

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Travel, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Data Collection
OMB Control Number: New Information Collection

A. JUSTIFICATION

This Supporting Statement is for a new information collection.

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

To effectively administer and monitor its economic development assistance programs, EDA collects certain information from applications for, and recipients of, EDA investment assistance. Under the EDA American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation, award recipients are required to submit identified program metrics and information to ensure that EDA regional development investments are evidence-based and data-driven, and accountable to participants and the public.

EDA will require electronic survey of the 332 Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation award recipients. Of these, 30 award recipients will also participate in a phone interview. This collection instrument will collect baseline data from awardees that will lay the foundation for a future evaluation of EDA's investments in travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation. The survey will be conducted once.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328) requires the Commerce Department to produce a report to Congress on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel industry. This legislation included language specifying that in writing this report, Commerce should consult with industry officials, including Destination Marketing Organizations and State Travel Directors. Commerce has produced an interim report. In preparing for the final report, which is due in December 2023, Commerce intends asking State Tourism Directors to supply comments on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on their state and the current conditions of travel in their state and incorporating their comments into the final report.

2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used.

The information will be used by EDA to establish baseline data for the Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation award recipients. In conducting this survey, EDA will ensure that the agency's travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation investments are evidence-based and data-driven, and accountable to participants and the public.

For the survey of impact of COVID-19 on travel industry and current condition of States, Commerce is seeking approval for an e-mail message delivering a link to a web-enabled survey to reduce the burden on the respondents, 50 State Tourism Directors.

The web-enabled survey will consist of questions that assess the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on their state and the current conditions of travel in their state. The data and comments collected will be analyzed and incorporated into the final report to the Congress as required by the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328).

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.

The information will be collected via electronic submissions and via phone interviews.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

EDA reviews new and existing information collections to ensure that there is no duplication.

The information requested is unique to the information collection and is not collected elsewhere.

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

Pursuant to EDA's authorizing legislation and regulations, eligible applicants and eligible recipients of EDA investment assistance include "small entities" as defined by the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C 601(6)). Accordingly, this information collection potentially involves small entities. As part of this process, EDA has conducted a thorough review of its forms and other information collections to minimize respondent burden.

Only the minimum amount of information will be collected by both EDA and ITA to effectively administer programs and to monitor compliance with regulations.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

EDA serves as the lead bureau for the Department of Commerce's Strategic Objective 2.1 ("Drive equitable, resilient, place-based economic development and job growth"). If the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, EDA will limit its ability to monitor grant program impacts which will play an important role in continuously improving EDA's investment strategy. This data collection, and its cadence, will provide EDA with the necessary data to facilitate sound evidence-based decision making.

Without this information ITA, would be unable to timely submit the mandated report to Congress on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel industry.

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

There are no special circumstances that would require the information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to the notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency 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 reported.

On April 3, 2023, EDA published a Federal Register notice (FRN) that solicited public comments on this information collection (88 FR 19607). No public comments were received in response to the FRN that solicited public comments on this information collection.

In particular, EDA solicited reviews from persons outside the agency including from independent researchers, Department of Commerce and other Federal agency staff, and OMB staff on topics including but not limited to: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No gifts or payments are made to any respondent, other than disbursements of award funds to financial assistance recipients.

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

While information submitted by a respondent to EDA generally is subject to public disclosure, EDA does not publicly release confidential personal or business information, including trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information, to the extent that such information is exempt from public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). See 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4). Additionally, EDA does not release information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy. See 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(6).

11. Provide additional justification for any question of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

This information collection requests aggregated demographic information regarding race, ethnicity, and sex of award beneficiaries, but the information does not collect demographic information associated with individual award beneficiaries. This information is necessary to assess whether the Travel, Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Program is producing equitable outcomes as pursuant with EDA's Investment Priorities.

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

Multiplying the expected number of responses by the average time to complete a response, EDA estimates the above total respondent burden for this one-time data collection.

Type of Respondent	Number of Respondents	Hours per Response	Total Estimated Time
Award Recipients – Electronic survey	332	2 hours	664 hours
Subset of Award Recipients – Phone interview	30	0.75 hours	22.5 hours
Total	362		686.5 hours

ITA estimates that there will be up to 50 respondents if all states respond. The average time to complete a survey is 10 minutes so the total annual burden hours will be 500 minutes.

Estimated Annualized Respondent Burden Hours

Information Collection Instrument	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)
Survey of Impact of COVID-19 on Travel Industry	State Government (General and Operations Managers)	50	1	50	0.17 hour (10 minutes)	8.33 hours (500 minutes)

Estimated Annualized Respondent Costs

Type of Respondent/ Occupational Title	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden per Response	Hourly Wage Rate*	Total Burden Costs
State Government (General and Operations Managers)	50	1	0.17	\$49.78	\$423.13

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

Apart from the value of the burden hours, there is no additional cost to respondents associated with this information collection.

The estimated annual cost burden to respondents, excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12, is \$0.

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

EDA estimates the total annual cost burden to the federal government to be \$42,590.46 (332 award recipients, each taking two hours, multiplied by \$62.04 per hour; plus a subset of 30 award recipients, each taking 0.75 hours, multiplied by \$62.04 per hour). Cost assumes application of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics third quarter 2022 mean hourly employer costs for employee compensation for professional and related occupations of \$62.04.

ITA estimates Total Cost: Total Hours (50 hour) x Average Salary (\$46.98/hour) = \$2,349

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

This is a new information collection, thus there are no changes or adjustments to a prior information collection.

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

Specific details of information collected from respondents will generally not be published.

However, information collected from respondents may be published in aggregate form as part of EDA's annual report, GPRA reporting, progress reports to the DOC, Congressional Reports and/or its OIG, or other summary reports.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328) requires the Commerce Department to produce a report to Congress on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel industry. The final report on the tourism data collected will be reported to Congress.

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

EDA is not seeking approval to not display the expiration date of OMB approval for the information collections.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.

B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

EDA and ITA will not employ statistical methods for this information collection.