

Request for OMB approval of a generic clearance for
“NICHD Research Partner Satisfaction Surveys”
Supporting Statement

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

This is a request, made by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health (NIH), that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approve, under the *Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995*, a generic clearance for the NICHD to conduct research partner satisfaction surveys as part of their ongoing evaluation of Institute program operations and research-related activities. Evaluation efforts are made under P.L. 42USC2856 (Attachment A, p. 1), and partner satisfaction surveys are administered according to Executive Order 12862 (Attachment A, pp. 2-3), which directs federal agencies that provide significant services directly to the public to survey customers to determine the kind and quality of services they want and their level of satisfaction with existing services.

The NICHD was founded in 1963. Its mission is to ensure, through the research and research training, the birth of healthy infants and the opportunity for each to reach full potential in adulthood, unimpaired by physical or mental disabilities. The NICHD conducts and supports research and research training on the many factors that protect and enhance the process of human growth and development. The developmental focus of the NICHD means that its research portfolio is unusually broad. NICHD programs include research on infant mortality, birth defects, learning disorders, developmental disabilities, vaccine development, and demographic and behavioral sciences, among others. In addition to supporting basic research, clinical trials,

and epidemiological studies that explore health processes, the NICHD forms partnerships with organizations or institutions to ensure effective use of scientific findings and research products.

Central to the performance of these research-related activities is the Office of Science Policy, Analysis and Communication (OSPAC). Among its roles and responsibilities, OSPAC is the NICHD component that leads and coordinates activities to help the Institute determine its programmatic and scientific objectives and priorities. In addition, the OSPAC has a communications program and supports the development of strategic plans to alert its research partners to new scientific findings and opportunities for research collaboration.

OSPAC also supports trans-Institute planning and policy development through program evaluations and strategic assessments. Some current evaluation efforts focus on interpreting research and training data; reviewing scientific literature; conducting bibliometric analyses; and identifying key scientific advances emanating from different research programs.

To further these evaluation efforts and support program planning and management, the OSPAC plans to conduct comprehensive evaluations of several major programs or initiatives in the next three years, some examples of which are:

- Extramural Associates Research Development Award (EARDA) Program;
- National Cooperative Program for Infertility Research (NCPIR) Program;
- Partnerships to Reduce Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) in African American Communities; and
- Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities Research Centers (MRDDRC) Program.

Evaluations of these programs will incorporate direct feedback from the NICHD's research partners by means of survey instruments using appropriate modalities to yield quality evaluation data while minimizing burden on NICHD research partners.

Authorization to collect this data is given under the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 285), provided in Attachment A, p 3.

2. Purpose and Use of the Information Collection

The survey response data collected under this generic clearance will augment the NICHD's ongoing efforts to evaluate research-related activities. The survey questions will be designed to measure two distinct types of opinions held by NICHD research partners:

- **Individual Satisfaction Questions:** This includes questions that will help the NICHD understand the satisfaction of *individual* research partners with specific programs or initiatives, particularly with respect to how the scientific aims or operations of a program or initiative directly affects the partner's own research activities.
- **Program Evaluation Questions:** These include questions that will help the NICHD understand how its research partners assess the *overall* program effectiveness of NICHD programs or initiatives at meeting the program's, or the Institute's, scientific aims or mission and their opinions about how the overall planning and management of those programs can be improved.

Thus, the first set of questions addresses research partners as *individual and direct beneficiaries* of specific NICHD programs or initiatives, while the second set of questions views partners as *general stakeholders or informed experts* on NICHD programs or initiatives. Illustrations of these two types of questions—individual satisfaction and programs evaluation—are presented in Attachment B. Sample Research Partner Survey Questions.

The OSPAC will use the survey findings to improve the NICHD’s research programs and initiatives activities in the following ways:

- a) assess the effectiveness and efficiency of program operations;
- b) identify opportunities for improving program performance;
- c) develop plans to incorporate innovations in programs management;
- d) measure partner satisfaction and document program outcomes for governmental accountability reporting; and
- e) identify the need for creating new programs or initiatives or restructuring existing ones to respond to emerging scientific opportunities and public health needs.

3. Use of Improved Information Technology and Burden Reduction

Whenever possible, the NICHD will use advanced technology to collect and process data to reduce respondent burden and make data processing reporting more timely and efficient. The majority of data collections will take place online using automated survey forms. In all data collections, the number of questions will be held to the absolute minimum required for the intended use of the data.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication and Use of Similar Information

The NICHD will conduct data collections only after determining, from a review of the data in the NIH IMPAC II database and existing Institute records, that similar information does not exist.

