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NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Information Collection; Improving Customer Experience (OMB Circular A-11, Section 280 Implementation)

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF), as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, is announcing an opportunity for public comment on a collection of information by the Agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), Federal Agencies are required to publish notice in the *Federal Register* concerning each proposed collection of information, and to allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on renewing an existing collection by the Agency.

DATES: Submit comments on or before: **[INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 401 Dulany 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:

A. Purpose

Under the PRA, (44 U.S.C. 3501-3520) Federal Agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. "Collection of information" is defined in 44 USC 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c) and includes Agency requests or requirements that members of the public submit reports, keep records, or provide information to a third party. Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA requires Federal Agencies to provide a 60-day notice in the Federal Register concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information, before submitting the collection to OMB for approval. To comply with this requirement, NSF is publishing notice of the proposed collection of information set forth in this document.

Whether seeking a loan, Social Security benefits, veterans benefits, or other services provided by the Federal Government, individuals and businesses expect Government customer services to be efficient and intuitive, just like services from leading private-sector organizations. Yet the 2016 American Consumer Satisfaction Index and the 2017 Forrester Federal Customer Experience Index show that, on average, Government services lag nine percentage points behind the private sector.

A modern, streamlined and responsive customer experience means: raising government-wide customer experience to the average of the private sector service industry; developing indicators for high-impact Federal programs to

monitor progress towards excellent customer experience and mature digital services; and providing the structure (including increasing transparency) and resources to ensure customer experience is a focal point for agency leadership. To support this, OMB Circular A-11 Section 280 established government-wide standards for mature customer experience organizations in government and measurement. To enable Federal programs to deliver the experience taxpayers deserve, they must undertake three general categories of activities: conduct ongoing customer research, gather and share customer feedback, and test services and digital products.

These data collection efforts may be either qualitative or quantitative in nature or may consist of mixed methods. Additionally, data may be collected via a variety of means, including but not limited to electronic or social media, direct or indirect observation (i.e., in person, video and audio collections), interviews, questionnaires, surveys, and focus groups. NSF will limit its inquiries to data collections that solicit strictly voluntary opinions or responses. Steps will be taken to ensure anonymity of respondents in each activity covered by this request.

The results of the data collected will be used to improve the delivery of Federal services and programs. It will include the creation of personas, customer journey maps and reports, and summaries of customer feedback data and user insights. It will also provide government-wide data on customer experience that can be displayed on performance.gov to help build transparency and accountability of Federal programs to the customers they serve.

Method of Collection:

NSF will collect this information by electronic means when possible, as well as by mail, telephone, technical discussions, and in-person interviews. NSF also may utilize observational techniques to collect this information.

Data:

OMB Clearance Number: 3145-0254.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Renewal.

B. Annual Reporting Burden

Affected Public: Collections will be targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the near future. For the purposes of this request, "customers" are individuals, businesses, and organizations that interact with a Federal Government agency or program, either directly or via a Federal contractor. This could include individuals or households; businesses or other for-profit organizations; not-for-profit institutions; State, local or tribal governments; Federal government; and Universities.

Estimated Number of Respondents: *2,001,550.*

Estimated Time per Response: *Varied, dependent upon the data collection method used. The possible response time to complete a questionnaire or survey may be 3 minutes or up to 2 hours to participate in an interview.*

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: *101,125.*

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: *$0.*

C. Public Comments

NSF invites comments on: (a) Whether the proposed 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 the burden (including hours and cost) 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 respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology. Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: August 18, 2026.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer,

National Science Foundation.

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