

Supporting Statement A for Generic Information Collection Submissions for Generic Clearance for the Collection of Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery

OMB Control Number: 3137-0081

PART A: JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

In order to work continuously to ensure that our programs are effective and meet our customers' needs, and consistent to the extent applicable with Executive Order 12862 and other Executive Order(s), the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) (hereafter "the Agency") seeks to obtain OMB approval of a generic clearance to collect qualitative feedback on our service delivery. By "qualitative feedback," we mean information that provides useful insights into perceptions and opinions but not statistical surveys yielding quantitative results that can be generalized to the population of study.

This collection of information is necessary to enable the Agency to garner customer and stakeholder feedback in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with our commitment to improving service delivery. The information collected from our customers and stakeholders will help ensure that users have an effective, efficient, and satisfying experience with the Agency's programs. This feedback will provide insights into customer or stakeholder perceptions, experiences, and expectations; provide an early warning of issues with service; and/or focus attention on areas where communication, training, or changes in operations might improve delivery of services. These collections will allow for ongoing, collaborative, and actionable communications between the Agency and its customers and stakeholders. They will also enable feedback to contribute directly to the improvement of program management.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

Improving agency programs requires an ongoing assessment of service delivery, by which we mean systematic review of the operation of a program compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards as a means of contributing to the continuous improvement of the program. The Agency will collect, analyze, and interpret information gathered through this generic clearance to identify strengths and weaknesses of current services and make improvements in service delivery based on feedback. The solicitation of feedback will target areas such as timeliness, appropriateness, accuracy of information, courtesy, efficiency of service delivery, and resolution of issues with service delivery. Responses will be assessed to plan and inform efforts to improve or maintain the quality of service offered to the public. If this information is not collected, vital feedback from customers and stakeholders on the Agency's services will be unavailable.

The Agency will only submit a collection for approval under this generic clearance if it meets the following conditions:

- Information gathered will be used only internally for general service improvement and program management purposes and is not intended for release outside of the Agency (if released, procedures outlined in Question 16 will be followed);

- Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions ¹;
- Information gathered will yield qualitative information; the collections will not be designed or expected to yield statistically reliable results or used as though the results are generalizable to the population of study;
- The collections are voluntary;
- The collections are low-burden for respondents (based on considerations of total burden hours, total number of respondents, or burden-hours per respondent) and are low-cost for both the respondents and the Federal Government;
- The collections do not raise substantive or policy issues and do not raise issues of concern to other Federal Agencies;
- Any collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program(s) or may have experience with the program(s) in the near future; and
- Personally identifiable information (PII) will be collected only to the extent necessary for small remuneration to participants in focus groups and cognitive laboratory studies and will not be retained.

If these conditions are not met, the Agency will submit an information collection request to OMB for approval through the standard PRA process.

To obtain approval for a collection that meets the conditions of this generic clearance, a standardized form will be submitted to OMB along with supporting documentation (e.g., a copy of the comment card). The submission will have automatic approval unless OMB identifies issues within five (5) business days.

The types of collections that this generic clearance covers include, but are not limited to:

- Customer comment cards/complaint forms
- Small discussion groups
- Focus groups of customers, potential customers, delivery partners, or other stakeholders
- Cognitive laboratory studies, such as those used to refine questions or assess usability of a website
- Qualitative/non-statistical customer surveys (e.g., post-transaction/interaction satisfaction surveys; opt-out web surveys)
- In-person observation testing (e.g., website or software usability tests)

The Agency has established a manager/managing entity to serve for this generic clearance and will conduct an independent review of each information collection to ensure compliance with the terms of this clearance prior to submitting each collection to OMB.

3. Consideration Given to Information Technology

If appropriate, we will collect information electronically and/or use online collaboration tools to reduce burden.

¹ As defined in OMB and agency Information Quality Guidelines, “influential” means that “an agency can reasonably determine that dissemination of the information will have or does have a clear and substantial impact on important public policies or important private sector decisions.”

4. Duplication of Information

No similar data are gathered or maintained by the Agency or are available from other sources known to the Agency.

5. Reducing the Burden on Small Entities

Small business or other small entities may be involved in these efforts, but the Agency will minimize the burden on them of information collections approved under this clearance by sampling, asking for readily available information, and using short, easy-to-complete information collection instruments.

6. Consequences of Not Conducting Collection

Without these types of feedback, the Agency will not have timely information to adjust its services to meet customer needs.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no special circumstances. The information collected will be voluntary and will not be used for statistical purposes.

8. Consultations with Persons Outside the Agency

In accordance with 5 CFR 1320.8(d), on September 6, 2023, IMLS published a 60-day notice for public comment in the *Federal Register* [88 FR 60989-60990]. No comments have been received at the time of this submission.

IMLS published a notice in the *Federal Register* on November 3, 2023 [88 FR 75626] with a 30-day public comment period to announce forwarding of the information collection request to OMB for approval.

9. Payment or Gift

IMLS may request permission to provide small remuneration to participants in certain focus groups and cognitive laboratory studies. However, generally speaking, IMLS will not provide payment or other forms of remuneration to respondents to its various forms of collecting feedback.

10. Confidentiality

If a confidentiality pledge is deemed useful and feasible, IMLS will only include a pledge of confidentiality that is supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, and that does not unnecessarily impede sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use. If the Agency includes a pledge of confidentiality, it will include a citation for the statute or regulation supporting the pledge.

11. Sensitive Nature

No questions that are of a personal or sensitive nature will be asked.

12. Burden of Information Collection

A variety of instruments and platforms will be used to collect information from respondents. The annual burden hours requested (2,975) are based on the number of collections we expect to conduct over the requested period for this clearance.

Estimated Annual Reporting Burden					
	No. of Respondents	Number of Information Collection Requests (ICRs)	Hours per Response	Total Hours	Cost
Customer Satisfaction Surveys	8,250	6	0.25	2062.50	\$62,823.75
Focus Groups	200	1	1.00	200.00	\$6,092.00
Usability Testing	825	2	0.50	412.50	\$12,564.75
Small Discussion Groups	200	1	1.00	200.00	\$6,092.00
Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form	500	1	0.20	100.00	\$3,046.00
TOTALS	9,975	11		2975.00	\$90,618.50
Average			0.25		

Customer Satisfaction Surveys: 15 minutes (0.25 hr)

Focus Groups: 60 minutes (1.00 hr)

Usability Tests: 30 minutes (0.50 hr)

Small Discussion Groups: 60 minutes (1.00 hr)

Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form: 12 minutes (0.20 hr)

Cost based on average hourly wage of Museum and Library Professionals: \$30.46/hr

13. Costs to Respondents

No costs are anticipated.

14. Costs to Federal Government

The estimated cost to the Federal Government is \$51,950 annually for a varying combination of staff salaries, reflecting the nature and number of ICRs for any particular year.

15. Reason for Change

Not applicable. This is a renewal request for a generic ICR.

16. Tabulation of Results, Schedule, Analysis Plans

Feedback collected under this generic clearance provides useful information, but it does not yield data that can be generalized to the overall population. Findings will be used for general service improvement but not for publication or other public release.

Although the Agency does not intend to publish its findings, the Agency may receive requests to release the information (e.g., congressional inquiry, Freedom of Information Act requests). The Agency will disseminate the findings when appropriate, strictly following the Agency's "Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Information Disseminated to the Public" and will include specific discussion of the limitation of the qualitative results discussed above.

17. Display of OMB Approval Date

We are requesting no exemption.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

These activities comply with the requirements in 5 CFR 1320.9.