

# Supporting Statement A for

## Evaluation of Office of Acquisitions System (OASYS) and FFRDC Contract Administration System (FCAS) Vendor Portals

National Cancer Institute (NCI)

OMB# 0925-XXXX, Expiration Date: XX/XX/20XX

Date: August 31, 2021

Check off which applies:

- New**
- Revision
- Reinstatement with Change
- Reinstatement without Change
- Extension
- Emergency
- Existing Collection in Use Without an OMB Number

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## **A. Justification**

This information collection request is to approve the Evaluation of Office of Acquisitions System (OASYS) and FFRDC Contract Administration System (FCAS) Vendor Portals for three years.

### **A.1 Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary**

Section 412 of the Public Health Service Act (42 USC § 285a-1) authorizes the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to establish and support programs for the detection, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of cancer; and to collect, identify, analyze and disseminate information on cancer research, diagnosis, prevention and treatment.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) Office of Acquisitions (OA) located within the Office of the Director (OD) in the Office of Management (OM) at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), awards and administers contracts and simplified acquisitions in support of the Institute's mission to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer. During the acquisition process, the OA ensures that customer service is paramount, and communications are open and continuous. Currently requests and correspondence are sent to and received from vendors through email with the exception of the FFRDC Contractor who submits through the FCAS Vendor Portal which is in production. To streamline processes, increase transparency and gain efficiencies, the OA developed OASYS and FCAS vendor portals to replace processes that are handled through email (future OASYS Vendor Portal Users) and were (current FCAS Vendor Portal Users) to individual OA recipients. The FCAS Vendor Portal and in the future, the OASYS Vendor Portal will serve as a one-stop shop for transmission of requests, reports, deliverables and other correspondence due on numerous research and development, in support of R&D contracts as well as those contract vehicles awarded using various Federal Acquisition Procedures including but not limited to FAR Part 8, Required Sources of Supplies and Services, FAR Part 13, Simplified Acquisition Procedures, and FAR Part 12, Acquisition of Commercial Items. These reports and deliverables cover a wide variety of topics in the areas of cancer research including prevention, detection, diagnosis, and control.

This request is to obtain OMB Clearance for the OASYS and FCAS Vendor Portals by (1) obtaining the required information from the vendors at time of vendor portal registration (2) during submission of requests and correspondence, and (3) in a voluntary online survey. Initial collection of information will be at time of vendor firm registration and will be required to establish the vendor profile that will establish and allow access to the vendor portal account. Vendors will be invited to set up the vendor account by NCI OA staff, through a link sent by email to the authorized business official at the vendor's firm. There is sensitive and proprietary data included in some of the documents that will be submitted by vendors and contractors through the vendor portals. Subsequent collection of information will be in the course of populating various data fields when submitting requests and uploading correspondence. Finally, voluntary feedback will be sought from vendor users when they utilize the system to respond to negotiations, submit documentation, make requests of OA and/or receive requests from OA within the vendor portals.

The FCAS Vendor Portal went into production in March 2020. The OASYS Vendor Portal's release was delayed, and the go live date is planned for 2022 along with a planned phased roll out to the approximate 400 active vendor companies that currently have contracts with NCI OA. Currently there is one vendor company and 61 vendor users that using the FCAS Vendor Portal which is in production.

The voluntary surveys will evaluate vendor user's satisfaction with the accessibility and usefulness of the vendor portals which will help the government assess the utility of the vendor portals, improve design and functionality, and identify strategies for improving user-friendliness of the site.

## **A.2 Purpose and Use of the Information Collection**

There are three purposes for the collection of information from the vendor users.

The purpose of information collection in the web surveys, one for OASYS vendor portal and one for FCAS vendor portal, (after vendor firm accounts are established) is to obtain individual vendor user feedback on the design, functionality, utility and user-friendliness of the vendor portals (Attachments 1 and 2). NCI OA will use the information to assess and evaluate if system changes and improvements are necessary to increase user-friendliness and reduce burden on vendor users. The survey data will be used to consider modifications to the content and/or appearance of the portal and navigation within the sections of the portal as well as to identify any additional information or features that may be appropriate to add.

The anticipated positive aspects of this data collection include:

- Collecting data from the vendor portal users will enable NCI OA to better understand how vendor users experience of the site and to further improve the design and navigation in response to their needs.
- User data will inform the development of new targeted website features or development of additional targeted products within the vendor portals.
- User data will identify whether expanding the vendor portals to include additional features or functionality needs to be discussed.

