

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Generic Clearance for Program Evaluation Data Collections
OMB Control No. 0693-0033

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

Abstract

In accordance with Executive Order 12862, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a non-regulatory agency of the Department of Commerce, proposes to conduct a number of surveys—both quantitative and qualitative—designed to evaluate our current programs from a customer’s perspective. NIST proposes to perform program evaluation data collections by means of, but not limited to, focus groups, reply cards that accompany product distributions, and Web-based surveys and dialogue boxes that offer customers the opportunity to express their views on the programs they are asked to evaluate.

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.

In accordance with OMB's regulations at 5 CFR 1320 - implementing the Paperwork Reduction Act, the Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010, and its’ mission “to promote U.S. innovation and industrial competitiveness by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology in ways that enhance economic security and improve our quality of life” the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), a non-regulatory agency of the Department of Commerce (DOC), proposes to conduct a number of data collections under this Generic Clearance for Program Evaluation Data. The individual information collections will be designed to evaluate current programs from a customer’s perspective that will provide customers with the opportunity to express their views on NIST programs. By collecting this type of information, NIST will be able to evaluate its performances as well as help determine the future direction of research to be conducted.

These types of data collection efforts will include but are not limited to questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, electronic methodologies, empirical studies, and video and audio data collections.

NIST will limit its inquiries to data collections that solicit strictly voluntary opinions and information and will not—under this PRA clearance request—collect information that is required (mandatory) or regulated.

For each proposed request using the generic clearance, NIST will submit the actual instrument and any related documents (letters, emails to respondents, scripts, etc.) to OMB along with responses to the following questions:

1. Explain who will be surveyed and why the group is appropriate to survey.
2. Explain how the survey was developed including consultation with interested parties, pre-testing, and responses to suggestions for improvement.
3. Explain how the survey will be conducted, how customers will be sampled if fewer than all customers will be surveyed, expected response rate, and actions your agency plans to take to improve the response rate.
4. Describe how the results of the survey will be analyzed and used to generalize the results to the entire customer population.

The following collections have been previously approved, are ongoing, and are part of this request.

NIST Small Business Innovation and Research Commercialization (SBIR) Survey
NIST Office of Weights and Measures (OWM) Training Evaluation
Outcome Survey for NIST Summer Institute for Middle School Science Teachers
Baldrige Examiner Training – Preparation Course Collection
Baldrige Executive Fellows – Post Program – Survey
Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder Tool – Feedback – Information Collection
Baldrige Technical Editing Information Collection
Baldrige Perception Survey
NIST SURF “Fellow” Feedback Survey
Bullet Black Box Participant Background Survey
Seeking Input on the Baldrige Excellence Framework
Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) Standards
Implementation Survey
NIST: Impact Program Evaluation Data for PULSE Business Accelerator
Employee Survey on the NIST Scientific Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research
Programs

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.

In general, the data collected will be used by NIST to aid and determine the planning and direction of future research for a variety of activities as well as to improve program management. The information collected will not be disseminated to the public but may be used to support research published in journals and conferences. All information collected will be stored anonymously and there will be no attribution to individuals in the analyzed data.

This information collection and dissemination will comply with the NIST Chief Information Officer (CIO) Information Quality Guidelines and Standards.

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.

Wherever possible, improved information technology will be used to reduce burden on NIST's customers. In addition to traditional data collection methods, NIST will, whenever possible, offer electronic response via the NIST Internet web site and by fax.

The planned use of transactional and electronic web site surveys will substantially contribute to the number of projected responses and associated burden hours.

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.

NIST has an internal review process that will examine each survey or data collection effort to be conducted under this generic clearance, to prevent internal duplication of effort and to ensure that appropriate data collection instruments are being developed. NIST is confident that the procedures in place ensure that there will be no duplication. Due to the nature of NIST's unique mission and programs to further the mission, no similar data exists.

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

Some small businesses and other small entities may be involved in these efforts. NIST will keep the burden to them, as well as on any other business, organization, or individual at a minimum by asking for only the minimum information needed to evaluate the NIST program(s) on a strictly voluntary basis.

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.

