NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request; National Science Foundation Research Traineeship Program Monitoring System

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to renew this collection. In accordance with the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are providing the 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 DATE OF 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, Randolph Building, 401 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA 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: National Science Foundation Research Traineeship (NRT) Monitoring System.

OMB Number: 3145-0263.

Expiration Date of Approval: December 31, 2026.

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

Proposed Project: The National Science Foundation's (NSF's) Directorate for STEM Education (EDU) administers the NSF Research Traineeship (NRT) program. The NRT program is designed to encourage the development and implementation of bold, new, and potentially transformative models for STEM graduate education training. The NRT program seeks to ensure that graduate students in research-based master's and doctoral degree programs develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to pursue a range of STEM careers. NRT is dedicated to the effective training of STEM graduate students in high-priority interdisciplinary or convergent research areas through the use of a comprehensive traineeship model that is innovative, evidence-based, and aligned with changing workforce and research needs. In support of national efforts to prepare the next generation of the advanced STEM workforce, the program anticipates publishing a revised notice of funding opportunity in spring 2026 for new research traineeship projects. These new research traineeship awards, alongside existing awards, will continue to use the NRT monitoring system.

Until 2021, NRT awardees provided NSF with information on their activities through periodic research performance progress reports. Beginning in 2021, the NRT monitoring system (also referred to as the NRT reporting system) has replaced these reports with a tailored program monitoring system that uses a web-based data collection system to collect, review, and validate specific data on NRT awards. EDU is committed to ensuring the efficient and effective means for

the reporting and analysis of data generated by funded projects within the NRT program.

The NRT monitoring system includes subsets of questions aimed at the different project participants (i.e., Principal Investigators (PIs), and trainees) and allows for data analysis and data report generation by authorized NSF staff. The collection generally includes three categories of descriptive data: (1) Staff and project participants (data that are necessary to determine individual-level treatment and control groups for future third-party study or for internal evaluation); (2) project implementation characteristics (also necessary for future use to identify well-matched comparison groups); and (3) project outputs (necessary to measure baseline for pre- and post- NSF-funding-level impacts). NRT awardees will be required to report data on an annual basis for the life of their award.

Use of the Information: NSF will primarily use the data from this collection for program planning, management, performance and audit purposes to respond to queries from the Congress, the public, NSF's external merit reviewers who serve as advisors, the NSF's Office of the Inspector General, and as a basis for either internal or third-party evaluations of individual programs. This information is required for effective administration, communication, program and project monitoring and evaluation, and for measuring attainment of NSF's program, project, and strategic goals, and as identified by the President's Accountability in Government Initiative; GPRA, and the NSF's Strategic Plan. The Foundation's Strategic Plan is available at https://www.nsf.gov/about/performance/strategic-plan.

Since this collection will primarily be used for accountability and evaluation purposes, a census, rather than sampling design, typically is necessary. At the

individual project level, funding can be adjusted based on individual project responses to some of the surveys. Some data collected under this collection will serve as baseline data for separate research and evaluation studies.

NSF-funded contract or grantee researchers and internal or external evaluators in part may identify control, comparison, or treatment groups for NSF's education and training portfolio using some of the descriptive data gathered through this collection to conduct well-designed, rigorous research and portfolio evaluation studies.

Burden on the Public: Estimated at 82 hours per award for 120 awards for a total of 9,840 hours (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 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.

Dated: January 27, 2026.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer,

National Science Foundation.

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