Request for Approval under the "Generic Clearance for the Collection of Routine Customer Feedback" (OMB Control Number: 0920-0919)

March 17, 2015

TITLE OF INFORMATION COLLECTION:

Assessing Customer Satisfaction with the Extramural Research Program Services Office Serving NCCDPHP and NCBDDD

PURPOSE:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) seeks to obtain Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval to conduct telephone interviews with applicants and panelists who have recently interacted with the Extramural Research Program Services Office (ERPOS). ERPOS is an administrative office that supports the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) and the National Center for Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD). ERPOS works with programs to develop, announce, review, and administer grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts. The quality of NCCDPHP- and NCBDDD- funded activities depends on CDC's ability to attract qualified public health professionals to participate in (a) generating project proposals, and (b) identifying meritorious proposals. As part of a customer satisfaction and quality improvement initiative, ERPOS plans to collect information from two key audiences: (1) individuals who have submitted applications for extramural funding, and (2) individuals who have served on merit review panels that rate applications. Findings will be used for process improvement.

In this information collection, we will focus on applicants and panelists associated with two types of funding opportunities. The funding opportunity announcement (FOA) mechanism is used for relatively large-scale research projects or public health programs. Small-scale projects may be announced through the Prevention Research Centers (PRC), a CDC-supported national network of 26 academic research institutions. Each PRC is placed within a school of public health or a medical school that has a preventive medicine residency program. PRC are committed to conducting prevention research and are leaders in translating research results into policy and public health practice. The PRC network has rich capacity for the community-based, participatory prevention research needed to drive the major community changes that can promote public health. Numerous CDC programs develop and fund special interest projects (SIP) through the PRC mechanism.

ERPOS provides critical support for FOAs issued by NCCDPHP and NCBDDD, and SIPs administered through the PRC program. ERPOS works with the originating programs in NCCDPHP and NCBDDD to develop announcements that reflect each program's goals and rating criteria. ERPOS also manages the objective review process for proposals. ERPOS recruits external subject matter experts who have appropriate areas of expertise, selects reviewers who do not have conflicts of interest, and manages the objective review panel meetings where proposals are rated and ranked.

CDC is requesting OMB approval to collect qualitative information from a convenience sample of applicants and panelists. Feedback obtained through this process will be used to identify

strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement in ERPOS operations. For example, were the review criteria for proposals clear to both applicants and panelists? Were the application and review processes managed efficiently and effectively?

Telephone interviews will be conducted on CDC's behalf by a consultant who specializes in communication and organizational improvement. The consultant will provide a de-identified, aggregate summary report to ERPOS management.

DESCRIPTION OF RESPONDENTS:

Applicant interviews will be conducted with 28 individuals who have previously applied for a funding announcement managed by ERPOS. These respondents will be affiliated with academic institutions or state/local health departments (state/local/tribal government sector).

- 7 respondents will be applicants who were funded through the PRC program
- 7 respondents will be applicants who applied for funding through the PRC program but were not funded
- 7 respondents will be applicants who were funded through other FOA
- 7 respondents will be applicants who applied for funding through other FOA but were not funded

Panelist interviews will be conducted with 14 individuals who have participated as reviewers in objective review panels managed by ERPOS. These respondents will be affiliated with academic institutions or state/local health departments (state/local/tribal government sector).

- 7 respondents will be panelists for the PRC program
- 7 respondents will be panelists for other FOAs

TYPE OF COLLECTION: (Check one)

[ ] Customer Comment Card/Complaint Form
[ ] Usability Testing (e.g., Website or Software)
[ ] Focus Group
[ ] Customer Satisfaction Survey
[ ] Small Discussion Group
[X] Other: Telephone interviews

CERTIFICATION:

I certify the following to be true:

1. The collection is voluntary.
2. The collection is low-burden for respondents and low-cost for the Federal Government.
3. The collection is non-controversial and does not raise issues of concern to other federal agencies.
4. The results are not intended to be disseminated to the public.
5. Information gathered will not be used for the purpose of substantially informing influential policy decisions.
6. The collection is targeted to the solicitation of opinions from respondents who have experience with the program or may have experience with the program in the future.

Name: Sam Posner

To assist review, please provide answers to the following question:

Personally Identifiable Information:

1. Is personally identifiable information (PII) collected? [ ] Yes [X] No
2. If Yes, is the information that will be collected included in records that are subject to the Privacy Act of 1974? [ ] Yes [X] No
3. If Applicable, has a System or Records Notice been published? [ ] Yes [X] No

Gifts or Payments:

Is an incentive (e.g., money or reimbursement of expenses, token of appreciation) provided to participants? [ ] Yes [X] No

BURDEN HOURS

There will be no direct costs to the respondents other than their time to participate in the survey.

Category of Respondent	**No. of Respondents**	**Participation Time**	**Burden Hours**
Applicant	28	30/60	14
Panelist	14	30/60	7
Totals			**21**

FEDERAL COST:

The estimated annual cost to the Federal government is $4,500.
This estimate includes 10 hours for a CDC employee to plan and oversee the project. The estimate also includes the cost of the consultant's time to conduct the interviews and prepare a de-identified, aggregate report of findings.

Staff or Contractor	***Hours***	***Average Hourly Rate***	***Cost***
CDC Oversight	10	$100	$1,000
Contractor	35	$100	$3,500
Totals	**45**		**$4,500**

<u>If you are conducting a focus group, survey, or plan to employ statistical methods, please provide answers to the following questions:</u>

The selection of your targeted respondents

1. Do you have a customer list or something similar that defines the universe of potential respondents and do you have a sampling plan for selecting from this universe?
   [X] Yes [ ] No

ERPOS will compile 2 lists from its existing records:

- A list of applicants for 9 recent FOA and the PRC program. The list will provide the name of the principal investigator (PI) for the application, the PI's telephone number, and the PI's mailing address. The list will indicate whether the application was funded or not funded.

- A list of panelists who participated as reviewers for the selected FOA or the PRC program. The list will provide the name of the panelist, the panelist's telephone number, and the panelist's mailing address.

CDC will send an advance email to interview candidates. The advance email will inform candidates about ERPO's customer satisfaction and quality improvement initiative, and ask them to consider participating in an interview, if contacted by CDC's independent consultant. The advance email will also inform candidates that participation is voluntary and that the consultant's findings will only be presented to CDC in a de-identified, summary report.

The independent consultant will use the CDC-supplied lists to randomly select respondents for interviews. CDC will not know which candidates actually participated in interviews. The consultant will prepare a summary report for ERPOS management. The consultant will destroy the lists of candidates and all notes and other records that were used to prepare the summary report.

Prior to initiating the telephone interview, the consultant will highlight key consent issues, and address any questions that respondents may have.

The purpose of this information collection is to collect customer satisfaction feedback that will assist NCCDPHP and NCBDDD in improving the services and guidance delivered by ERPOS. The interview guides are process-oriented. The consultant will not have access to CDC records pertaining to the substantive review of applications for funding, i.e., the consultant will not have access to the applications or the panelists' comments on the applications. This information is sensitive and outside the scope of a process improvement initiative.

Administration of the Instrument

1. How will you collect the information? (Check all that apply)
   [ ] Web-based or other forms of Social Media
   [X] Telephone
   [ ] In-person
   [ ] Mail
   [ ] Other, Explain

2. Will interviewers or facilitators be used? [X] Yes [ ] No

Please make sure that all instruments, instructions, and scripts are submitted with the request.

List of Attachments

A1 Advance Email for Applicants
A2 Interview Guide for Applicants

B1 Advance Email for Panelists
B2 Interview Guide for Panelists