

Dated: June 24, 1999.

**Geraldine Phillips,**

*Acting Assistant Archivist for Record  
Services—Washington, DC.*

[FR Doc. 99-16672 Filed 6-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7515-01-P

## NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

### Agency Information Collection

#### Activities: Proposed Modification OMB No. 3145-0101; Comment Request; Submission to OMB Review

**AGENCY:** National Science Foundation.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13 (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), and as part of its continuing efforts to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, 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 64 FR 19831 (April 22, 1999). We did not receive any comments. NSF is forwarding the proposed renewal submission, the comments with our responses, to OMB for clearance simultaneously with the publication of this second notice. Comments regarding (a) whether the 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 burden including the validity of the methodology and assumptions used; (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 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 should be addressed to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of OMB, Attention: Desk Officer for National Science Foundation, 725-17th Street, N.W. Room 10235, Washington, D.C. 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](mailto:splimpto@nsf.gov). Please include current OMB Control Number 3145-0101 with your comments.

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.

**DATES:** Comments regarding this information collection 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.

#### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR

**COMMENTS:** Contact Suzanne H. Plimpton, Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation, 4201 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 295, Arlington, Virginia 22230; telephone (703) 306-1125 X 2017; or send email to [splimpto@nsf.gov](mailto:splimpto@nsf.gov). You also may obtain a copy of the data collection instrument and instructions from Ms. Plimpton.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Abstract

In 1995 OMB approved both the 1996 and 1998 survey cycles of the NSF Survey of Scientific and Engineering Research Facilities at Colleges and Universities (OMB No. 3145-0101). The survey collects information on the science and engineering (S&E) research facilities at the nation's higher education institutions. The 1999 Facilities Survey will also collect information on S&E research facilities at the nation's higher education institutions. The modifications to the approved 1998 questionnaire will make the data more useful to federal agencies and policymakers. The Federal Government intends to use the aggregate data to review average costs of construction. The Follow-Up Survey responds to a revision to OMB Circular A-21 which requires an adequate internal review and approval process for facility costs when an institution has a new large facility costing at least \$25 million. The Follow-Up Survey will collect more specific information on each project fitting OMB's qualifications as determined using data reported in the Facilities Survey.

#### Proposed Modifications to the OMB-Approved 1999 Survey

- **Sample size.** We are requesting that the 1999 survey sample be increased from a sample of 365 to a census of 579 to allow for more precise data estimates and more complex analyses such as subgroup analyses.

- **Modifications to the 1999 questionnaire wording** focused on improving the clarity of the questions and increasing the ease of response. The changes include:

- A check-off box was added above each question allowing institutions who participated in the 1998 cycle of the survey and whose information has not changed to simply mark the check-off box instead of copying repeat information into the grids. The check-off boxes are explained in detail on the main instruction page at the beginning of the questionnaire.

- The instructions provided for each question were condensed and made more precise, in an effort to avoid respondent confusion.

- A statement was added to the instructions reminding respondents that animal research facility space should be included in cost calculations.

- Basic skip patterns were added to Items 4A, 4C, 4E, 6A, and 7A to allow respondents to skip over questions that do not apply to their particular institution.

- In an effort to increase specificity, the columns in Item 3 were renamed and a column was added for "Not Applicable." The column headings read: Suitable Space; Requires Minor Repair/Renovation; Requires Major Repair/Renovation; Requires Replacement; and Not Applicable. The definitions of these categories were revised accordingly.

- Items 4C and 4D were reworded to clarify the appropriate inclusion of non-fixed equipment. The wording specifies that non-fixed equipment costs refer to single pieces of non-fixed equipment costing at least \$1 million.

- In Items 4B and 6B, a category was added for construction costs equal to or greater than \$500,000 for biomedical research facilities.

- A definition of the term "project" was added to the appropriate item glossaries.

- Item 8 was redesigned in an effort to collect more useful data regarding animal research facilities. A question was added in this section asking respondents to rate, as adequate or inadequate, the amount of total animal research NASF available to their institutions. In a new question following the design of Item 3, respondents are asked to rate the current condition of their institution's animal research space. The final question in this section was altered, in the form of a grid, follows the design of Item 4B, requesting the costs and amounts of NASF for animal facility improvements involving repair/renovation and new construction over \$100 million scheduled to begin in FY 1000 or FY 2001. Question 3 of Item 8

from the 1998 questionnaire was dropped from the survey.

There are no modifications to the Follow-Up Survey, because the first cycle of the survey (1998) has not yet been completed.

