



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Steven VanRoekel
Acting Deputy Director for Management and U.S. Chief Information Officer

SUBJECT: Guidance for 2013 SAVE Award Program

Since its creation in 2009, the President's SAVE Award (Securing Americans Value and Efficiency) has served as a vehicle for Federal employees to offer their ideas about how to cut waste, save taxpayer dollars, and make government more efficient and effective. Over the past four years, Federal employees have submitted more than 85,000 ideas through the SAVE Award program. Recommendations have ranged from implementing new measures that conserve energy to eliminating paper copies of publications that are available online to using ground shipping instead of next-day service when mailing non-urgent packages. In total, more than 80 SAVE Award ideas have been incorporated into the President's Budgets, saving hundreds of millions of dollars. Given the current challenging budget environment, it is important that we continue to use the SAVE Award program to tap the knowledge and insight of frontline Federal workers to help us identify areas where we can root out waste and improve the way the government serves the American people.

SAVE Award Ideas As Part of FY 2015 Agency Budget Submissions

In an effort to further institutionalize the SAVE Award process, OMB is making additional modifications to the SAVE Award evaluation process.

Last year, agencies were asked to identify the five to ten ideas their agency viewed most favorably. This year, agencies should identify only their top three to five ideas. However, instead of submitting those ideas to OMB in August, as has been done in the past, agencies should take additional time to carefully evaluate and vet the ideas and then include them as part of their Fiscal Year 2015 Budget submission in September. While agencies are encouraged to provide their top SAVE Award ideas with their FY 2015 Budget submissions, SAVE Award ideas may be submitted separately, as long as they are received by OMB no later than September 20, 2013.

In addition, agencies are now invited to select ideas from those submitted through the White House SAVE Award website and through their internal employee savings idea program, if they have one or wish to create one. All selected agency "top" ideas, regardless of their origin, must continue to meet the SAVE Award assessment criteria. In order to maximize the impact of

the SAVE Award, we also ask agencies to look closely for ideas that could be implemented across several agencies or government-wide.

Before an agency selects a “top” idea, the agency CFO must confirm with internal agency programmatic, operations, communications, and other stakeholders, as well as agency leadership, that all parties are comfortable with moving forward with the idea should it ultimately be selected as a finalist for the SAVE Award or included in the President’s Budget. This step of thoroughly vetting the small group of top ranked ideas is a critical piece of the SAVE Award review process.

The OMB Director will select the SAVE Award finalists from the pool of agency-submitted ideas. As in previous years, the public will then vote to select the winning idea; and the finalist ideas, as well as other SAVE Award submission ideas selected by OMB, will be included in the President’s Budget.

Assessment Criteria

As a reminder, the goal of the SAVE Award is to produce ideas that will not only yield savings but also improve the way that government operates. Therefore, not every idea has to generate significant savings to be worth implementing.

Agencies should continue to judge submissions according to the specific SAVE Award assessment criteria, which include:

- Does the idea reduce costs in a way that is concrete and quantifiable?
- Does the idea improve the way that government operates by:
 - improving the quality of output at lower costs; or
 - simplifying processes to reduce administrative burden; or
 - improving the speed of government operations to improve efficiency?
- Does the idea have a tangible impact on the lives of Americans or the environment?
- Is there a clear and practical way to implement the idea?
- Will it be possible to begin realizing savings immediately?

In identifying the three to five top ideas for the year, agencies should select ideas that are unique, are not significantly similar to an idea previously included in one of the President’s Budgets, and are not already being implemented by the agency.

As has been done in previous years, OMB will provide additional guidance to agencies on the process for reviewing and rating SAVE Award submissions. If you have any questions about this guidance, please contact Jamal Brown (JTBrown@omb.eop.gov) in the OMB Communications Office at 202-395-7254.