5. Impact on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities

The burden on small businesses or other small entities will be reduced by the voluntary nature of the data collections.

6. Consequences of Collecting the Information Less Frequently

A single questionnaire will be administered once per evaluation per specific respondent group. Any less frequent response would not yield useful data for program planning and management improvements.

7. Special Circumstances Relating to the Guidelines of 5CFR 1320.5

The request fully complies with regulation 5CFR 1320.5.

8. Comments in Response to the Federal Register Notice and Efforts to Consult Outside the Agency

A. As required by 5CFR 1320.8(d), a notice of this proposed data collection appeared in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 68, No. 165, pg. 51276-51277 on August 26, 2003 (Attachment C). There were no public comments.

B. Outside consultation was conducted with three national organizations (the March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Pediatrics). These three organizations are representative of the diverse groups of NICHD research partners. We contacted the following individuals who provided us with comments and suggests on the NICHD draft supported statement for expedited generic clearance:

Nancy S. Green, M.D., Medical Director, *March of Dimes Birth Defects Foundation*, 1275 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains, New York, 10605
(914) 997-4649

Merry Bullock, Ph.D., Acting Executive Director, Science Directorate, *American Psychological Association*. 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242 (202)-336-5955

Lynn M. Olson, Ph.D., Co-Director, Department of Practice and Research, *American Academy of Pediatrics*. 141 Northwest Point Blvd., Elk Grove Village, IL 60007 (847) 434-7631

OSPAC staff personally discussed future evaluation plans and provided this supporting statement to these three contact persons.

9. Explanation of Any Payment or Gift to Respondents

In most cases, the NICHD does not plan to offer remuneration. If remuneration is considered critical to successfully field a specific data collection effort, the OSPAC will make a specific request to OMB with ample justification. The request will identify:

- the target audience,
- the rationale for remuneration,
- the dollar value of the individual payment, and
- the total projected cost of remuneration for the specific data collection.

This information will be included in the submission package described in 16A.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality Provided to Respondents

In general, partner satisfaction surveys will not collect individually identifiable information. However, it is possible that some data collections (e.g., questionnaires for program-eligible grant applicants or unsuccessful grant applicants) may fall under the Privacy Act. For these data collections, the OSPAC will maintain records in compliance with 09-25-0156, the Privacy Act system of records.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

The majority of questions asked will not be of a sensitive nature. However, to evaluate certain research-related activities, some research partner surveys may ask questions about general income in relation to debt burden from education, work history, and attitudes and behaviors related to NICHD research activities or programs. To avoid fear of disclosure of sensitive information, participants will be told that their responses will be treated in a confidential manner, and will be reported in terms of aggregate numbers or summary statistics. Respondents will also

be informed that they need not answer any question that makes them feel uncomfortable or that they simply do not wish to answer.

Interviewers administering telephone surveys and in-person interviews will be trained to ask questions in a sensitive manner and to handle any subsequent discussion skillfully.

12. Estimates of Hour Burden Including Annualized Hourly Costs

A. Estimated Annualized Burden Hours:

Type of Respondents/ Survey Modality	Estimated Number of Respondents	Estimated Number of Responses per Respondent	Average Burden Hours Per Response	Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours Requested
Web-based	10,000	1	0.0835	835.00
Paper Survey	2,500	1	0.167	417.50
Telephone	1,000	1	0.50	500.00
In-person	125	1	1.00	125.00
Total	13,625			1872.50

B. Estimated Annualized Burden Costs:

An average hourly salary of approximately \$15.00 is assumed for all respondents, based on the Department of Labor (DOL) civilian labor force average wage guide. With a maximum annual respondent burden of 1872.50 hours, the overall annual cost of respondents' time for the proposed interviews is estimated to be a maximum of \$28,087.50 (1872.50 hrs x \$15.00). There will be no direct costs to the respondents other than their time to participate in each study.

Total Respondent Hours	Hourly Pay Rate	Total Respondent Burden
1872.50	\$15.00	\$28,087.50

13. Estimate of Other Total Annual Cost Burden to Respondent or Recordkeepers

There will be no capital, operating, or maintenance costs to the respondent.

14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The approximate annualized cost to the government for this data collection effort is \$463,975.35.

Total government personnel costs will be \$13,050.35, assuming a median GS-14 annual salary of \$93,844 for an NIH evaluation professional to govern and guide the evaluation efforts, and a median GS-11 annual salary of \$55,721 for administrative support in processing individual survey instrument through clearance. Salaries are based on the January 2003 General Schedule (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/03tables/html/dcb.asp>). Details are provided in the table below.

