



7555-01-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request.

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) has submitted the following information collection requirement to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 on the National Science Foundation Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide. NSF may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless the collection of information displays a currently valid OMB control number and the agency informs potential persons who are to respond to the collection of information that such persons are not required to respond to the collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

DATES: Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS FROM PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: Comments should be addressed to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for National Science Foundation, 725 - 17th Street, N.W. Room 10235, Washington, D.C. 20503, and to Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 1265, Arlington, Virginia 22230 or send email 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).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, 703-292-7556.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This is the **second notice** for public comment; the first was published in the FEDERAL REGISTER at 82 FR 23840, and 50 comments were received 57 responses were received from 3 different organizations/institutions/individuals. NSF is forwarding the proposed renewal submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for clearance simultaneously with the publication of this second notice. The full submission may be found at: <http://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain>.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to request renewed clearance of this collection. The primary purpose of this revision is to implement changes described in the Supplementary Information section of this notice. Comments regarding (a) whether the collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information will have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility and clarity of the information to be collected; (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on those who are to respond, including through the use of appropriate automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Summary of Comments on the National Science Foundation Proposal and Award Policies and Procedures Guide and NSF's responses:

The draft NSF PAPPG was made available for review by the public on the NSF website at <http://www.nsf.gov/bfa/dias/policy/>. NSF received 57 responses from three commenters in response to the First Federal Register notice published on May 24, 2017, at 82 FR 23840. Please see <https://www.reginfo.gov/public/do/PRAMain> for the comments received, and NSF's responses.

Title of Collection: "National Science Foundation Proposal & Award Policies & Procedures Guide."

OMB Approval Number: 3145-0058.

Type of Request: Intent to seek approval to extend with revision an information collection for three years.

Proposed Project: The National Science Foundation Act of 1950 (Public Law 81-507) sets forth NSF's mission and purpose:

"To promote the progress of science; to advance the national health, prosperity, and welfare; to secure the national defense...."

The Act authorized and directed NSF to initiate and support:

- hBasic scientific research and research fundamental to the engineering process;
- aPrograms to strengthen scientific and engineering research potential;
- rScience and engineering education programs at all levels and in all the various fields of science and engineering;
- cPrograms that provide a source of information for policy formulation; and
- rOther activities to promote these ends.

NSF's core purpose resonates clearly in everything it does: promoting achievement and progress in science and engineering and enhancing the potential for research and education to contribute to the Nation. While NSF's vision of the future and the mechanisms it uses to carry out its charges have evolved significantly over the last six decades, its ultimate mission remains the same.

Use of the Information: The regular submission of proposals to the Foundation is part of the collection of information and is used to help NSF fulfill this responsibility by initiating and supporting merit-selected research and education projects in all the scientific and engineering disciplines. NSF receives more than 50,000 proposals annually for new projects, and makes approximately 11,000 new awards.

Support is made primarily through grants, contracts, and other agreements awarded to approximately 2,000 colleges, universities, academic consortia, nonprofit institutions, and small businesses. The awards are based mainly on merit evaluations of proposals submitted to the Foundation.

The Foundation has a continuing commitment to monitor the operations of its information collection to identify and address excessive reporting burdens as well as to identify any real or apparent inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, or disability of the proposed principal investigator(s)/project director(s) or the co-principal investigator(s)/co-project director(s).

Burden on the Public:

It has been estimated that the public expends an average of approximately 120 burden hours for each proposal submitted. Since the Foundation expects to receive

approximately 52,000 proposals in FY 2017, an estimated 6,240,000 burden hours will be placed on the public.

The Foundation has based its reporting burden on the review of approximately 50,500 new proposals expected during FY 2018. It has been estimated that anywhere from one hour to 20 hours may be required to review a proposal. We have estimated that approximately 5 hours are required to review an average proposal. Each proposal receives an average of 3 reviews, resulting in approximately 757,500 hours per year.

The information collected on the reviewer background questionnaire (NSF 428A) is used by managers to maintain an automated database of reviewers for the many disciplines represented by the proposals submitted to the Foundation. Information collected on gender, race, and ethnicity is used in meeting NSF needs for data to permit response to Congressional and other queries into equity issues. These data also are used in the design, implementation, and monitoring of NSF efforts to increase the participation of various groups in science, engineering, and education. The estimated burden for the Reviewer Background Information (NSF 428A) is estimated at 5 minutes per respondent with up to 10,000 potential new reviewers for a total of 833 hours.

The aggregate number of burden hours is estimated to be 6,817,500. The actual burden on respondents has not changed.

Dated: August 22, 2017.

Ann Bushmiller,
Senior Counsel,
National Science Board.

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