

(3) Enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and

(4) 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, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses.

Overview of This Information Collection

(1) *Type of Information Collection:* New collection.

(2) *Title of the Form/Collection:*

Application for Transmission of Citizenship Through a Grandparent.

(3) *Agency form number, if any, and the applicable component of the Department of Justice sponsoring the collection:* Form N-600/N-643 Supplement A. Office of Examinations, Adjudications, Immigration and Naturalization Service.

(4) *Affected public who will be asked or required to respond, as well as a brief abstract:* Primary: Individuals or households. This form is required so that information on a grandparent's residence may be collected to establish a child's eligibility for naturalization.

(5) *An estimate of the total number of respondents and the amount of time estimated for an average respondent to respond:* 4,000 responses at 30 minutes (.50) per response.

(6) *An estimate of the total public burden (in hours) associated with the collection:* 2,000 annual burden hours.

If additional information is required contact: Mr. Robert B. Briggs, Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice, Information Management and Security Staff, Justice Management Division, Suite 850, Washington Center, 1001 G Street, NW., Washington, DC 20530.

Dated: December 3, 1996.

Robert B. Briggs,
Department Clearance Officer, United States Department of Justice.

[FR Doc. 96-31202 Filed 12-6-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4410-18-M

NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION

Notice of Cancellation of Previously Announced Open Meeting

TIME AND DATE: 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 6, 1996.

PLACE: Board Room, 7th Floor, Room 7047, 1775 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3428.

The National Credit Union Administration Board has canceled its previously announced open meeting scheduled for 5:00 p.m. on Friday, December 6, 1996.

The previously announced items were:

1. Request from a Federal Credit Union to Convert to a Community Charter.

2. Request from a Federal Credit Union to Convert to a Group Community Charter.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Becky Baker, Secretary of the Board, Telephone 703-518-6304.

Becky Baker,

Secretary of the Board.

[FR Doc. 96-31349 Filed 12-5-96; 2:31 pm]

BILLING CODE 7535-01-M

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Proposed Data Collection: Comment Request

Title of Proposed Collection: National Science Board and National Science Foundation Staff Task Force on Merit Review Discussion Report

Merit Review at NSF

For every proposal that receives funding from the National Science Foundation, two do not. To determine which get funded and which do not, NSF relies on a rigorous, competitive process of merit review based on peer evaluation.

Merit review is the cornerstone of the NSF's work. Virtually all of the 30,000 new proposals submitted to NSF annually undergo external merit review. NSF receives over 170,000 reviews each year to help evaluate these proposals. Through the use of merit review, NSF seeks to maintain the high standards of excellence and accountability for which it is known around the world.

Why Consider Changing NSF's Merit Review Criteria?

NSF's current criteria were adopted by the National Science Board in 1981. They remain an effective means for determining the optimal allocation of NSF's valuable resources. From time to time, it is nevertheless prudent to examine the review criteria—in the spirit of improving an already outstanding system.

Furthermore, there are also a number of important factors that deserve consideration in any assessment of NSF's review criteria:

—First, NSF's 1994 strategic plan established long-range goals and core strategies for the Foundation.
—Second, several studies suggest that there is room for improvement in

NSF's highly successful system of merit review. For example, surveys of reviewers and program officers have revealed that the current criteria are not always well understood and often ignored.

—Third, seminal events over the past fifteen years—notably the end of the Cold War and the rise of global economic competition—have altered the context for public support of research and education. It is now more important than ever to highlight and document the returns to society on NSF's investments in research and education.

It is worth noting in addition that maintaining flexibility in the application of criteria may be as important as the criteria themselves. Most reviewers will only address those elements that they feel they are capable of judging. Similarly, NSF also does not pre-assign weights to the criteria; given the variation across NSF's many different programs, any such "one size fits all" approach would be counterproductive. Overall, excellence will continue to be the hallmark of all NSF-sponsored activities.

Furthermore, NSF will continue to employ special criteria when proposals are expected to respond to the specific objectives of certain programs and activities. Examples include teacher training projects and the development of large research facilities.

Opportunity for Input and Comments

At the November 1996 meeting of the National Science Board, the Board's Merit Review Task Force recommended that the current merit review criteria be simplified and that the language be harmonized with the NSF strategic plan. The current criteria and the Task Force's recommended criteria are shown below.

With the release of the Task Force's discussion report, NSF and the Board aim to stimulate discussion within and outside the Foundation. NSF is seeking input and comments from all interested persons—especially current and potential grant applicants and reviewers, as well as informed observers and followers of science and engineering research and education. To encourage the broadest possible comment and discussion, we have posted a summary of this document along with a comparison of current and proposed merit review criteria on our homepage (<http://www.nsf.gov>). The summary includes "hotlinks" to the full NSB Task Force report, NSF strategic plan, and other related documents. Most important, there is a response box for you to provide the agency with your feedback electronically.