

RIC OMB ICR - Appendix B-4 Small Business and Partner Organization Interview Consent Form

OMB Approval number: 3245-0392

Expiration Date: 04/30/2026

Consent Form

The U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA), via the Regional Innovation Clusters (RIC) Initiative, is investing in regional clusters throughout the United States. The [cluster name] ([cluster acronym]) is an implementer of the RIC Initiative.

The SBA has hired Optimal Solutions Group, LLC (Optimal), to conduct an evaluation of the RIC Initiative. The objective of this evaluation is to determine if the SBA RIC is meeting its intended outcomes. To assist in this process, we request that you participate in a brief virtual interview.

Based on event sign-up lists or attendance sheets, [Cluster POC name] stated that you attended or participated in cluster-organized trainings, events (including networking events), activities, and/or services. The purpose of this virtual interview is to learn about your experiences with these events and/or services. ***Even if you are unsure, unaware, or don't recall your attendance in these events or services, we still would like to ask you a few questions that may help [cluster name] or organizations with similar functions tailor their message and outreach to organizations like yours.***

Optimal will collect and store your responses to this virtual interview on a secure server accessible to Optimal staff only. Any information provided in this interview will be kept confidential. No respondent will be identified or named in any publicly available report or other such publication. All interview responses will be de-identified and then these data will be provided to the SBA.

The virtual interview is expected to take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to, and you can stop participating at any time. Your time and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

- If you have questions about the cluster, please contact [cluster point of contact] at [cluster POC email].
- If you have questions about your participation in this study, please contact Optimal at clusters@optimalsolutionsgroup.com or 301-306-1170.

I hereby agree that I have read and understand all of the information presented in this consent form.

Signature:

Date:

Printed Name: