

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT**  
**U.S. Department of Commerce**  
**Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR)**  
**OMB Control No. 0690-0032**

**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 RPPR is a uniform format implemented by federal agencies for use in the reporting of performance progress on Federally funded research and research-related projects. The RPPR resulted from an initiative of Research Business Models (RBM), an Interagency Working Group of the Social, Behavioral & Economic Research Subcommittee of the Committee on Science (CoS), a committee of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC). The original version of the RPPR format was approved for implementation in the Federal Register (FR) [Volume 75, pages 1816-1819, January 13, 2010].

The Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) directly benefits award recipients by making it easier for them to administer Federal grant and cooperative agreement programs through standardization of the types of information required in interim performance reports—thereby reducing their administrative effort and costs. The RPPR also makes it easier to compare the outputs, outcomes, etc. of research programs across the government.

Given the increasing complexity of interdisciplinary and interagency research, it is important for Federal agencies to manage awards in a similar fashion. The RPPR does not change the performance reporting requirements specified in 2 CFR § 200.328; it merely provides additional clarification, instructions, and a standard format for collecting the information.

The Department of Commerce began using this form for all progress reports required for grants awarded by Commerce starting with the reporting cycle ending January 31, 2018; this request is to renew this information collection for a period of three years.

**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.**

Potential respondents include public or private institutions, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, and laboratories; units of state and local government; domestic or foreign non-profit and for-profit organizations; and eligible agencies of the Federal government.

Commerce grant awards vary widely across and within line and staff offices, in requirements and time frames. Progress reports document grantee recipient accomplishments and compliance with terms of award. This format may now be used for interim, annual and final progress reports, as required by a specific grant. For some grants, if they are for one year only, there may be only a final report. The RPPR is intended to address progress for the most recently completed period, at the frequency

required or designated by the sponsoring agency. Information, once reported, does not have to be provided again on subsequent reports. Recipients are advised to state “Nothing to Report” if they have nothing significant to report during the reporting period.

Each category in the RPPR is a separate reporting component. Recipients report on the one mandatory component (“Accomplishments”) and other components as appropriate, including:

### **Accomplishments**

- What were the major goals and objectives of the project?
- What was accomplished under these goals?
- What opportunities for training and professional development did the project provide?
- How were the results disseminated to communities of interest?
- What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals and objectives?

### **Products**

- publications, conference papers, and presentations
- website(s) or other Internet site(s)
- technologies or techniques
- inventions, patent applications, and/or licenses
- other products, such as data or databases, physical collections, audio or video products, software, models, educational aids or curricula, instruments or equipment, research material, interventions (e.g., clinical or educational), or new business creation.

### **Participants and Other Collaborating Organizations**

#### **Impact**

#### **Changes/Problems (not required for Final or Interim RPPR)**

- Changes in approach and reasons for change
- Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them
- Changes that have a significant impact on expenditures
- Significant changes in use or care of vertebrate animals, biohazards, and/or select agents

#### **Budgetary Information (not required for Final or Interim RPPR)**

#### **Project Outcomes (only required on Final and Interim RPPR)**

- Concise summary of the outcomes or findings of the award, written for the general public in clear and comprehensible language, without including any proprietary, confidential information or trade secrets.

In general, Commerce grant programs provide summary information to the public about the grants it awards. Information is publicly disseminated through the publication of reports describing each program’s university-based research, education, and outreach activities. These reports are widely distributed in both print and web-based formats. All reports and supporting data are reviewed for

objectivity, utility and integrity, as required by the Commerce guidelines, before they are disseminated.

Commerce retains control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with Commerce standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

**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.**

All reports will be submitted electronically.

**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**

This RPPR is available for use by all Commerce departments/Bureaus that support research and research-related activities for use in submission of performance progress reports. It is intended to replace other performance progress reports for Federally funded research and research-related projects.

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

Depending on the grant, small businesses may be involved. The RPPR format will help to minimize burden hours particularly for awardees responding to more than one award.

**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.**

Use of this reporting form is intended to save time for both the grantors and the grantees, and the information collected allows DOC to consider the impact our programming actions have on grantees and their research science. DOC implements information collection policies and procedures with consideration of efficient Federal funding oversight, compliance with government wide standards and regulations, minimization of time and cost burdens, and cost-efficient project execution. At each phase of the award lifecycle, DOC mandates collection only of information that meets these criteria.

**7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**

There is no request for special circumstances or exceptions to the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

**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.**

The 60-day *Federal Register* Notice soliciting public comment was published on May 27, 2021 (Volume 86, pg. 28537). One comment was received from Lisa Jean Fronczek, a NIST Program Officer, who made some salient suggestions for revisions to the form. User feedback is very important to Commerce, as well as continuous quality improvement. Unfortunately, a lack of time and resources do not make it possible to make any changes for this renewal. However, we will certainly be looking into the feasibility of making suggested revisions to this form for the next renewal.

In addition, through calls with stakeholders, frequent contact with federal-wide grant personnel, and the delivery of technical assistance, Commerce remains in close contact with the Grants community to obtain their views on submission of information regarding public cost and undue burden on the grant recipient.

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

No payments or gifts to respondents will be provided.

**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 system of records notice (SORN) or privacy impact assessment (PIA), those should be cited and described here.**

The minimum of personally identifiable information is requested. There is assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

**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.**

We will not be asking questions of a sensitive nature as outlined above.

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

- **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**

- **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included under ‘Annual Cost to Federal Government’.**

Commerce awards a large number of grants per year, which require interim and/or final reports. Each year, a number will be completed, and replaced by approximately the same number or more of new awards. Therefore, there is no adjustment to the burden estimate number. The annual progress reports for DOC associated with forms currently in use range from a minimum of 2 hours to a maximum of 15 hours, depending on the type of research project being supported. Therefore, the estimated total burden hours would be as follows: (7400 responses x 10 hours = 74,000 total burden hours.)

**Estimated Annualized Respondent Burden Hours**

Type of Respondent (e.g., Occupational Title)	# of Respondents (a)	Annual # of Responses/ Respondent (b)	Total # of Annual Responses (c) = (a) x (b)	Burden Hours/ Response (d)	Total Annual Burden Hours (e) = (c) x (d)
Grantee	1850	4	7,400	10/60	74,000
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1850</b>		<b>7,400</b>		<b>74,000</b>

**13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected on the burden worksheet).**

The estimated annual cost burden to respondents, excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12, is \$0. Reports may be emailed or completed online. There are no recordkeeping/reporting costs.

**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.**

The Grants administrative personnel who review progress performance grant reports generally are in the GS-14 and GS-15 salary ranges. Based on a step one average of these grades (OPM General Schedule Pay Table for 2021), an average hourly salary is \$63.89 per hour. It is further estimated that about an hour of time is needed to review a progress report, leading to a \$4,727,860 (\$63.89 x 74,000 hours) estimated annual cost to the Federal Government.

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

There are no program changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval. An update was made to the annual cost to the Federal Government due to salary adjustments of support staff.

**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.**

Publication of awards, and of grant activities, would depend on the line or staff office and the type of award.

**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\(b\)\(3\)](#).