

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Deliberative Focus Groups on American Community Survey Messaging
OMB Control No. 0607-0760

This Supporting Statement provides additional information regarding the Census Bureau’s request for processing of the proposed information collection, Deliberative Focus Groups on American Community Survey Messaging. The numbered questions correspond to the order shown on the Office of Management and Budget Form 83-I, “Instructions for Completing OMB Form 83-I.”

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

Seven (7) Deliberative Focus Groups will be conducted in a variety of U.S. cities with individuals who are identified to have cynical, suspicious, or ambivalent attitudes toward the government. Individuals with attitudes of these types have historically lower-than-average ACS self-response rates; thus, it is important to understand what arguments and messages are strong motivators of their behavior and likelihood to respond. There will be n=20-24 participants in each of the seven groups, for a total of n=140-168 participants.

Focus group locations have been selected on the basis of geographic and racial/ethnic diversity, and diversity of ACS self-response rates.

| Focus Group Location | 2012 Self Response Rate | Percent Hispanic Pop. | Percent Black Pop. | Percent White Pop. | Percent Asian Pop. | Percent AI/AN Pop. | Percent Pacific Islander Pop. |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Albuquerque, NM | .44–.54 | 45.9% | 2.8% | 42.8% | 2.5% | 3.9% | .10% |
| Atlanta, GA | .45–.54 | 5.0% | 53.6% | 36.3% | 3.30% | .20% | 0% |
| Dallas, TX | .30–.54 | 41.9% | 24.4% | 29.5% | 2.8% | .20% | 0% |
| Los Angeles, CA | .30–.61 | 48.1% | 9.3% | 28.9% | 11.30% | .20% | .20% |
| Richmond, VA | .54–.61 | 5.9% | 50.1% | 38.9% | 3.5% | .20% | 0% |
| St. Louis, MO | .54–.67 | 3.4% | 49.1% | 42.2% | 2.60% | .20% | 0% |
| Washington, DC | .61–.67 | 9.0% | 51.3% | 34.0% | 3.50% | .20% | .10% |

The Los Angeles focus group will be conducted in Spanish with Spanish-speaking participants.

Participants will be recruited according to their attitudes toward the Federal Government with regard to trustworthiness, privacy, and intrusiveness. Screening questions have been sourced from relevant sections of CBAMS II. The screening guide is provided in Appendix B. Questions will be asked to determine respondents’ trust of the federal government to use their information responsibly, keep the public’s best interests in mind, and keep personal

information private. Additional demographic questions about country of origin, education level attained, marital status, income, age, homeownership, etc., will be asked so that a diversity of backgrounds can be included in the focus groups.

Individuals who demonstrate the requisite attitudes toward the government in a majority of questions posed will be accepted for participation.

It should be noted that this is qualitative research. Results will not be used to make nationally representative statements or to generalize the data beyond the scope of the sample. In qualitative research of this nature, representativeness of the underlying population is less important than ensuring the desired points of view among the select sample members.

The collection has not been conducted previously.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

This will be a one-time collection of data, spanning seven discrete sessions over two weeks. The methodology for selecting participants is discussed above in the response to Question 1.

At the conclusion of each focus group, we will develop a summary report; all seven reports will be compiled in a single report that will include data analysis. The summary reports will detail the proceedings and analyze the focus group sessions. A description of the focus group participants (minus personal, protected information) will be included in the summary report as well.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

We will invite 30 individuals to participate in each focus group. Based on industry norms for focus group recruitment, we believe we will receive a 70 to 80 percent participant turnout, to ensure that we can seat the 20–24 participants sought for each focus group. The qualitative nature of this effort will not result in data that can be generalized to be statistically representative of the broader population. Our report will include a clear advisory that the data represent only the individuals involved in the focus groups. The data, however, will be useful to inform messages for use in the ACS mail package design and related communications efforts.

4. Test of Procedures or Methods

As qualitative research, no formal statistical testing is planned besides counts, basic marginal percentages, and cross-tabulations. Transcripts from the interviews will be coded to identify reoccurring concerns regarding privacy, intrusion, and value of data. They will also be coded to identify those arguments in favor of ACS that particularly resonate with participants.

We will systematically monitor data collection procedures in order to identify ways to reduce burden, streamline processing, and assure quality data.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

Consultants outside of the Census Bureau are listed below.

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