



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Intent to Seek Approval to Establish an Information Collection System.

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, and as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the National Science Foundation (NSF) is inviting the general public or other Federal agencies to comment on this proposed continuing information collection.

DATES: Written comments on this notice must be received by [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER], to be assured consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable. Send comments to address below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1265, Arlington, Virginia 22230; telephone (703) 292-7556; or send e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year (including federal holidays).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

COMMENTS: Pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act, Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.), comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Foundation, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Foundation's estimate of the burden 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 those who are to respond, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

TITLE of COLLECTION: Grantee Reporting Requirements for the Emerging Frontiers in Research and Innovation program

OMB Number: 3145-0233.

Expiration Date of Approval: March 31, 2017.

Type of Request: Intent to seek approval to renew an information collection system.

Abstract:

Proposed Project:

The Emerging Frontiers in Research and Innovation (EFRI) program recommends, prioritizes, and funds interdisciplinary initiatives at the emerging frontier of engineering research and education. These investments represent transformative opportunities, potentially leading to: new research areas for

NSF, ENG, and other agencies; new industries or capabilities that result in a leadership position for the country; and/or significant progress on a recognized national need or grand challenge.

Established in 2007, EFRI supports cutting-edge research that is difficult to fund through other NSF programs, such as single-investigator grants or large research centers. EFRI seeks high-risk opportunities with the potential for a large payoff where researchers are encouraged to stretch beyond their ongoing activities. Based on input from workshops, advisory committees, technical meetings, professional societies, research proposals, and suggestions from the research community the EFRI program identifies those emerging opportunities and manages a formal process for funding their research. The emerging ideas tackled by EFRI are "frontier" because they not only push the understood limits of engineering but actually overlap multiple fields. The EFRI funding process inspires investigators with different expertise to work together on one emerging concept.

EFRI awards require multi-disciplinary teams of at least one Principal Investigator and two Co-Principal Investigators. The anticipated duration of all awards is 4-years. The anticipated funding level for each project team may receive support of up to a total of \$2,000,000 spread over four years, pending the availability of funds. In that sense EFRI awards are above the average single-investigator award amounts.

EFRI-funded projects could include research opportunities and mentoring for educators, scholars, and university students, as well as outreach programs that help stir the imagination of K-12 students, often with a focus on groups underrepresented in science and engineering.

We are seeking to collect additional information from the grantees about the outcomes of their research that goes above and beyond the standard reporting requirements used by the NSF and spans over a period of 5 years after the award. This data collection effort will enable program officers to longitudinally monitor outputs and outcomes given the unique goals and purpose of the program. This is very important to enable appropriate and accurate evidence-based management of the program and to determine whether or not the specific goals of the program are being met.

Grantees will be required to submit this information on an annual basis to support performance review and the management of EFRI grants by EFRI officers. EFRI grantees will be required to submit these indicators to NSF via a data collection website that will be embedded in NSF's IT infrastructure. These indicators are both quantitative and descriptive and may include, for example, the characteristics of project personnel and students; sources of complementary cash and in-kind support to the EFRI project; characteristics of industrial and/or other sector participation; research activities; education activities; knowledge transfer

activities; patents, licenses; publications; descriptions of significant advances and other outcomes of the EFRI effort. Such reporting requirements will be included in the cooperative agreement which is binding between the academic institution and the NSF.

Each submission will address the following major categories of activities: (1) knowledge transfer across disciplines, (2) innovation of ideas in areas of greater opportunity, (3) potential for translational research, (4) project results advance the frontier/ creation of new fields of study, (5) innovative research methods or discoveries are introduced to the classroom, and (6) fostering participation of underrepresented groups in science. For each of the categories, the report will enumerate specific outputs and outcomes.

Use of the Information: The data collected will be used for NSF internal reports, historical data, and performance review by peer site visit teams, program level studies and evaluations, and for securing future funding for continued EFRI program maintenance and growth.

Estimate of Burden: Approximately 10 hours per grant for approximately 80 grants per year for a total of 800 hours per year.

Respondents: Principal Investigators who lead the EFRI grants.

Estimated Number of Responses per Report: One report collected for each of the approximately 80 grantees every year.

Dated: December 14, 2016.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,
Reports Clearance Officer,
National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. 2016-30447 Filed: 12/16/2016 8:45 am; Publication Date: 12/19/2016]