#### Use of the information

The information from the Facilities survey will be used by Federal policymakers, planners, and budget analysis in making policy decisions as well as by academic officials, the S&E establishment, and State agencies that fund universities and colleges. The survey will provide updated data on the status of and trends in S&E research facilities to help policymakers with decisions about the health of academic S&E research, funding, regulations, and reporting guidelines. The Follow-Up Survey will collect additional information to supplement the original survey data. The data collected using the Follow-Up Survey is expected to be used to make more exact and, as a result, more valid judgements concerning the reasonableness of facility costs.

Specifically, the Facilities data will be used in:

- A separate report of the findings for Congress;
- A special report for NIH on the Status of Biomedical Research Facilities;
- Other NSF compilations such as National Patterns of R&D Resources and Science and Engineering Indicators;
- Special reports for other Federal agencies on an as-needed basis; and
- A public release file of collected data in aggregate form made available to researchers on the World Wide Web.

#### Expected Respondents

The sample size for the 1999 survey is planned to be increased to the size of the universe of institutions in the NSF 1997 Survey of Scientific and Engineering Expenditures at Universities and Colleges. This universe is selected to provide nationally representative data for both undergraduate and graduate degree-granting schools. The respondents will have the option to complete the survey on the World Wide Web. Based on experience with similar populations, we expect some forty percent (40%) of the institutions to respond via the Internet. Eligibility for inclusion in the Follow-up Survey is based upon responses to the Facilities Survey. There is no sampling involved in the determination of institutions who will be asked to participate. All qualified institutions will be included in this study. It is estimated that approximately 43

academic institutions will be eligible for the Follow-Up Survey.

#### Burden on the Public

The average completion time for the survey by academic institutions was reduced from 43 to 24 hours between 1988 and 1998. This decrease reflected continued improvements in the questionnaire, institutional databases, and, more recently, the introduction of the option to complete the survey on disk.

Much of the data noted in the the proposed modification are readily available to the respondents. It is expected that the proposed modifications to the questionnaire will decrease burden hours due to the inclusion of skip patterns on the survey itself, clarification of all instructions to the respondent, and the option to use an Internet-based version of the survey. We expect that the overall response time will be an average of 22 hours.

The Follow-Up Survey will be sent to qualifying institutions, of which there is expected to be approximate 43. The completion time per academic institution is expected to average 1.5 hours

Dated: June 25, 1999.

**Suzanne Plimpton,**

*NSF Reports Clearance Officer.*

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#### NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

##### Committee Management; Renewals

The NSF management officials having responsibility for the 26 advisory committees listed below have determined that renewing these groups for another two years is necessary and in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed upon the Director, National Science Foundation (NSF), by 42 U.S.C. 1861 *et seq.* This determination follows consultation with the Committee Management Secretariat, General Services Administration.

1. Advisory Committee for Small Business Industrial Innovation (#61)
2. Advisory Committee for Biological Sciences (#1110)
3. Advisory Committee for Education & Human Resources (#1119)
4. Advisory Committee for Polar Programs (#1130)
5. Advisory Panel for Biochemistry & Molecular Structure & Function (#1134)
6. Advisory Panel for Cell Biology (#1136)

7. Advisory Panel for Developmental Mechanisms (#1141)
8. Advisory Panel for Genetics (#1149)
9. Advisory Panel for Neuroscience (#1158)
10. Advisory Panel for Physiology and Ethnology (#1160)
11. Advisory Committee for Engineering (#1170)
12. Alan T. Waterman Award Committee (#1172)
13. Advisory Panel for Biological Infrastructure (#1215)
14. Special Emphasis Panel in Science & Technology Infrastructure (#1373)
15. Earth Sciences Proposal Review Panel (#1569)
16. Advisory Panel for Ecological Studies (#1751)
17. Advisory Panel for Systematic & Population Biology (#1753)
18. Special Emphasis Panel in Biological Sciences (#1754)
19. Advisory Committee for Geosciences (#1755)
20. Special Emphasis Panel in Geosciences (#1756)
21. Advisory Panel for Anthropological & Geographic Sciences (#1757)
22. Advisory Panel for Cognitive, Psychological & Language Sciences (#1758)
23. Advisory Panel for Economics, Decision & Management Sciences (#1759)
24. Advisory Panel for Methods, Cross-Directorate and Science and Society (#1760)
25. Advisory Panel for Social & Political Sciences (#1761)
26. Special Emphasis Panel in Social, Behavioral & Economic Sciences (#1766)

Authority for these Committees will expire on June 30, 2001, unless they are renewed. For more information, please contact Karen York, NSF, at (703) 306-1182.

Dated: June 25, 1999.

**Karen J. York,**

*Committee Management Officer.*

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#### NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-443]

**North Atlantic Energy Service Corporation, et al.; Seabrook Station, Unit 1; Notice of Consideration of Approval of Application Regarding Proposed Corporate Merger and Opportunity for a Hearing**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is