The negative consequences of not periodically collecting user data include:

- We will not be able to adapt the vendor portals to the vendor users' needs.
- We will not be able to assess what improvements or new features are most desirable.
- We will not be able to assess whether information in the vendor portals user guides is appropriate.
- We will not be able to understand how to better engage users and maintain vendor user satisfaction.

The purpose of and anticipated benefit of collection of information at registration (Attachments 4 and 5) is to ensure that unique profiles are created for each vendor firm account, to provide for access security, and to protect against unauthorized access to sensitive information including proprietary information. Depending upon which application the vendor firm will use, will determine whether Attachment 4 or 5 applies. Each vendor firm will utilize either FCAS Vendor Portal or OASYS Vendor Portal. Initial registration is a one-time process and will ensure that documentation and information can only be submitted by and is only accessible to those vendor users authorized and with appropriate permissions. The information collected at vendor portal registration will be stored in the system and it will be used by NCI OA for negotiations and day to day contract administration. The personal information the vendor inputs will be specific to the company (e.g. company name, company address, company phone number) and will also include contractor employee first and last names and firm email addresses for the following vendor users: business representative, solicitation coordinator, planning coordinator and additional vendor user roles.

The screen shots in Attachment 6 and 7 reflect separate processes available in the application, only the screen shots identified as “Data Field Information/Action Step:” highlighted in yellow, require action on behalf of the Vendor Firm. The purpose of and anticipated benefit of collection of information in the various data fields (Attachments 6 and 7) is to ensure requests and correspondence submitted are categorized and stored properly in the system so that the OA and program staff are alerted to pending actions in their queues. Vendor users with permissions to access the account will interact with OA during the pre-award phase and if awarded a contract, during the post-award phase. In the pre-award phase, vendors will enter data fields and upload documentation, including initial task order proposals, Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) Call quotes, proposal revisions and revised quotes, final proposals and final responses to negotiation questions, to ask questions, as well as receive notifications from NCI Office of Acquisitions. Vendors that are awarded a contract, order or BPA call, will enter information in data fields and upload documentation including but not limited to correspondence submissions such as invoices, reports, deliverables, contractor-initiated requests, responses to Contracting Officer’s requests, responses to modifications, and submission of contractually required notifications. Vendor users will also be in receipt of requests from NCI OA through the system.

If a new Vendor User account needs to be added to an existing Vendor Firm account or an existing vendor user account needs to be edited, users will be sent an email invite to log in and finalize the action (Attachments 8 and 9).

A pilot of the Evaluation of Office of Acquisitions System (OASYS) and FFRDC Contract Administration System (FCAS) Vendor Portals was approved by OMB (#0925-0046) and implemented in March 2020 to assess the clarity of the instructions and the functionality of the OASYS and FCAS Vendor Portals.

### **A.3 Use of Information Technology to Reduce Burden**

Online web surveys within the vendor portals will provide ease of response by the vendor users. The opportunity to provide feedback will be available on in the vendor portal after login. A feedback box is included in the FCAS Vendor Portal on the left navigation pane so that wherever the vendor user is in the vendor portal site, they will be able to provide feedback immediately from the screen that they are working in. Additionally, feedback submitted will be immediately available to NCI OA. A feedback box will also be included in the OASYS Vendor Portal. The survey will initiate for those that select the feedback box. All responses will be submitted electronically.

The OASYS and FCAS Vendor Portals will assist with streamlining processes and save time by gaining efficiencies. The Vendor Portals will:

- a. Provide the capability for vendors to submit requests, documents and information through the Vendor Portal to OASYS and FCAS.
- b. Provide the capability for NCI OA staff to transmit documents and information including notifications and requests to vendors through the Vendor Portals.

The FCAS Vendor Portal uses and the OASYS Vendor Portal will use technology to collect information from vendors. Vendors that do not have existing vendor portal accounts with whom NCI OA wish to negotiate based upon evaluation of their proposal, will be invited by NCI OA by email (Attachment 3), to set up a vendor profile. This will allow the authorized vendor users to access to the subject solicitation to view and respond to the request for revised proposal, and or negotiation questions.

Information technology will only be used to store data and exchange data between vendors and the NCI Office of Acquisitions. Once vendors have set up their vendor firm portal, authorized vendor users will be able to receive email alerts and in-system notifications pushed to them by NCI OA. FCAS Vendor Portal Vendor users are able to submit correspondence to the FCAS vendor portals only if initiated through the pre-award and/or post award phases. This will also be the case for the OASYS Vendor Portal. All correspondence with vendor users will occur within the vendor portals and will facilitate opportunity for improved response time by the NCI OA staff to send and answer requests. FCAS Vendor Portal vendor users that submit correspondence populate information fields that categorize correspondence and requests, and NCI OA and NCI Program staff will receive system notifications that the information and documentation are available for action. This will also be the case for the OASYS Vendor Portal. Documents submitted by the vendors are automatically saved in the OASYS/FCAS Internal Document Repository in the respective sections based upon information entered into the data fields. All documents are and will be stored within the cloud. These processes are and will facilitate prompt notification, action and transparency, even when NCI OA or program staff are out of the office. All emails received by vendors are automated and will include a link to where action can be taken on a correspondence.

The FCAS Vendor Portal and subsequently the OASYS Vendor Portal are additional services of existing internal systems, OASYS/FCAS. The vendor portals are in the design and development phase. The NCI Privacy Act Coordinator was consulted and determined that a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) was needed. The Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) was completed and signed by HHS on April 12, 2021 (Attachment 10).

#### **A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication**

The information that a vendor enters will be unique to the OASYS and FCAS Vendor Portals. Once a vendor user creates a vendor firm's profile (Attachments 4 and 5) with an associated unique identifier (i.e. Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS), General Service Administration's (GSA's) Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)), the vendor's account will be stored in the OASYS/FCAS system indefinitely. The vendor firm's portal administrator will have the ability to update the account when indicated (e.g. with new phone number, update to address) and to add additional authorized vendor users by adding their first and last names, firm email addresses, job titles and firm telephone numbers. When a new vendor user attempts to create an account using the same unique identifier, the system will hinder the user from creating the new profile and will notify the user to contact their vendor portal account administrator(s) to request access (Attachments 8 and 9).

FCAS Vendor Portal Vendor users enter, and OASYS Vendor Portal Vendor users will enter information into data fields for each unique request they submit and each unique correspondence (document) that they upload (Attachments 6 and 7). This allows for automatic categorization and notifications for each request and document.

The web survey is available for FCAS Vendor Portal vendor users (Attachment 2) and will be available for OASYS Vendor Portal vendor users (Attachment 1) to provide voluntary feedback whenever they chose, once they are in the vendor portal.

#### **A.5 Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities**

This information collection will have no impact on small businesses or other small entities.

#### **A.6 Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently**

The Vendor Portal Registration information will only be collected at the time the vendor activity begins in the portal (Attachments 4 and 5). The vendor will then be able to update information with the exception of the unique identifier (e.g. DUNS, GSA's UEI). The data field information collected will be one time per vendor request and/or vendor upload of correspondence document(s) (Attachments 6 and 7). The survey feedback is voluntary and may be submitted based upon vendor choice (Attachments 1 and 2).



## **A.7 Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5**

This survey will be implemented in a manner that fully complies with 5 C.F.R. 1320.5.

### **A.8.1 Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice**

The 60-day Federal Register Notice was published on May 19, 2021, (Vol. 86, pg. 27093) and allowed 60 days for public comment. No public comments were received.

### **A.8.2 Efforts to Consult Outside Agency**

No outside consultation is intended.

### **A.9 Explanation of Any Payment of Gift to Respondents**

No payments or gifts will be given to respondents.

### **A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents**

All information will be kept private to the extent allowable by law. The following Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will be collected to establish the vendor profile at time of Vendor Portal Registration, so that vendor users that are authorized can have access to their specific vendor firm's account:

- First Name of Business Official
- Last Name of Business Official
- Business Official's title at the firm
- Email address of the business official at the firm
- Firm/company name
- Firm/company mailing address
- Firm/company phone number
- Firm DUNS number

The following Personally Identifiable Information (PII) will be collected to add additional vendor users to the vendor portals:

- First Name of additional vendor users
- Last Name of additional vendor users
- Job Title of additional vendor users
- Email address of the additional vendor users at the firm
- Telephone Number of additional vendor users

This information will be stored within the internal OASYS/FCAS system and will only be accessible by authorized users.

The Privacy Act is applicable as determined by the NIH Privacy Officer in the Privacy Act Memo (Attachment 11). The applicable SORN is NIH Privacy Act Systems of Record 09-25-0216 Administration: NIH Electronic Discovery and 09-25-0118 Contracts: Professional Services Contractors, HHS/NIH/NCI.

