

Department of the Treasury, Office of Inspector General
Supporting Statement and Request for Clearance
State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) – ‘Effectiveness of the State Small Business
Credit Initiative’

1. Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection methods to be used. Indicate expected response rates for the collection as a whole.

The respondent universe for this collection will be the 57 states, territories or municipalities currently participating in the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI). Each participant signed an agreement with Treasury that requires them to discuss the affairs, finances and accounts of the program with oversight officials, including Treasury OIG. Since responding to this survey is required by their agreement, we expect that 100% of the 57 participants will provide responses.

2. Describe the procedures for the collection of information including: statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection, estimation procedure, degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification, unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures, and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.

The information will be sent to the entire universe of 57 participants and therefore no sample selection will occur. Data will be collected and accumulated from all survey respondents. We do not plan to use periodic data collection cycles because this is a one-time questionnaire.

3. Describe methods to maximize response rates and to deal with issues of non-response. The accuracy and reliability of information collected must be shown to be adequate for intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided for any collection that will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

We will send the survey to the entire universe of current SSBCI participants (57 state, territories and municipalities) and therefore no sampling will occur. The 57 current participants are required by their agreements with Treasury to participate in the survey. We plan to deal with any non-response that may occur through multiple follow-up contacts. If necessary, the OIG can subpoena the information from the current SSBCI participants in order to obtain a response.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Testing is encouraged as an effective means of refining collections of information to minimize burden and improve utility. Tests must be approved if they call for answers to identical questions from 10 or more respondents. A proposed test or set of test may be submitted for approval separately or in combination with the main collection of information.

Treasury OIG has completed pretests of the survey with eight SSBCI participants to improve the utility of the survey in determining what factors have contributed to how SSBCI participants have used SSBCI funds and how well the program has performed to date. We have amended the survey questionnaire in response to the eight pretest institutions' comments and suggestions. Comments were primarily wording changes and additional instructions.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on statistical aspects of the design and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Treasury OIG consulted with our statistical expert, OIG Audit Manager Ken Dion (617-223-8641) on the design of the survey, anticipated response rates, and methodologies to analyze the survey results by subgroups. The SSBCI audit team, including Audit Director Lisa DeAngelis, Audit Team Lead Shola Epemolu and staff member Nicolas Harrison, will collect and analyze the survey responses.