



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request; NSF I-Corps

Regional Hubs Assessment

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to establish this collection. In accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are providing opportunity for public comment on this action. After obtaining and considering public comment, NSF will prepare the submission requesting Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance of this collection for no longer than 3 years.

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: Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite W18200, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone (703) 292-7556; 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).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title of Collection: NSF I-Corps Regional Hubs Assessment.

OMB Number: 3145-NEW.

Expiration Date of Approval: Not applicable.

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

Abstract: NSF's Division of Industrial Innovation and Partnerships (IIP), within the Engineering Directorate, serves a wide range of grantees across five major programs.

The NSF Innovation Corps (I-Corps) program was established at NSF in FY 2012 to equip scientists with the entrepreneurial tools needed to transform discoveries with commercial realization potential into innovative technologies. The goal of the I-Corps Program is to use experiential education to help researchers reduce the time necessary to translate a promising idea from the laboratory bench to widespread implementation. In addition to accelerating technology translation, NSF seeks to reduce the risk associated with technology development conducted without insight into industry requirements and challenges. The I-Corps Program uses a lean startup approach to encourage scientists to think like entrepreneurs through intensive workshop training and ongoing support. The program focuses on teams comprised of a Principal Investigator, Entrepreneurial Lead, and Mentor that work together to explore commercialization for their research-derived products.

In FY 2017, the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act (AICA), Public Law 114-329, Sec 601, formally authorized and directed the expansion of NSF I-Corps Program by increasing the economic competitiveness of the United States, enhancing partnerships between academia and industry, developing an American STEM workforce that is globally competitive, and supporting female entrepreneurs and individuals from historically underrepresented groups in STEM through mentorship, education, and training.

To that end, NSF built and has continued expanding an I-Corps National Innovation Network (NIN). NIN is a collection of NSF I-Corps Nodes and Sites that together with NSF implement the I-Corps program to grow and sustain the national innovation ecosystem. I-Corps Nodes are typically large, multi-institutional collaborations that deliver NSF national I-Corps Teams training curriculum as well as

recruit and train the National I-Corps instructors. Sites are entrepreneurial centers located at individual colleges and universities to catalyze potential I-Corps teams within their local institutions. Together, the Nodes and Sites serve as the backbone of the NIN.

Recently, IIP published a new I-Corps Program Solicitation, NSF 20-529—NSF Innovation Corps Hubs Program (I-Corps™ Hubs), that has placed a strong emphasis on developing and further expanding the NIN. The I-Corps Hubs Program has strengthened the requirements to support a diverse and inclusive community of innovators, in that teams are encouraged to recruit diverse members at all levels. In addition, the I-Corps Hubs Program also provides new pathways for teams to qualify for the participation in the national I-Corps Teams program (at the Nodes). Through this solicitation, NSF seeks to evolve the current structure, in which NSF I-Corps Teams, Nodes, and Sites are funded through separate programs, towards a more integrated operational model capable of sustained operation at the scope and scale required to support the expansion of the NSF I-Corps Program as directed by AICA.

In order to support the agency's congressional reporting requirements in response to the AICA, we are asking NIN grantees to report the following information:

- **Expansion of NIN**
 - Number of teams trained
 - Number of teams advancing to national I-Corps Teams program
(applicable to I-Corps Hubs and I-Corps Sites)
- **STEM Workforce**
 - Team size (number of members on the team)
 - Team characteristics (participation of females, veterans, and underrepresented minorities)

- Participant status at the time of program
- **Subsequent Commercialization Outcomes**
 - Company formation
 - Following-on funding
 - SBIR Phase I, II funding
 - Other Federal Funding
 - Private Funding (including competition, and prize awards)
 - Revenues (sales, licensing fees, other operational cash flows)

The reporting of this information is in addition to the agency's annual report requirement for the grantees. Not only will the information help the agency report on NIN activities to Congress, they also provide managing Program Directors a means to monitor the operational states of these I-Corps Sites, Nodes, and Hubs, and ensure that their awards are in good standing. These data will also allow NSF to assess these awardees in terms of intellectual, broader, and commercial impacts that are core to our merit review criteria. Finally, in compliance with the Evidence Act of 2019, information collected will be used in satisfying congressional requests, responding to queries from the public, NSF's external merit reviewers who serve as advisors, and NSF's Office of the Inspector General, and supporting the agency's policymaking and internal evaluation and assessment needs.

Information collected will include name of the participants, their affiliated organizations, email addresses, and home states. These personal identifiable information (PII) are collected primarily to track recipients of their roles in the I-Corps teams, and allow us to perform due diligence and quality check on the data provided by the grantees. These PII data will be accessed only by the I-Corps Sites, Nodes, and Hubs, the managing Program Directors, NSF senior management, and supporting staff

conducting analyses using the data as authorized by NSF. Any public reporting of data will be in aggregate form, and any personal identifiers will be removed.

Use of the Information: The information collected is primarily for the agency's AICA Reporting requirements, and other congressional requests.

Estimate burden on the public: Estimated at 40 hours per award, per year, for the life of the award

Respondents: I-Corps Sites, Nodes, and Hubs Grantees.

Estimated number of respondents: 110.

Average Time per Reporting: 20 hours.

Frequency: Twice per year.

Comments: Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the Agency's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Please submit one copy of your comments by only one method. All submissions received must include the agency name and collection name identified above for this information collection. Commenters are strongly encouraged to transmit their comments electronically via email. Comments, including any personal information provided become a matter of public record. They will be summarized and/or included in the request for Office of Management and Budget approval of the information collection request.

Dated: March 5, 2021.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer,

National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. 2021-05130 Filed: 3/11/2021 8:45 am; Publication Date: 3/12/2021]