

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A
U. S. Department of Commerce
Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR)
OMB Control No. 0690-0032

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.

The RPPR is a uniform format implemented by federal agencies for use in the reporting of performance progress on Federally funded research and research-related projects. The RPPR resulted from an initiative of Research Business Models (RBM), an Interagency Working Group of the Social, Behavioral & Economic Research Subcommittee of the Committee on Science (CoS), a committee of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC). The original version of the RPPR format was approved for implementation in the Federal Register (FR) [Volume 75, pages 1816-1819, January 13, 2010].

The Research Performance Progress Report (RPPR) directly benefits award recipients by making it easier for them to administer Federal grant and cooperative agreement programs through standardization of the types of information required in interim performance reports—thereby reducing their administrative effort and costs. The RPPR also makes it easier to compare the outputs, outcomes, etc. of research programs across the government.

Given the increasing complexity of interdisciplinary and interagency research, it is important for Federal agencies to manage awards in a similar fashion. The RPPR does not change the performance reporting requirements specified in 2 CFR § 200.328; it merely provides additional clarification, instructions, and a standard format for collecting the information.

The Department of Commerce began using this form for all progress reports required for grants awarded by Commerce starting with the reporting cycle ending January 31, 2018; this request is to renew this information collection for a period of three years.

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.

Potential respondents include public or private institutions, such as universities, colleges, hospitals, and laboratories; units of state and local government; domestic or foreign non-profit and for-profit organizations; and eligible agencies of the Federal government.

Commerce grant awards vary widely across and within line and staff offices, in requirements and time frames. Progress reports document grantee recipient accomplishments and compliance with terms of award. This format may now be used for interim, annual and final progress reports, as required by a specific grant. For some grants, if they are for one year only, there may be only a final report. The RPPR is intended to address progress for the most recently completed period, at the frequency required or designated by the sponsoring agency. Information, once reported, does not have to be provided again on subsequent reports. Recipients are advised to state “Nothing to Report” if they have nothing significant to report during the reporting period.

Each category in the RPPR is a separate reporting component. Recipients report on the one mandatory component (“Accomplishments”) and other components as appropriate, including:

Accomplishments

- What were the major goals and objectives of the project?
- What was accomplished under these goals?
- What opportunities for training and professional development did the project provide?
- How were the results disseminated to communities of interest?
- What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals and objectives?

Products

- publications, conference papers, and presentations
- website(s) or other Internet site(s)
- technologies or techniques
- inventions, patent applications, and/or licenses
- other products, such as data or databases, physical collections, audio or video products, software, models, educational aids or curricula, instruments or equipment, research material, interventions (e.g., clinical or educational), or new business creation.

Participants and Other Collaborating Organizations Impact

Changes/Problems (not required for Final or Interim RPPR)

- Changes in approach and reasons for change
- Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them
- Changes that have a significant impact on expenditures
- Significant changes in use or care of vertebrate animals, biohazards, and/or select agents

Budgetary Information (not required for Final or Interim RPPR)

Project Outcomes (only required on Final and Interim RPPR)

- Concise summary of the outcomes or findings of the award, written for the general public in clear and comprehensible language, without including any proprietary, confidential information or trade secrets.

In general, Commerce grant programs provide summary information to the public about the grants it awards. Information is publicly disseminated through the publication of reports describing each program's university-based research, education, and outreach activities. These reports are widely distributed in both print and web-based formats. All reports and supporting data are reviewed for objectivity, utility and integrity, as required by the Commerce guidelines, before they are disseminated.

Commerce retains control over the information and safeguard it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with Commerce standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. See response to Question 10 of this Supporting Statement for more information on confidentiality and privacy. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information will be subjected to quality control measures and a pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

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.

All reports will be submitted electronically.

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.

This RPPR is available for use by all Commerce departments/Bureaus that support research and research-related activities for use in submission of performance progress reports. It is intended to replace other performance progress reports for Federally funded research and research-related projects.

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

Depending on the grant, small businesses may be involved. The RPPR format helps to minimize burden hours particularly for awardees responding to more than one award.

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.

