

**Supporting Statement for the
Application for Employment with the
Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
(FR 28; OMB No. 7100-0181)**

Summary

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, under delegated authority from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), proposes to extend for three years, with minor revision, the Application for Employment with the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (the Application) (FR 28; OMB No. 7100-0181). The Application is required to obtain a benefit and collects information to determine the qualifications, suitability, and availability of applicants for employment with the Federal Reserve Board. The Application collects information on education and training, employment record, military service record, and other information since the applicant left high school. Included with the Application are two supplemental questionnaires: 1) The Applicant's Voluntary Self-Identification Form (FR 28s), which collects information on the applicant's gender, race, and ethnic group, and 2) The Research Assistant Candidate Survey of Interests (FR 28i), which collects information on a candidate's level interest in economics and related areas.

The Federal Reserve proposes to revise the FR 28 to include the applicant's email address and cell phone number. In addition, the FR 28 would be modified to inform applicants that educational claims must be from an accredited school. The Federal Reserve proposes to modify the FR 28s to be consistent with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMBs) Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, (Race and Ethnic Standards for Federal Statistics and Administrative Reporting). The Federal Reserve also proposes to revise the FR 28i, by modifying the areas of interest, changing the rating scale format, adding a section on software packages used by the candidate, and adding a line for the candidate's name. The Federal Reserve receives approximately 2,500 applications per year, solicited and unsolicited; the estimated total annual reporting burden is 2,548 hours.

Background and Justification

The Application in its current format has been used for more than twenty years. The Federal Reserve has made minor changes to the Application during this period to keep pace with changes in staffing requirements and to comply with laws that have been enacted or amended to protect the applicant and the information provided on the Application. Such laws include the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (29 U.S.C. '621 et seq), the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. '2000e-16), the Equal Pay Act (29 U.S.C. '206(d)), the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (8 U.S.C. "1324(a) and 1324(b)), the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. '552a), and the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. '791 et seq).

The Application may be used to examine, rate, or assess the applicant's qualifications, to determine if the applicant is entitled to rights or benefits under certain laws and regulations, and to contact the applicant to arrange an interview. After the Federal

Reserve evaluates an Application, the applicant is either contacted for an interview or notified in writing that he or she does not qualify for any open position. Applications received, whether from applicants in whom the Federal Reserve retains a future interest or not, are kept for two years. An applicant may update his or her Application at any time.

The most recent revisions to the Application were approved in December 2001. At that time, the Federal Reserve added the Applicant's Voluntary Self-Identification Form (FR 28s). Applicants check the appropriate boxes that correspond to his or her gender, race, and ethnic group. The Federal Reserve also added a Research Assistant Candidate Survey of Interests (FR 28i). The FR 28i is used to better match a Research Assistant (RA) candidate's interests with those particular areas of research at the Board.

Description of Information Collection

The Federal Reserve receives approximately 2,500 applications per year, both solicited and unsolicited, from members of the public that would like to be considered for employment at the Board. Applications are kept on file for two years. Since applicants are usually either hired by the Board or find other employment within that time, applicants generally file the Application once. An applicant is any person who meets the published minimum qualifications for a specific position and has expressed interest in or been considered for that position.

The Application is comprised of eight sections: Background, Education and Training, Employment Record, Military Service Record, References, General, Remarks, and Notes. Each of the first six sections provides information on a specific aspect of the applicant's qualifications. The Background section asks the applicant to provide identifying information and to specify the position for which the application is made. The Education and Training section collects detailed information on education and skills. The Employment Record section asks for a chronological summary of work experience. The Military Service Record section collects information on service branch, rank, duties, and discharge. The References section asks for three references. The General section queries the applicant about criminal records, discharge from employment, willingness to travel, and relations to, or acquaintances with, Federal Reserve staff, officers and directors of financial institutions. The Remarks section provides the applicant an opportunity to provide further information regarding his or her qualifications. The Notes section explains what is required of the applicant prior to an interview and what may be required of the applicant if he or she is offered a position (for example, transcripts, medical examination, or drug test).

The Applicant's Voluntary Self-Identification Form (FR 28s) is comprised of three sections for "Gender," "Race," and "Ethnic Group." Applicants are asked to check the box that corresponds to his or her gender, race, and ethnic group (White, Black, Asian or Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Hispanic). The Federal Reserve uses this information to comply with federal equal employment opportunity recordkeeping, reporting, and other legal requirements and as an input to its self-analysis of hiring practices. Information collected on the FR 28s has no bearing on the

determination of an applicant's job-related qualifications and returning the form is entirely voluntary.