If responses to these surveys and other data collections are not collected, NIST would be unable to gauge some of the programs for present and future use. If the collections are not conducted, then: (1) the results from these data collections may lead to further investigations that could result in changes to, or enhancements of, the administration of programs, as well as identifying high-priority items for improvement; (2) the collection of economic data may shed light on the productivity of NIST programs and their role in achieving NIST's mission, would not be possible. There is no technical or legal obstacle to reducing this burden.

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 data collection conducted under this generic clearance will be conducted in accordance with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

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 soliciting public comment was published on April 5, 2022 (Vol. 87, Number 65, page 19666). No comments were received.

A 30-day Federal Register Notice soliciting public comment was published on July 28, 2022 (Vol. 87, Number 144, page 45297).

NIST will consult with various research groups and stakeholders from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records at least once every 3 years.

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

NIST will not provide payment or gifts to respondents for any written, telephone, comment card, or responses to other such survey. In the case of focus groups, if respondents must leave their home or place of business to travel to a specific location, NIST will, on a case-by-case basis, consider a modest remuneration for the participant's time and travel. In such cases, the

remuneration may range from \$25-\$75 per individual, dependent on the data collection and the level and length of participation required. Remuneration for focus group participation is a recognized and standard industry practice, without which it would be difficult to achieve appropriate and adequate participation and response and to obtain reliable information.

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.

Individuals will be assured of confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a (3)) only requires a Privacy Act Statement when collecting personal information that will be placed or stored in a system of records. Each information collection under this generic clearance will be assessed for Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and how the information is stored and retrieved. If a collection is deemed to be part of a System of Records as defined by the Privacy Act, NIST will describe the appropriate System of Records Notice (SORN) and provide a Privacy Act Statement on the instrument.

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.

No sensitive data will be collected.

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

The estimated totals for the three-year period of this collection are 40,000 Respondents and 20,000 burden hours. Below is a table of approved collections continuing with this renewal:

Information Collection	# of Respondents	Time per response	Burden hours
NIST Small Business Innovation and Research Commercialization (SBIR) Survey	25	30 minutes	13
NIST Office of Weights and Measures (OWM) Training Evaluation	800	5 minutes	67
Outcome Survey for NIST Summer Institute for Middle School Science Teachers	88	26 minutes	38
Baldrige Examiner Training - Preparation Course Collection	300	15 minutes	75
Baldrige Executive Fellows -			

Postprogram - Survey	18	10 minutes	3
Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder Tool - Feedback - Information Collection	100	20 minutes	33
Baldrige Technical Editing Information Collection	35	10 minutes	6
Baldrige Perception Survey	137	15 minutes	34
NIST SURF "Fellow" Feedback Survey	220	40 minutes	147
Bullet Black Box Participant Background Survey	1,500	10 minutes	250
Seeking Input on the Baldrige Excellence Framework	5,000	15 minutes	1,250
Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (OSAC) Standards Implementation Survey	800	60 minutes	800
NIST: Impact Program Evaluation Data for PULSE Business Accelerator	80	60 minutes	40
Employee Survey on the NIST Scientific Integrity and Responsible Conduct of Research Programs	7,000	15 minutes	1,750
TOTALS	16,103		4,506

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 are no costs to the respondents.

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 is an umbrella submission. This Generic Clearance will involve 5 NIST employees that will devote a portion of their time, aside from normal duties, 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 560 hours and an estimated cost of \$125,000 per year.

NIST will describe individual cost estimates for each individual information collection request made. For example, if NIST determines that a Contractor will be involved in the collection efforts, those specific costs will be described.

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

There are no changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval.

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.

The results from these data collection activities are not intended for general publication, but may be disseminated to NIST staff, key policy and management officials, and stakeholders.

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.

All written and electronic material will display the expiration date of the OMB approval of the information collection. All written and electronic surveys (with the exception of transactional surveys in the form of business reply cards where space will not permit) will also display the following notification:

A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with an information collection subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 unless the information collection has a currently valid OMB Control Number. The approved OMB Control Number for this information collection is 0693-0033. Without this approval, we could not conduct this survey/information collection. Public reporting for this information collection is estimated to be approximately ____ minutes/hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information collection. All responses to this information collection are voluntary/mandatory/required to obtain benefits. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection, including suggestions for reducing this burden to National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) at: address, Attn: Title/POC Name, and email if desired.

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

NIST does not require any exceptions.