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# Supporting Statement for DOE Applicant Portal

## **Part A: Justification**

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**OMB No. 1910-5193**

*DOE F 321.2, DOE's Applicant Portal*

July 2022

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## A.1. Legal Justification

**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 information collection.**

President Biden signed into law the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, or BIL (Public Law (PL) 117-584, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act). The Department of Energy (DOE) has a key role in implementing the clean energy provisions of BIL to modernize the nation's energy infrastructure, create jobs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, advance our energy sector, and benefit underserved communities. BIL provides more than \$62 billion in new funding to DOE to establish clean energy demonstration and deployment programs that will underpin a resilient and flexible energy system for the nation and deliver a more equitable clean energy future for the American people by doing the following:

- Investing in American manufacturing and workers;
- Expanding access to energy efficiency and clean energy for families, communities and businesses;
- Delivering reliable, clean, and affordable power to more Americans; and
- Building the technologies of tomorrow through clean energy demonstrations.

This funding represents the most dramatic change to the Department since our founding in 1977. To support the President's law, DOE will need to hire nearly 1,000 new employees in the immediate future.

To support meeting this historic initiative, PL 117-58 provides the Secretary of Energy the authorization, upon a determination that there is a severe shortage of candidates or a critical hiring need for particular positions to carry out DOE activities funded under this title, may, from within the funds provided to DOE under PL 117-58, recruit and directly appoint highly qualified individuals into the competitive service. The authorization in PL 117-58 permits DOE to use Direct Hire Authority (DHA) to fill critical positions related to energy infrastructure, innovative technologies, and information technology. DHA is a streamlined hiring process outside of the normal Title 5 competitive hiring procedures that allows the Department to fill positions expeditiously based upon critical needs.

When assessing ways to improve hiring to support Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility initiatives and optimize DOE's ability to connect with underrepresented communities, it was determined that the Federal application system is difficult to navigate, and the traditional vacancy postings often do not resonate with the public. To be able to hire new employees and attract a diverse applicant pool from outside of the Federal government to fill these critical positions, it is imperative for DOE to have a targeted hiring campaign that can reach the widest applicant pool possible and provide them with an easy and effective way to identify interest in new Federal job opportunities at DOE to support the BIL. To that end, DOE created a centralized applicant portal to focus its recruitment, marketing, and outreach efforts to directing all interested candidates to one central location.

USAJobs, the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) system used for hiring in the Federal government, is not configured to allow collecting applicant information in a more generic format. Individual job vacancy announcements are required that are tailored to specific positions which often utilize confusing Government jargon.

To leverage USAJobs for DOE's massive BIL hiring efforts, posting 1,000 separate job announcements would not be an attainable approach. Consolidating positions by job series would limit announcements to the 30-40 range but would limit the Department's ability to filter applicants by program area of interest and/or areas of expertise. Additionally, DOE would need to spend significant resources to not only reach underserved communities and the general population, so they are aware of these new job opportunities;

but also, to train them on the nuances of Federal hiring terminology to ensure they apply to the appropriate job opening. This greatly limits exposure by not connecting effectively with candidates who are unfamiliar with Government terminology and will significantly delay DOE's ability to bring on quality hires quickly to support the BIL.

DOE is committed to reaching underserved communities and the public from across the country who may not be used to applying to government jobs or with the terminology used in the traditional job postings. Having a centralized applicant portal to facilitate resume collection from interested members of the public will allow DOE to implement a targeted hiring strategy that will significantly streamline and ease the burden on applicants.

## **A.2. Needs and Uses of Data**

**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**

This information is being requested, collected, and maintained to facilitate filling DOE's critical vacant positions to support the President's agenda. Specifically, this information will be used by DOE staff charged with filling the vacant positions. The demographic information requested is strictly voluntary. It will be used to evaluate agency marketing and outreach strategies to expand both the size and diversity of the applicant pool and assess the aggregate diversity of the applicant pool as candidates move through the evaluation process. The demographic data will be linked to individual candidates to support this analysis but will not be included in the applicant profile information available to hiring managers nor used to evaluate any individual candidate or inform consideration for any position. Participation in the diversity data is strictly voluntary. Respondents voluntarily completing the form will be asked a series of questions. Questions marked as required are:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email Address
- Phone
- US Citizen
- Veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces
- Currently Employed by the Federal government
- Current or prior political appointee
- Years of Experience
- Supervisory/Management Experience
- Functional Area of Expertise
- Employment Availability
- Area of Interest
- Interested in Remote Work
- Interested Geographic Locations
- Applicant Source

Respondents can opt to respond to the below additional questions to assist DOE with better filtering interested candidates to the appropriate hiring managers:

- Highest Degree Attained
- Degree Type
- Project/Program Budget Oversight Experience
- Technical Skills and Certifications

- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Race and Ethnicity
- Age
- Disability Status

All interested applicants will be required to submit a resume.

