate of \$48.69.

The STEPP Interest Forms will be summarized for each of the 18 courses, and take about 1 hour to complete and send formal course invitations. This equals 18 total hours for 3 years. 18 hours \* \$48.69 = **\$876**. The STEPP Needs Assessment Survey will be summarized 3 times a year and take about 2 hours to graphically summarize and distribute. 9 occurrences \* 2 hours = 18 hours. 18 hours \* \$48.69 = **\$876**. The STEPP Evaluation Survey will be summarized for each of the 18 courses, and take about 2 hour to graphically summarize and distribute. 18 courses \* 2 hours = 36 hours. 36 hours \* \$48.69 = **\$1,753**. The STEPP Overall Evaluation and Future Advanced Courses survey will be summarized twice a year for 3 years, and take about 2 hours to graphically summarize and distribute. 6 summaries \* 2 hours = 12 hours. 12 hours \* \$48.69 = **\$584**. The International STEPP Evaluation survey will be summarized once a year for 3 years, and take about 2 hours to graphically summarize and distribute. 3 summaries \* 2 hours = 6 hours. 6 hours \* \$48.69 = \$292.

**Total Federal cost for all 4 items = \$4,381.**

**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?

Potential respondents for the the STEPP Interest Form and/or the STEPP Needs Assessment Survey will be based on the users who visit the STEPP website: <https://www.uspto.gov/patents/patent-quality/stakeholder-training-examination-practice-and-procedure-0> The courses and this site are marketed through Patents Alerts, social media, and direct emails to those who have requested to be notified of events. The universe of STEPP course participants is defined by all parties who complete the STEPP Interest Form. Based on the computations below, this is estimated to be 1,400 for the 3-year period. This includes 1,200 (1,100 Private, 100 Individual) for STEPP Evaluation and 200 for International STEPP. At the same website, users have the option to fill out the STEPP Needs Assessment Form. This form provides USPTO information on how to tailor course structures. Based on recent history, it is estimated that 100 people will fill out this form over the 3-year period.

Once people are registered via the Interest Form, most will attend the STEPP course or the International STEPP Course online. For the STEPP Evaluation, there will be 6 individual courses per year, currently averaging around 50 people per session. This computes to 300 attendees per year, or a population of 900 total attendees for 18 courses for the 3-year time period. Around 30% of those who fill out the interest form do not meet minimum qualifications, thus the 900 attendees are less than the 1,200 who filled out the interest form. Historically, external USPTO surveys have realized around a 50% response rate. That percentage has been applied to get the hourly burden noted above for 450 survey respondents. USPTO will examine each session's survey results individually to analyze differences in training methods and instructors. Thus the population for each session is small enough that using a smaller sampling plan would not provide statistically reliable results. The 900 attendees are also sent an email invitation for the STEPP Overall Evaluation and Future Advanced Courses survey. This invite is sent a few months after completing the course, to gauge whether the courses are having a lasting impact. This survey also gauges the need for additional advanced courses and in what subjects. We estimate a similar 450 overall responses for it.

Around 200 private attorney/agents are expected to fill out the STEPP Interest Form in order to attend the International STEPP Course. This course is very similar to the STEPP course but is targeted only to persons living outside of the United States. Similar to the above, around 150 will be selected. A 50% response rate will result in 75 survey respondents to the International STEPP Evaluation survey in the 3-year period.

### Administration of the Instrument

How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)

Web-based or other forms of Social Media

Telephone

In-person

Mail

Other, Explain: live poll software

Will interviewers or facilitators be used?  Yes  No