Appendix A: Cognitive Interview Protocol

NSF/NIH I-Corps Teams Longitudinal Outcomes Survey (Time 2): Cognitive Interview Protocol

Notes: The I-Corps respondents will represent a random selection of all I-Corps program participants from the 2011 through 2013 cohorts, who consented to participate in the Longitudinal Outcomes study at Time 1 and match key demographic characteristics of interest for cognitive interviewing purposes. Non-I-Corps PIs will be identified with the assistance of entrepreneurship programs not associated with I-Corps. PIs must have received an NSF research grant and pursued commercialization of some aspect of the research.

Interviews will occur in 2-stages. First, the I-Corps respondents will be interviewed. The instrument will be revised to incorporate changed. Non-I-Corps respondents will be interviewed after the changes in the I-Corps instrument are made, as the non-I-Corps instrument has to mirror most questions of the I-Corps respondent survey.

An e-mail solicitation will be sent, explaining the purpose of the interview and procedures that will be followed. If a participant agrees to be interviewed, an interview date and time will be arranged. He/she will then be sent a web-version of the survey—to complete as close to the date and time of the interview as possible. As the survey tool captures time data (e.g., how many seconds each section took to complete), participants will only be asked to approximate how long the survey took them to complete.

Except the date and start and stop time (see below), all demographic questions of interest will be filled out by the survey administration team in advance. A member of the research and evaluation team will then read through the informed consent, and conduct the interview.

START TIME: **STOP TIME:**

Date: **Interview number:**

Interviewee id number:

Role: PI or EL or M

Involved in project @ Time 1: Y/N/NA

Project still active @ Time 1: Y/N/NA

Company @ Time 1: Y/N/NA

Private investment @ Time 1: Y/N/NA

Notes: On behalf of our NSF/NIH/I-Corps project officer and [contractor or grantee leading interview] I want to thank you for your time.

Purpose: Before we administer this survey to everyone who consented to participate, we want to ensure that certain questions we developed make as much sense to the respondents (i.e., you) as we think they do. Consequently, this interview will focus on (1) how you interpreted a particular question or (2) whether you thought the question was clear and understandable, not your answers to the question. For the sake of keeping this an efficient process, we will focus on particular subsets of questions.

Procedures: We will focus on certain subsets of questions. There are no right or wrong answers. In order to improve the survey, we are soliciting your honest and candid feedback. In general, I will ask you a combination of one of the following types of questions:

> (1) In your own words, can you tell me what this word, phrase, or sentence means?
> (2) What information did you need to remember in order to answer this question?
> (3) If this survey was totally anonymous, and you knew your responses could not be linked in any way to you or your project, would you have answered this question in the same way?
> (4) Tell me as best as you can, how did you arrive at your answer to this question?
> (5) How clear or understandable did you find this question?

The entire interview should last between 25 to 30 minutes.

Protection of Privacy: We will make every effort to protect your privacy. The information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The answers to the interview are summarized and not linked to your name or project. However, as agreed upon (at Time 1) your answers to the Longitudinal Outcomes survey are reported to NSF/NIH, on a group basis (e.g., by node affiliation or technology innovation cluster), with no identification of specific individuals.[2]

Risks: There are no risks to participation.

Benefits: The real benefit to participation is helping NSF collect information on this program in as meaningful and efficient a way as possible. Your participation thus contributes to NSF's commitment to program understanding and improvement efforts. Furthermore, helping improve the survey contributes to the ease with which your peers can complete it.

> [Will ask for verbal consent at this point]
>
> INTRODUCTION:
> - Approximately how long did this survey take you to complete?
> - Any general comments or questions about the survey before we begin?
>
> [After answering any of these questions, proceed to INTERVIEW QUESTIONS]

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[2] All raw data is shared with NSF, but there are certain exceptions for data linked to individual outcomes.