Once an interested person completes the form, DOE will use the answers to the questions to generate search tags (e.g., years of experience, areas of interest, technical certifications) to create “building blocks” to narrow down candidate profiles and identify necessary technical expertise for positions. The information provided will support resume capture and management, along with candidate sorting, grouping and referrals, and associated metrics (such as skills cataloging). Demographic data collected will be kept confidential, analyzed in the aggregate, and will not be included in the applicant profile information available to hiring managers. Aggregate applicant pool demographic data may be analyzed at multiple stages of the candidate evaluation process to include initial recruitment, following a structured core competency interview, a Subject Matter Expert (SME) resume review, and structured technical qualifications interview(s). The demographic data will be linked to individual candidates to support this analysis but will not be included in information available to hiring managers to inform consideration for any position.

DOE intends to collect the information via DOE F 321.2 located at [www.energy.gov/jobs](http://www.energy.gov/jobs). The form will display an OMB Control Number and expiration date, as well as a PRA Burden Disclosure Statement and a Privacy Act Statement.

While the information collected is intended to be used for internal purposes, a complete list of the routine uses can be found in the system of records notice associated with this collection of information, OPM/GOVT-5, *Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records*, 79 FR 16834 (March 26, 2014), modification published 80 FR 74815 (November 30, 2015) and OPM/GOVT-7 Applicant Race, Sex, National Origin, and Disability Status Records, 71 Fed. Reg. 35351 (June 19, 2006), amended 80 Fed. Reg. 74815 (Nov. 30, 2015).

### A.3. Use of Technology

**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.**

The Department will collect the information using electronic forms. In rare cases if a reasonable accommodation is requested by a potential applicant, paper-based forms may be used. DOE anticipates 99.5% of responses will be submitted electronically.

### A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

**Describe efforts to identify duplication.**

DOE is not collecting this information anywhere else within the Department. As was previously stated, USAJobs is not configured to allow collecting applicant information in a more generic format that allows applicants to identify interest in multiple functional areas. Individual job vacancy announcements are required for specific positions which utilize often confusing Government jargon. To utilize USAJobs for DOE’s massive BIL hiring efforts, DOE would need to spend significant resources training potential applicants on the nuances of Federal hiring terminology to ensure they apply to the appropriate job opening. This greatly limits exposure by not connecting effectively with candidates who are unfamiliar

with Government terminology and will significantly delay DOE's ability to bring on quality hires quickly to support BIL.

### **A.5. Provisions for Reducing Burden on Small Businesses**

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

This information collection request has no identified impact on small businesses and organizations.

### **A.6. Consequences of Less-Frequent Reporting**

**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.**

Interested applicants will need to complete the form one time. Completion of this form is voluntary.

### **A.7. Compliance with 5 CFR 1320.5**

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

- (a) requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- (b) requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- (c) requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- (d) requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**
- (e) in connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to product valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- (f) requiring the use of statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- (g) that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in stature of 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**
- (h) 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.**

There are no other special circumstances involved in the collection of this information.

## **A.8. Summary of Consultations Outside of the Agency**

**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 5CFR 320.8(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 in response to the comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden. Describe efforts to consult with persons outside DOE 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 report.**

The Department published a 60-day Federal Register Notice and Request for Comments concerning this collection in the Federal Register on March 11, 2022, Vol. 87, No. 48, and page number 13994-13995. The notice described the collection and invited interested parties to submit comments or recommendations regarding the collection. No comments were received.

## **A.9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents**

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

No gifts or payments of any kind have been provided to any individuals who are connected to this collection.

## **A.10. Provisions for Protection of Information**

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

Personal Identifiable Information (PII) collected through this form will be retained and covered by OPM/GOVT-5, *Recruiting, Examining, and Placement Records*, 79 FR 16834 (March 26, 2014), modification published 80 FR 74815 (November 30, 2015) and OPM/GOVT-7 Applicant Race, Sex, National Origin, and Disability Status Records, 71 Fed. Reg. 35351 (June 19, 2006), amended 80 Fed. Reg. 74815 (Nov. 30, 2015). A Privacy Act Statement is included on the form.