Contractor support will be required to carry out the evaluations. A typical program evaluation costs \$150,000, of which \$90,000 is devoted to survey activities. The OSPAC anticipates performing no more than 5 evaluations in 12 months.

Mailing costs for paper surveys total \$925 assuming FY2003 US Postal rate of \$0.37 per ounce.

Activity	Cost
Administration of the Clearance	\$4,692.20
NIH Evaluation expertise – 5% FTE @ \$93,844/yr	8,358.15

Administrative support – 15% FTE \$55,721/yr	
Contract Support for Data Collection	
5 Evaluations per year @ \$90,000 per evaluation	450,000.00
Mailing Cost for Paper Surveys	
2,500 surveys x \$0.37	925.00
Total	\$463,975.35

15. Changes in Hour Burden

This is a new data collection.

16. Plans for Tabulation, Publication, and Project Time Schedule

A. Time Schedule

The OSPAC will assume responsibility for compliance with all criteria associated with clearing individual partner satisfaction surveys and for working with all parties who have responsibility for OMB clearance at the NIH and within the NICHD. Among the first survey instruments to be submitted for approval under the anticipated generic clearance will be an evaluation of the NICHD's Extramural Associates Research Development Award (EARDA) Program.

Working with the NICHD program directors, the OSPAC has begun to identify other candidates for evaluation, such as the NICHD Learning Disabilities Centers Research Program. For all major evaluations, the OSPAC will work closely with the director of the program or initiative to conduct feasibility and methodological design studies;

develop proposals to obtain evaluation funds; and prepare statements of work for hiring contractor support. Once an experienced evaluation firm has been contracted, the OSPAC’s evaluation professionals and program staff will work with the firm to:

- choose appropriate survey modalities for proposed data collections;
- develop a nd pilot test survey questions that are appropriate for the target audience and the survey modality;
- design survey instruments to include the OMB clearance number, expiration date, and burden disclosure information; and
- process the survey instruments through clearance to obtain expedited approval from OMB.

Sample survey questions are provided in Attachment B. Survey instruments will be submitted for approval in a package containing the documents set forth below:

Document	Contains at minimum
Cover Memo	NICHD letterhead Date Routing information "NICHD Research Partner Satisfaction Surveys" Title of the Evaluation
Submission Form	Date Title of the Evaluation OMB Clearance number Survey instrument titles Internal control numbers for each survey instrument Burden hours requested for each survey instrument Total burden hours for the Evaluation
Evaluation Plan Summary	Synopsis or outline of the Evaluation plan Sampling plan, if applicable Analysis plan, if applicable

	Statement of compliance with Privacy Act, if applicable Justification for sensitive questions, if applicable Justification for remuneration, if applicable
Survey Instrument(s)	OMB Clearance number in upper right Expiration date in upper right Internal control number Survey questions Burden disclosure information at bottom

The OSPAC will publish the procedures for using the generic clearance on the NICHD Intranet.

B. Publication

Study results will be used internally by the OSPAC to fine-tune program objectives and scientific priorities for the Institute and improve program management. Executive summaries, overview reports, articles, and presentations may be developed for decision-makers and the Institute’s advisory council, and distributed as appropriate to share certain findings among NIH’s other Institutes, Centers, and Offices.

C. Analysis Plan

Each survey instrument will be administered as part of an overall evaluation design for a particular research-related activity. It is conceivable that several surveys will be administered in varied modalities during the course of a single evaluation. Therefore, the analysis plan for the survey data will be incorporated into the overall analysis of the evaluation of that activity.

Evaluation analysis plans developed by contractors will be reviewed by evaluation contract specialists from the OSPAC. A summary will be provided to OMB in the submission package described in 16A.

17. Reason(s) Display of OMB Expiration Date is Inappropriate

No exemption is requested.

18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

This data collection has been designed in accordance with the requirements specified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I. No exceptions to certification are requested.

B. STATISTICAL METHODS

For evaluation purposes, the NICHD defines the universe of its research partners as those individuals who have a direct connection to the operations and outcomes of an NICHD research program or initiative. In most cases, surveys will be administered to a census of research partners connected with the particular program or initiative. In some cases, it may be more cost efficient to sample a number of the potential respondents, using stratified, random, or cluster sampling methods. With each data collection, a description of the sampling plan and procedures specific to that collection will be included in the submission package described in 16A.