

Desk Officer for National Science Foundation, 725—17th Street, NW., Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503, and to Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 295, Arlington, Virginia 22230 or send email to splimpto@nsf.gov. Comments regarding these information collections are best assured of having their full effect if received within 30 days of this notification. Copies of the submission(s) may be obtained by calling 703-306-1125 X 2017.

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.

Title: National Science Foundation Proposal Evaluation Process.

OMB Control Number: 3145-0060.

Summary of Collection: The missions of NSF are to: increase the Nation's base of scientific and engineering knowledge and strengthen its ability to support research in all areas of science and engineering; promote innovative science and engineering education programs that can better prepare the Nation to meet the challenges of the future; and promote international cooperation in science and engineering. The Foundation is also committed to ensuring the Nation's supply of scientists, engineers, and science educators. In its role as leading Federal supporter of science and engineering, NSF also has an important role in national policy planning.

The Foundation fulfills this responsibility by initiating and supporting merit-selected research and education projects in all the scientific and engineering disciplines. This support is made primarily through grants, contracts, and other agreements awarded to over 2000 universities, colleges, academic consortia, non-profit institutions, and small business.

The Foundation relies heavily on the advice and assistance of external advisory committees, ad-hoc proposal reviewers, and other experts to ensure that the Foundation is able to reach fair and knowledgeable judgments. These scientists and educators come from colleges and universities, non-profit research and education organizations, industry, and other Government agencies.

In making its decisions on proposals, the counsel of these merit reviewers has

proven invaluable to the Foundation both in the identification of meritorious projects and in providing sound basis for project restructuring.

Merit review is successful because of the thousands of experts from all fields of research who volunteer their time to evaluate and determine which proposals deserve consideration for funding. NSF program officers rely on the advice of expert reviewers to help make often-difficult decisions on how to best allocate limited resources and to target those proposals that promise to produce the most significant contributions. Review of proposals may involve large panel sessions, small groups, or use of a mail-review system. Proposals are reviewed carefully by scientists and engineers who are expert in the particular field represented by the proposal.

Need and Use of the Information: The information collected is used to support grant programs of the Foundation. The information collected on the proposal evaluation forms is used by the Foundation to determine the following criteria when awarding or declining proposals submitted to the agency: (1) Research performance competence; (2) Intrinsic merit of the research; (3) Utility or relevance of the search; and (4) Effect of the research on the infrastructure of science and engineering.

The information collected on reviewer background questionnaires 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, ethnicity is used in meeting NSF needs for data to permit response to congressional and other queries into equity issues. These data are also used in the design, implementation, and monitoring of NSF efforts to increase the participation on various groups in science, engineering, and education.

Confidentiality. Verbatim but anonymous copies of reviews are sent to the principal investigators/project directors. Subject to this NSF policy and applicable laws, including the Freedom of Information Act, reviewers' comments will be given maximum protection from disclosure. While listings of panelists' names are released, the names of individual reviewers, associated with individual proposals, are not released to anyone.

Because the Foundation is committed to monitoring and identifying 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), the

Foundation also collects race, ethnicity, disability, and gender. This information also is protected by the Privacy Act.

Description of Respondents: Nonprofit institutions; state, local or tribal governments; and business or other for-profit.

Number of Respondents: 30,000.

Frequency of Responses: On occasion.

Total Burden Hours: The Foundation estimates that anywhere from one hour to twenty hours may be required to review a proposal. It is estimated that approximately five hours are required to review an average proposal. Each proposal receives an average of three reviews, resulting in approximately 450,000 burden hours each year.

Dated: December 29, 1998.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,
Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. 99-24 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Proposed Information Collection Requests

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.
ACTION: Notice of proposed information collection requests.

SUMMARY: The Reports Clearance Officer invites comments on the proposed information collection requests as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995. The National Science Foundation (NSF) is inviting the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this proposed continuing information collection. This is the second notice for public comment; the first was published in the **Federal Register** at 63 FR 66585-66586 on December 2, 1998 and no comments were received. NSF will forward the proposed renewal submission to OMB for clearance with the publication of this second notice.

DATES: The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) should receive written comments by January 30, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the emergency review should be addressed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Danny Werfel, Desk Officer: NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, Office of Management and Budget; 725 17th Street, NW., Room 10235, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503. Requests for copies of the proposed information collection request should be addressed to Suzanne Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION,

4201 Wilson Blvd., Rm. 295, Arlington, VA 22230, or should be electronically mailed to the Internet address splimpto@nsf.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Suzanne Plimpton, 703-306-1125, x 2017. Individuals who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

NSF invites public comment at the address specified above. Copies of the requests are available from Suzanne Plimpton at the address specified above.

Type of Review: New.

Title: Survey of 1996 and 1997

Research and Development Funding and Performance by Nonprofit Organizations.