The Research Assistant Candidate Survey of Interests (FR 28i) is comprised of sixteen fields of economics and related areas. Candidates rate their interest (little, moderate, strong, or uncertain) of economics and related areas by circling the number that corresponds to their level of interest. The FR 28i helps to streamline the recruitment process and reduce the likelihood of offering RA positions that candidates subsequently turn down. The FR 28i was designed to minimize the amount of time required to respond.

Proposed Revisions

Application (FR 28)

- Add – two lines to the “Background” section that would allow applicants to provide an “E-mail address” and “Cell” phone number. This information would be used as an alternate source to contact applicants.
- Revise – “College” and “Graduate School” items under “Education and Training” section to include the caption “Attendance or degrees from accredited schools.” The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has informally recommended that all Federal Agencies include a statement regarding educational accreditation.
- Revise – under the “Notes” section the statement “All positions at the Board are excepted from the Classified Civil Service” to read “All positions at the Board are appointed without regard to the provisions of the classified civil service except politically appointed positions.” The revised statement would accurately represent the actual status of employment practices at the Board.
- Add – under the “Notes” section a statement regarding alternative formats or questions for persons with disabilities.
- Clarify – the certification statement by translating legal terminology into plain English.

Applicant's Voluntary Self-Identification Form (FR 28s)

To be consistent with the OMB's Statistical Policy Directive No. 15, The Federal Reserve proposes to modify the following categories:

Ethnic

- Revise – the "Hispanic" category into a question “Are you Hispanic or Latino?” and provide a list to include: Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or Other Spanish Culture.

Race

- Revise – the “Black – (Not of Hispanic Origin)” category as “Black or African American.”
- Separate – the “Asian or Pacific Islander” category into two categories "Asian" and "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander." The Asian category would include persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. The Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander category would

include persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Research Assistant Candidate Survey of Interests (FR 28i)

- Revise – the topic of “Computer Science” to read as “Basic Computer Programming / Database Maintenance.”
- Add – two fields of economics and related areas to the survey “Business Behavior” and “Price Inflation.” This information would help The Federal Reserve to better match a Candidate’s interests with particular areas of research at the Board.
- Revise – the format of the rating scale from numbers to check boxes.
- Add – a section for candidates to provide the names of all software packages or matrix or statistical languages they have used.
- Add – a line for “Name” and “Date.”

Time Schedule for Information Collection

The Application form may be obtained from, and the applicant may submit the Application to, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. The Federal Reserve also distributes and collects the Application in their recruiting efforts. Candidates for RA positions in the economic research divisions submit the FR 28i along with the Application.

Consultation Outside the Agency

The Board’s Legal Division previously consulted with outside attorneys on the content of the Applicant’s Voluntary Self-Identification Form. There has been no consultation outside the Federal Reserve System on any other portion of the Application.

Legal Status

The Legal Division has determined that the Application is required to obtain a benefit and is authorized by sections 10(4) and 11(1) of the Federal Reserve Act (12 U.S.C. "244 and 248(1)). The Board is required to treat the information collected on the Application as confidential pursuant to the requirements of the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a). Individual respondent data are regarded as confidential under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. "552(b)(2) and (b)(6)). A separate Privacy Act notice is enclosed with each Application.

Sensitive Questions

This collection of information contains no questions of a sensitive nature, as defined by OMB guidelines.

Estimate of Respondent Burden

The estimated number of applications is based on the average number of applications submitted over the last two year period. The FR 28s is filled out on a voluntary basis and is estimated to take an average of one minute to complete. The FR 28i is filled out only by RA candidates and is estimated to take less than five minutes to complete. The current annual burden is estimated to be 2,548 hours and represents less than 1 percent of the total Federal Reserve burden for all reports. The Federal Reserve believes the proposed revisions would have no affect on the ongoing annual burden for the Application and would remain unchanged from current estimates and averages.

| | <i>Estimated number of respondents</i> | <i>Annual frequency</i> | <i>Estimated average hours per response</i> | <i>Estimated annual burden hours</i> |
|--------------|--|-----------------------------|---|--|
| FR 28 | 2,500 | 1 | 1 | 2,500 |
| FR 28s | 1,700 | 1 | 1 minute | 28 |
| FR 28i | 250 | 1 | 5 minutes | 20 |
| <i>Total</i> | | | | 2,548 |

Based on a rate of \$20 per hour, the estimated current annual cost to the public of this information collection is \$50,960.

Estimate of Cost to the Federal Reserve System

The total annual cost to the Federal Reserve for printing and processing the Application is estimated to be \$175,000.