



NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request; Grantee Reporting Requirements for Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSECs)

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The U.S. 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 opportunity for public comments 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, Randolph Building, 401 Dulaney Street, 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: Grantee Reporting Requirements for Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSECs)

OMB Number: 3145-0230.

Expiration Date of Approval: June 30, 2026.

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

Overview of this Information Collection:

The Materials Research Science and Engineering Centers (MRSECs) Program provides sustained support of materials science and education of the highest quality while addressing fundamental problems in science and engineering. The MRSECs support materials research infrastructure in the United States, promote active collaboration between universities and other sectors, including industry, national laboratories, and international organizations. They contribute to the development of national university-based centers in materials research, education, and facilities. By supporting innovation in interdisciplinary research, education, and knowledge transfer, MRSECs build intellectual and physical infrastructure within and between disciplines, and weave together knowledge creation, knowledge integration, and knowledge transfer. New knowledge thus created is meaningfully linked to society.

MRSECs enable and foster excellent education, integrate research and education, and create bonds between learning and inquiry so that discovery and creativity more fully support the learning process.

MRSECs are required to submit annual reports on progress and plans, which are used as a basis for performance review and determining the level of continued funding. To support this review and the management of a Center,

MRSECs will be required to develop a set of management and performance indicators for submission annually to NSF via the Research Performance Project Reporting module in Research.gov and an external technical assistance contractor that collects programmatic data electronically. These indicators are both quantitative and descriptive and may include, for example, the characteristics of center personnel and students; sources of financial support and in-kind support; expenditures by operational component; characteristics of industrial and/or other sector participation; research activities; education activities; knowledge transfer activities; patents, licenses; publications; degrees granted to students involved in Center activities; descriptions of significant advances and other outcomes of the MRSEC effort. Such reporting requirements are included in the cooperative agreement that is binding between the academic institution and NSF.

Each Center's annual report will address the following categories of activities: (1) research, (2) shared experimental facilities, (3) education, (4) knowledge transfer, (5) partnerships, (6) management, and (7) budget issues.

For each of the categories the report will describe overall objectives for the year, specific outputs and outcomes of the reporting period, challenges that the Center has encountered in making progress towards goals and remedies, and plans for the following year.

MRSECs are required to file a final annual report through the RPPR and external technical assistance contractor. Final annual reports contain similar information and metrics as annual reports, effectively they constitute the last annual report; the Program Officer maintains a cumulative database with all relevant achievements and metrics.

Use of the Information: NSF will use the information to continue funding of the Centers, and to evaluate the progress of the program.

Estimate of Burden: 80 hours per annual report for each of 20 centers for a total of 1600 hours per year.

Respondents: Non-profit institutions.

Estimated Number of Responses per Report: One from each of the 20 MRSECs.

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: March 5, 2026.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer,

National Science Foundation.