Abstract: OMB clearance for the NSF Survey of Research and Development Funding and Performance by Nonprofit Organizations (NPOs) expired June 30, 1998. The proposed information clearance request is for an extension of the time period for the survey that is now in the field. The survey collects information on the science and engineering (S&E) research and development (R&D) activities of nonprofit organizations in 1996 and 1997. A prior study with similar objectives was conducted in 1973. The purposes of the study are to: (1) develop estimates of the amounts of R&D funding provided by NPOs and the types of organizations supported; (2) develop estimates of the amount of R&D performed by NPOs; and (3) develop estimates of R&D researchers' employment in NPOs.

Expected Respondents: Respondents are nonprofit organizations (NPOs) that funded and/or performed science and engineering research and development in 1996. It will be a mail survey with telephone follow-up as necessary.

NSF is proposing the time extension of one form (Form 1400, the screening survey); the change in format of one form (Form 1402, the Funders survey form); and the reduction in the number of questions in one form (Form 1401, the Performers survey form).

As the table below shows, 2,432 respondents will be asked to complete the qualifying screening survey Form 1400. If they are eligible to participate in the survey, they will also receive either a Form 1401 Performer survey or a Form 1402 Funder survey. Some NPOs have already responded to the Form 1400 (screener) and the 705 eligible organizations will be sent either a Form 1401 or 1402.

Since the answers on the Form 1400 (screener) will determine whether

newly contacted organizations will receive the Performer or Funder survey form, we are estimating the number that will be eligible based on the percentage of NPOs that reported themselves eligible in the March 31, 1998 screener mailing. The estimate for the Funders Form 1402 is 245 organizations; the estimate for the Performers Form 1401 is 766 organizations. These figures include both the NPOs that we estimate will be eligible in the next screener mailing and the NPOs that responded after June 30, 1998 to the March 31, 1998 screener (606 Performers, 99 Funders).

Need for data: Failure to continue and complete this survey will result in the U.S. Government continuing to use 1973 data in estimating the nonprofit sector's R&D and the national totals of R&D funding and performance. A complete accurate description of R&D funding and performance is necessary for policymakers for planning, reporting, and tax purposes. Considerable work in drawing the sample has already been completed and \$568,000 has been spent. The most efficient and cost effective way for the U.S. Government to obtain the needed data is to complete this survey. Therefore, we are asking for extension of the OMB clearance that we can mail out the survey forms, complete the survey and publish the report in a timely manner.

Burden on the Public: The Foundation estimates that a total annual reporting and recordkeeping burden of 3,294 hours will result from the collection of information. The calculation is:

2,432 NPOs (1,030 Funders 1,402 Performers) × 1 screening survey Form 1400 × 12.5 minutes = 506 hours

766 Performers × 1 revised Form 1401 × 3 hours = 2,298 hours

245 Funders × 1 reformatted Form 1402 × 2 hours = 490 hours

Total: 3,443 responses, 3,294 hours

Frequency: One-time survey; second form only to eligible Not-for-profit institutions.

Affected Public: Not-for-profit institutions.

Dated: December 29, 1998.

Suzanne Plimpton,

Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. 99-26 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-U

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Meetings; Sunshine Act

Time and Date: 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, January 12, 1999.

Place: NTSB Board Room, 5th Floor, 490 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Washington, DC 20594.

Status: Open.

Matters to be Considered: 7108 Highway Special Investigation Report: Selective Motorcoach Issues.

News Media Contract: Telephone: (202) 324-6100

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Rhonda Underwood, (202) 314-6065.

December 30, 1998.

Katia N. Proctor,

Acting Federal Register Liaison Officer.

[FR Doc. 98-34848 Filed 12-21-98; 1:29 pm]

BILLING CODE 7533-01-M

NORTHEAST DAIRY COMPACT COMMISSION

Notice of Meeting

AGENCY: Northeast Dairy Compact Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Compact Commission will hold its monthly meeting to consider matters relating to administration and enforcement of the price regulation, including the reports and recommendations of the Commission's standing Committees. The Commission will also hold its deliberative meeting to consider whether the price regulation should be amended regarding income distribution from the producer-settlement fund, supply management policies, organic milk or the administrative assessment.

DATES: The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13, 1999 to commence at 10:00 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Tuck Library Building, 30 Park Street, Concord, NH Building, (exit 14 off I-93).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kenneth Becker, Executive Director, Northeast Dairy Compact Commission, 34 Barre Street, Suite 2, Montpelier, VT 05602. Telephone (802) 229-1941.

(Authority: U.S.C. 7256. Article V, Section 11 of the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact, and 7 U.S.C. 7256.)

Kenneth Becker,

Executive Director.

[FR Doc. 99-41 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 1650-01-P