

Generic Information Collection Request

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for the collection of routine customer feedback (OMB number 0690-0030). We propose to conduct and seek approval for an online cognitive/usability evaluation of language on census.gov regarding respondent privacy and confidentiality protections conducted by Census Bureau staff. As part of this current submission we are seeking approval for a remote, asynchronous data collection by Census Bureau staff.

Purpose: It is important to ensure that messaging about the census and our surveys available online is both easy to understand and easy to access. Traditionally, researchers at the U.S. Census Bureau would conduct in-person cognitive and usability testing separately to assess the understanding and accessibility of this messaging, respectively. Performing cognitive and usability testing independently is more time-consuming and expensive, and eliminates the opportunity to determine whether respondents' ability to find and understand survey messaging interact. This planned evaluation is an online, joint cognitive and usability test of messaging about privacy and confidentiality protections. The goal is to both evaluate this methodology as well as collect substantive findings on effective messaging about respondent privacy and confidentiality.

Population of Interest: The planned usability evaluation will focus on assessing and improving the user experience on census.gov for the general population, in terms of both usability of the site and clarity of the language used.

Timeline: Testing will be conducted over 1-2 weeks in either December 2016 or January 2017, depending on when approval is received, with a maximum of 200 testers.

Language: Testing will be conducted in English only.

Sample: Staff from the Center for Administrative Records Research and Applications (CARRA) will sample email addresses from 10,000 MAFIDS in the Contact Frame. We expect to achieve a 2% response rate, determined by experience with other recent studies, with a goal of 200 completes for this study.

Recruitment: Participants will be recruited by email through GovDelivery. Participants will receive up to three emails:

- An initial email on a Monday,
- A reminder email on the following Thursday (if they have not yet clicked on the link to the survey), and
- A final reminder email on the following Monday (if they have not yet clicked on the link to the survey) with the survey closing the following Friday.

Depending upon when OMB approval is received, the data collection period may decrease from two weeks to one week, and the second of these three emails would be eliminated. Copies of these emails are included in Enclosure 1.

Participants can respond to the voluntary research study at a time convenient for them. They can also unsubscribe or opt-out at any time.

Method: Participants will be invited to participate in the study via a link sent by email as described above. They will use their own smartphones, tablets, or desktop/laptop devices to complete the study. The study will be open for 1 or 2 weeks.

CSM will host the study using Loop11 and will collect no personally identifiable data. The questions and tasks asked and messages shown to respondents are shown in Enclosure 2.

Protocol: Respondents will be given privacy and confidentiality scenarios and then asked to locate relevant information on the census.gov homepage. We will collect information on whether the respondent successfully navigated to the messaging of interest on the website and what they clicked on to get there using Loop11 software. Following each navigation task, respondents will be presented with privacy and confidentiality messaging and asked fixed open-ended cognitive probes. These probes will be administered to all respondents regardless of whether they successfully completed the prior navigation task. Respondents will then be asked demographic questions.

Consent: Participants will be informed of the OMB number and the voluntary nature of the study in the recruitment emails (see Enclosure).

Use of Incentive: No incentives will be used in this research.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study:

1. Emails sent to respondents inviting them to participate (Enclosure 1)
2. Questions/tasks and example screenshot from study (Enclosure 2)

Length of interview: We estimate 10 minutes per respondent, overall.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

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