Use of this reporting form is intended to save time for both the grantors and the grantees, and the information collected allows DOC to consider the impact our programming actions have on grantees and their research science. DOC implements information collection policies and procedures with consideration of efficient Federal funding oversight, compliance with government wide standards and regulations, minimization of time and cost burdens, and cost-efficient project execution. At each phase of the award lifecycle, DOC mandates collection only of information that meets these criteria.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

There is no request for special circumstances or exceptions to the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5. However, due to the limited space on this RPPR Form, DOC has elected to use Figure 3 of the SPD 15 Revised Race and Ethnicity Data Standards.

8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of the 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. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

The 60-day *Federal Register* Notice soliciting public comment was published on June 28, 2024

(Volume 89, pg. 53947). No comments were received.

During our last renewal, we received a comment from Lisa Jean Fronczek, a NIST Program Officer, who made some salient suggestions for revisions to the form. We looked into addressing these suggestions with this renewal request. In an effort not to duplicate efforts, we discovered that NSF has a common form that appears to address some of the suggested revisions, therefore we forwarded the common form and will request use for this program office should the need arise.

In addition, through calls with stakeholders, frequent contact with federal-wide grant personnel, and the delivery of technical assistance, Commerce remains in close contact with the Grants community to obtain their views on submission of information regarding public cost and undue burden on the grant recipient. This effort yielded no new or suggested revisions.

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

Other than the funding awards, the Department does not provide any payment or gift to respondents in connection with this information collection request.

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.

The minimum of personally identifiable information is requested. This is the assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents.

Privacy Act Statement

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. § 552a(e)(3), this Privacy Act Statement serves to inform you of the following concerning the collection of the information on this form.

AUTHORITY: Public Law 106-107—NOV. 20, 1999, *Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999*; 2 CFR § 200.328.

PURPOSE: This information is required of grant recipients, with the exception of the demographic information. Provision of contact information on principal investigator allows contact, if needed. Contact information, roles, and state/U.S. territory/country of major collaborators allows Commerce to gauge performance in building partnerships. Demographic information for major participants allows Commerce to gauge whether our programs are reaching everyone, regardless of demographic category, and whether under-represented groups have equal access to programs, meetings, and training.

ROUTINE USES: Disclosure of this information is permitted under the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. Section 552a) to be shared among Department staff for work-related purposes. Disclosure of this information is also subject to all the published routine uses as identified in the Privacy Act System of Records Notices [DEPT-2, Accounts Receivable](#) and [GSA/GOVT-9, System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#).

DISCLOSURE: Disclosing the information requested on this form is voluntary; however, failure to provide such information impedes Commerce's ability to determine the grant program's progress.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or 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.

Application and reporting requirements in research funding announcements and associated forms do not ask questions of a sensitive nature.

As a general matter, information collections under this generic collection request will not result in any new system of records containing privacy information and will

not ask questions of a sensitive nature that have not been approved for use by OMB, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

For information collections involving questions of race/ethnicity, the agency will ensure that the OMB Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity are followed (SPD 15 Revised Race and Ethnicity Data Standards).

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

In the last 3 years, Commerce has awarded an even larger number of grants per year, which require interim and/or final reports. Therefore, there is a slight adjustment to the burden estimate number. The annual progress reports for DOC associated with forms currently in use range from a minimum of 2 hours to a maximum of 15 hours, depending on the type of research project being supported. Therefore, the estimated total burden hours is as follows: (8200 responses x 10 hours = 82,000 total burden hours.)

Estimated Annualized Respondent Burden Hours

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)
Grantee	2050	4	8,200	10/60	82,000
Totals	2050		8,200		82,000

13. Provide estimates of 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 shown in items 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no costs other than monetization of hourly burden as captured above in Item 12.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The Grants administrative personnel who review progress performance grant reports generally are in the GS-14 and GS-15 salary ranges. Based on a step four grade 14 (OPM General Schedule Pay Table for 2024), an average hourly salary is \$74.37 per hour. It is further estimated that about an hour of time is needed to review a progress report, leading to a \$6,098,340 (\$74.37 x 82,000 hours) estimated annual cost to the Federal Government.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-1.

There are no scope changes to the information collection since the last OMB approval, but there is a slight adjustment to the number of respondents and burden hours; and the privacy statement was added to the form.

16. For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Publication of awards, and grant activities, depends on the Bureau or program office and the type of award and determines whether the information will be distributed internally or externally. Additionally, the information may be made available publicly depending on requests from OMB, Congress, or Federal agencies with appropriate authority.

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.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."

The Department is not seeking an exception to the certification statement.