

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology
NIST Center for Neutron Research (NCNR) Information Management System (IMS)
and Summer School Application
OMB Control No. 0693-0081

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

Abstract

This data collection is needed to provide access to the NIST Center for Neutron Research for facility users, students, and visitors. It gathers proposals for performing research at the facility which are judged by an external community of expert reviewers. It also records results of radiation protection and other safety training needed for compliance with NIST and other agency regulations.

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 National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) houses the NCNR which is a National User Facility, chartered to serve the nation's scientific community by providing unique experimental apparatus for scientific studies using neutron scattering. Since the demand for such measurements exceeds the available resources, NCNR designed an Information Management System (IMS) that implements a peer-reviewed proposal based system to allocate the instrumentation to the best scientific proposals, collect information from the selected external participants to enable their scientific visits to NIST/NCNR, and track the results of those visits. In order to fulfill these goals, IMS implements a complex business process involving the following steps:

- Registration of NCNR facility users
- Collection of scientific experiment proposals
- Regularly scheduled peer review of said proposals
- Merit-based award of available experimental resources
- Experiment date scheduling for selected projects (instrument scheduling)
- Collection and management of data required by the NCNR site access protocol
- Managing the Health Physics training of arriving scientists
- Coordination of personal data with the NIST Associates Information System (NAIS, SSP 100-03) for future NAIS account processing

- Collection of data in support of related activities such as
- NCNR Summer School for facility users
- Tracking of the research results such as collected data, and subsequent publications
- Numerous internal reporting functions used to evaluate and manage the NCNR activities.
- Neutron Scattering Course an online graduate course provided in Fall 2021, to help students/postdocs/early career scientists interested in learning how they can utilize neutron scattering to advance their research.

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 collection of information is organized around the timeline of the scientific proposal cycle, which usually includes two calls for proposals per year. Most data is submitted by NCNR applicants in support of these proposals, and in subsequent activities coordinating visits to perform selected experiments. The information collected by IMS is not designed to be disseminated publicly--it's used to support the NCNR facility operations. Points of information collection will include:

- Registration of NCNR facility users
- NCNR/NSF Summer School Application
- Neutron Scattering Course Application

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.

The information is collected via a web-based data input and computer database storage back end.

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 Item 2 above.

The IMS system contains a database of information and reuses previously entered data, and avoids collecting data that is not strictly necessary for the NCNR User Facility process.

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

NCNR does not interact with small business entities.

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 IMS collects only data that is required for the programmatic activities of NCNR, so any curtailment of collection would hamper the scientific research that is performed at NCNR.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner: requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly; requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it; requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document; requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract; grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years; in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study; requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB; that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.

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

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication 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. Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years - even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

A 60-day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting public comments was published on Monday, June 14, 2021 (Vol. 86, No. 112, page 31480-31481). No comments were received.

A 30-day Federal Register Notice (FRN) soliciting comments was published on Tuesday, September 21, 2021 (Vol. 86, No. 180, page 52445).

Outreach and effort for consultation outside of the agency primarily focused around the NCNR Facility Users' community. NCNR is continuously engaged with this community; and the Facility Users advisory committee's recommendations provide guidance for the development of the Information Management System (IMS).

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

There are no payments or gifts to respondents, other than those resulting from programmatic activity that follows afterwards.

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.

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. 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.

The Information Management System (IMS) is not collecting such information.

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

The estimated time per response is one (1) hour; estimated number of respondents is 2,000.

The estimated burden is 2,000 hours annually.

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).

There is no cost to the respondent or record keepers.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs 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. Agencies may also aggregate cost estimates from Items 12, 13, and 14 in a single table.

This information collection will involve several NIST employees that will devote a portion of their time, to plan, coordinate, administer, or monitor the overall types of individual information collections to be conducted. NIST estimates that it would involve an annual estimated total of 780 hours (15 hours per week) and an estimated cost of \$87,000 per year (based on a loaded professional salary of \$116 / hour).

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported on the burden worksheet.

A free graduate level, online Neutron Scattering Course is being provided by the NCNR this Fall. This course will focus on the application of neutron scattering to soft materials. This course is intended for students/postdocs/early career scientists interested in learning how they can utilize neutron scattering to advance their research, and anyone else who feels they could benefit from the topics outlined in the syllabus. This course is supported by the Center for High Resolution Neutron Scattering, a partnership between NSF and NIST.

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.

There is no plan to publish the collected data.

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 OMB number and expiration date will be displayed on the instrument.

18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in "Certification or Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."

There are no exceptions to this information collection.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

(If this collection does not employ statistical methodology, state this information. Delete the following questions.)

Statistical methods are NOT employed by INS in any meaningful sense, apart from basic reporting used for internal management purposes.