

produced there, and the design of livable structures, among other issues. The videotapes will be used in pre K-12 schools across the United States as part of the Mars Millennium Project. The project as envisioned will include: development of script format, coordinating scheduling and travel arrangements for participants, arranging production and post production, and providing up to 200,000 copies of the material produced. Those interested in receiving the Solicitation should reference Program Solicitation PS 99-02 in their written request and include two (2) self-addressed labels. Verbal requests for the Solicitation will not be honored.

DATES: Program Solicitation PS 99-02 is scheduled for release approximately January 25, 1999 with proposals due on February 22, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Requests for the Solicitation should be addressed to the National Endowment for the Arts, Grants & Contracts Office, Room 618, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20506.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: William Hummel, Grants & Contracts Office, National Endowment for the Arts, Room 618, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20506 (202/682-5482).

Larry Baden,

Deputy Chairman, Management and Budget.

[FR Doc. 99-34717 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7537-01-M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Comment Request: National Science Foundation Proposal/Award Information—Grant Proposal Guide

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is announcing plans to request renewed clearance of this collection. In accordance with the requirement of Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, we are providing opportunity for public comment on this action. After obtaining and considering public comment, NSF will prepare the submission requesting OMB clearance of this collection for no longer than 3 years.

DATES: Written comments should be received by March 8, 1999 to be assured of consideration. Comments received after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

ADDRESSES: Written comments regarding the information collection and 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 by e-mail to splimpto@nsf.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Suzanne Plimpton on (703) 306-1125 x 2017 or send e-mail 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 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., Eastern time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title Of Collection: "National Sciences Foundation Proposal/Award Information-Grant Proposal Guide".

OMB Approval Number: 3145-0058.

Expiration Date of Approval:

September 30, 1999.

Type of Request: Intent to seek approval to extend with revision an information collection for three years.

Proposed Project: 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; and promote innovative science and engineering education programs that can better prepare the Nation to meet the challenges of the future. The Foundation is 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 science policy planning.

Use of the Information: The regular submission of proposals to the Foundation is part of the collection of information and is used to help NSF fulfill this responsibility by initiating and supporting merit-selected research and education projects in all the scientific and engineering disciplines. NSF receives more than 30,000 proposals annually for new projects, and makes approximately 10,000 new awards. Support is made primarily through grants, contracts, and other agreements awarded to approximately 2,800 colleges, universities, academic consortia, nonprofit institutions, and small businesses. The awards are based mainly on evaluations of proposal merit submitted to the Foundation (proposal review is cleared under OMB Control No. 3145-0060).

The Foundation has a continuing commitment to monitor the operations of its information collection to identify and address excessive reporting burdens as well as to identify 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).

Burden on the Public: The Foundation estimates that an average of 120 hours is expended for each proposal submitted. An estimated 38,000 proposals are expected during the course of one year. These figures compute to an estimated 4,560,000 public burden hours annually.

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.

Dated: December 29, 1998.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,

NSF Reports Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 99-25 Filed 1-4-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-U

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Comment Request

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) has submitted the following information collection requirement to OMB for review and clearance under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104-13. 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; (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, 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,