## **A.11. Justification for Sensitive Questions**

**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 DOE 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 form includes demographic information that will be used to evaluate agency marketing and outreach strategies to expand both the size and diversity of our talent pool. Providing demographic information is strictly voluntary and candidates can submit a resume signifying their interest in DOE opportunities without providing the accompanying demographic information.

## **A.12A. Estimate of Respondent Burden Hours**

**Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should 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, DOE should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample fewer than 10 potential respondents is desirable.**

The estimated number of respondents and responses is 35,000. This estimate is based on the number of potential people who may be interested in applying to DOE to work on BIL jobs and is informed by the number of applicants the DOE Applicant Portal has received during the six-month emergency authorization. Of the 35,000 respondents, DOE estimates that 175 respondents (0.5%) will submit the paper-based form, and 34,825 respondents (99.5%) will submit the form electronically. The form requires approximately 0.167 hours (or 10 minutes) for completion, to include time for reviewing the instructions, completing the response, and submitting the information to the agency. The total burden hours estimated for annual activity within the DOE Applicant Portal is 5,845 hours.

**Table A1. Estimated Respondent Hour Burden**

| Form Number/Title (and/or other Collection Instrument name) | Type of Respondents | Number of Respondents | Annual Number of Responses | Burden Hours Per Response | Annual Burden Hours* | Annual Reporting Frequency |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| DOE F 321.2 – paper form                                    | General Public      | 175                   | 175                        | 0.167                     | 29                   | 1                          |
| DOE F 321.2 – electronic form                               | General Public      | 34,825                | 34,825                     | 0.167                     | 5,816                | 1                          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  |                     | <b>35,000</b>         | <b>35,000</b>              |                           | <b>5,845</b>         |                            |

\* Totals may not add due to rounding

## **A.12B. Estimate of Annual Cost to Respondent for Burden Hours**

**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’.**

The estimated total cost to respondents is \$340,121. This is based on a fully burdened hourly wage of \$58.19/hour using the ‘Professional and related’ line item on the BLS Civilian workers table (<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ecec.t02.htm>).

**Table A2. Estimated Respondent Cost Burden**

| Type of Respondents | Total Annual Burden Hours | Hourly Wage Rate | Total Respondent Costs |
|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| General Public      | 5,845                     | \$58.19          | \$340,121              |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>5,845</b>              |                  | <b>\$340,121</b>       |

## **A.13. Other Estimated Annual Cost to Respondents**

**Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.**

No other costs, including capital or maintenance costs, will be incurred by respondents, beyond their time.



## A.14. Annual Cost to the Federal Government

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

The annualized cost to the Federal government for this information collection is estimated to be \$28,400. This includes the costs associated with the 250 hours spent on the design, preparation, printing, and distribution of the form. Federal employee costs are estimated to be \$28,400 based on an assumed fully loaded rate of \$113.60 (\$71 per hour base rate (GS 14/15 level personnel), plus a 1.6 multiplier).

## A.15. Reasons for Changes in Burden

**Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 (or 14) of OMB Form 83-I.**

Burden estimates have been updated to reflect projected interest in the DOE Applicant Portal over a full year. This estimate is based on actual interest recorded within the Applicant Portal during the six-month emergency authorization.

**Table A3. ICR Summary of Burden**

|                           | <b>Requested</b> | <b>Program Change Due to Agency Discretion</b> | <b>Change Due to Adjustment in Agency Estimate</b> | <b>Previously Approved</b> |
|---------------------------|------------------|--|--|----------------------------|
| Total Number of Responses | 35,000           |  | +20,000  | 15,000                     |
| Total Time Burden (Hr)    | 5,845            |  | +3,340   | 2,505                      |
| Total Cost Burden         | \$340,121        |  | +194,646   | \$145,475                  |

## A.16. Collection, Tabulation, and Publication Plans

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

This package contains no collection whose results will be published for statistical use.

## A.17. OMB Number and Expiration Date

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

DOE is seeking approval to display the OMB Control number only, not the expiration date, upon OMB's approval of the information collection. The inclusion of an expiration date on the DOE Applicant Portal has the potential to create confusion among applicants that their opportunity to apply for positions supporting DOE's BIL activities expires. Removing the expiration date will help to ensure equal access to all interested applicants.

## **A.18. Certification Statement**

**Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.**

The Department is not requesting any exceptions to the Certification Statement.