### A.11 Justification for Sensitive Questions

No sensitive questions will be asked.

### A.12.1 Estimates of Hour Burden Including Annualized Hourly Costs

The total annual number of respondents is estimated at 919, with a total annual burden of 230 hours (Table A.12-1). Currently there is only one vendor company with 61 vendor users that use the FCAS Vendor Portal as it is still in production, this places no burden at this time on the respondent (Attachment 2 and Attachment 5).

**A.12-1 Estimated Annualized Burden Hours**

Form Name	Type of Respondent	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Time Per Response (in hours)	Total Annual Burden Hours
Survey - OASYS – (Attachment 1)	Individuals	10	1	6/60	1
Survey – FCAS – (Attachment 2)	Individuals	1	1	6/60	0
Registration - OASYS – (Attachment 4)	Corporations	400	1	6/60	40
Registration – FCAS – (Attachment 5)	Corporations	1	1	6/60	0
Data Field Information - OASYS – (Attachment 6)	Individuals	400	18	1/60	120
Data Field Information – FCAS – (Attachment 7)	Individuals	61	63	1/60	64
Add/Edit new Vendor User – OASYS – (Attachment 8)	Corporations	40	1	6/60	4
Add/Edit new Vendor User – FCAS – (Attachment 9)	Corporations	6	1	6/60	1
<b>Totals</b>		<b>919</b>	<b>11,501</b>		<b>230</b>

**A.12-2 ANNUAL COST TO RESPONDENT**

The total annualized cost to respondents is \$8,921.70.

**A.12-2 Annualized Cost to the Respondents**

Form Name	Type of Respondent	Total Annual Burden Hours	Hourly Wage Rate*	Respondent Cost
Survey	Individuals	1	\$38.79	\$38.79
Registration	Corporations	40	\$38.79	\$1,551.60
Data Field Information	Individuals	184	\$38.79	\$7,137.36
Add/Edit new Vendor	Corporations	5	\$38.79	\$193.95
<b>Totals</b>		<b>230</b>		<b>\$8,921.70</b>

\*Source of the Hourly Wage Rate is provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_nat.htm#13-0000](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm#13-0000), “Business and Financial Operations Occupations”

**A.13 Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondents or Record Keepers**

There are no additional costs to report.

**A.14 Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

The annual cost to the Federal Government is estimated to be \$192,161.85 (Table A.14.1). The federal personnel are responsible for the review of data collected via the application mechanisms. The contractor tasks include the design and implementation of the systems and maintenance of the active systems.

**A.14-1 Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

Staff	Grade/Step	Salary**	% of Effort	Fringe (if applicable)	Total Cost to Gov't
<b>Federal Oversight</b>					
Support Assistant	9/2	\$62,133	40%		\$24,853.20
Contract Specialist	13/5	\$117,516	30%		\$35,254.80
Contract Specialist	14/5	\$138,866	10%		\$13,886.60
Branch Chief	15/5	\$163,345	5%		\$8,167.25
<b>Contractor Cost</b>					\$110,000.00
Travel					\$0
Other Cost					\$0
<b>Total</b>					<b>\$192,161.85</b>

\*\*The salary in the table above is cited from <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2021/DCB.pdf>

### **A.15 Explanation for Program Changes or Adjustments**

This is a new information collection request.

### **A.16 Plans for Tabulation and Publication and Project Time Schedule**

The information collected will not be published. Information has been collected for the FCAS Vendor Portal online survey since go live in March 2020. The plan is to begin the OASYS Vendor Portal online survey at time of vendor portal go live which is currently planned for 2022 and will continue indefinitely. The FCAS Vendor Portal vendor profile was set up in March 2020. Contractor firm's that have current contracts with NCI OA at the time of go live will be invited to set up vendor profiles in OASYS Vendor Portal. Additional vendor firm's will be invited as they are invited to submit revised proposals in response to solicitations and/or at the time of new contract award. Therefore, there will be new vendor users accessing the vendor portals over time. Data will be analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. Reports will be run on a quarterly basis and used by internal NCI OA staff to determine to evaluate if changes need to be made to the vendor portals.

Information collected to set up vendor portals will be used by internal NCI OA staff to respond to internal data calls where indicated. Information collected when vendors are submitting requests or correspondence to the vendor portals will be used for day-to-day contract administration.

### **A.17 Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate**

We are not requesting an exemption to the display of the OMB Expiration date.

### **A.18 Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

There are no exceptions to the Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions.