

## **Generic Information Collection Request**

**Request:** 1The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional survey work under the generic clearance for Data User Evaluation Surveys (OMB number 0607-0760).

Planning has begun for conducting research in 2017 among respondents of the Census Bureau's current economic surveys. The focus of the research is to obtain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing Census economic survey respondents, gain insights on approaches to increase participation (as well as timeliness and quality of response), determine the best way to communicate to participants for multiple surveys and to finalize elements of the 2017 Economic Census program prior to communication launch.

The research plan for 2017 seeks to build on the findings from the first phase of research which was conducted among small business owners during the summer of 2015 and the second phase conducted in 2016 among not only small businesses, but medium and large size firms who were known to have been Census economic survey respondents.

In addition to the primary target audience of persons involved in the completion of government requests for business information in small, medium and large size firms who were known to have been Census economic survey respondents, the research is also interested in understanding the role of intermediary organizations, such as trade and industry organizations and local Chambers of Commerce.

The research will begin to obtain reaction to materials and messaging developed from insights coming directly from the participants of the earlier research efforts. It will explore potential barriers to completing current economic Census surveys with special attention given to determining concerns or issues associated with submitting data electronically. Messaging and communications strategies will be tested to determine what approaches best convey generating awareness of the Census's economic surveys among the business community, why it is important for them to respond, how to complete and submit their data, where to go for help and assistance, etc.

**Purpose:** The usability goal for 2017 is to improve upon the 2016 Census Test instrument. Testing will evaluate the usability of the screen design for different types of devices including desktop/laptop, tablets and smartphones. There was not enough time before the 2016 Census Test production to program all the changes recommended from the prior round of usability testing. This is especially true for the mobile-optimized version. Accordingly, changes recommended from the 2016 testing as well as other design improvements will be tested for the 2017 test. These include programming field lengths which match the length of the data expected, converting all fields which required horizontal scrolling to a vertical layout design, using a keypad for numeric data entries such as ZIP and phone fields, implementing more space between radio buttons, etc.

**Population of Interest:** Respondents of current economic surveys.

**Timeline:** Beginning in early 2017, our contractor WBA (company profile attached) will conduct up to 16 focus group sessions with a range of business persons in private sector companies around the country who are responsible for completing government requests for information. It is planned that some of the focus groups will also be held with decision makers from a variety of intermediary organizations. These may be held as traditional “behind the glass” focus groups or as conference room roundtables. We will strive to achieve a well-rounded mix of participants. We will hold groups in at least four markets to gain insights from different regions around the country. The markets have been selected based on analysis of response rates from the 2012 Economic Census. We plan two focus group sessions will be held in each market.

**Language:** The focus groups will be conducted in English only.

**Method:** Telephone interviews for recruitment and focus groups.

**Sample:** In each of the four selected markets (Chicago, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh, and Miami), two focus groups will be conducted. The markets have been selected based on analysis of response rates from the 2012 Economic Census. Each market represents one of four categories: hi-overall response rate/hi online response rate, hi-overall response rate/low online response rate, lo-overall response rate/hi online response rate, and low-overall response rate/low online response rate.

The first group will be composed of individuals who were responsible for completing the 2012 Economic Census and/or other economic surveys from the Census Bureau (such as: Quarterly Service Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Annual Survey of Manufacturers, etc.). Because there are very limited numbers of “large” companies within a market, we plan to draw on both “large” and “medium” multi-unit businesses to recruit the needed number of respondents. The goal will be to recruit 8 - 10 qualified (*see screening document included in the submission packet*) participants for the first group. Efforts will be made to obtain a mix of companies in different industries (retail trade, construction, professional services, food services, manufacturing, healthcare, etc.) different sizes (number of employees or revenue), different types of economic surveys they complete (Quarterly Service Survey, Monthly Retail Trade Survey, Annual Survey of Manufacturers, etc.), as well as a mix of female and male participants. This is what we refer to as a “well rounded” recruitment group.

The second group, will be made up of individuals who were responsible for completing the 2012 Economic Census from small single and small multi-unit firms with at least five or more employees. The goal will be to recruit 8 - 10 qualified participants for the second group. Similar to the recruitment of the first group, we will seek a mix of companies in different industries, different sizes (number of employees or revenue), number of units, as well as a mix of female and male participants.

**Recruitment:** The majority of the recruiting of participants will be done by professional telephone interviewers. We anticipate the recruitment effort to take 5 minutes per recruitment questionnaire. We plan on calling 1,500 potential focus group participants for each focus group to recruit 8 - 10 qualified participants for a total of 125 burden hours per group.

**BUSINESS FOCUS GROUPS-RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

RESPONDENT'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF GROUP: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF GROUP: (Circle one) 6pm/8pm

INTERVIEWER: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE RECRUITED: \_\_\_\_\_

(ASK TO SPEAK TO THE NAMED PERSON ON LIST, WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPLETING BUSINESS INFORMATION SURVEYS REQUIRED BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.)

(READ:) Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_. We're conducting a short survey among the business community on behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau and I'd like to ask you a few questions. This is not a sales call of any kind. This is a public opinion survey that will take less than five minutes.

A. (RECORD GENDER.)

01 Male → GET A MIX

02 Female

B. (RECORD COMPANY SIZE FROM SAMPLE. DO NOT ASK.)

01 MU-S (Small) → MAY QUALIFY FOR "SMALL" GROUP 8:00PM

02 MU-M (Medium) → MAY QUALIFY FOR "MEDIUM/LARGE" GROUP 6:00PM

03 MU-L (Large) → MAY QUALIFY FOR "MEDIUM/LARGE" GROUP 6:00PM

1. First of all, are you the person in your firm responsible for completing government requests for business information? (READ LIST.)

01 Yes → CONTINUE

02 No → ASK TO SPEAK TO THAT PERSON AND BEGIN BY READING INTRODUCTION.

1A. Which statement best describes your role in completing government requests for business information?

01 You compile the information and complete the request yourself

02 You, along with others in your firm, compile the information and complete the request

03 You have overall responsible of submitting the request, but you assign others to actually compile the information

2. How long have you been employed in your current position? (READ LIST.)

01 Three years or less → ACCEPT NO MORE THAN 3 PER GROUP

02 More than three years. → CONTINUE

3. Is this the headquarters location for your company?

01 Yes → CONTINUE

02 No → THANK AND TERMINATE

4. How many employees work at your location? (READ LIST.)

01 Less than 5 → THANK AND TERMINATE

02 5 to 19

03 20 to 149

04 150 to 299

05 300 or more

5. Would you classify your business as primarily being engaged in: (READ LIST.)

01 Retail Trade,

02 The Service Industry,

03 Manufacturing, or

04 Some other category

6. What is the type or nature of your business? That is, what does your company do? (PROBE AND CLARIFY.)

7. Is your business involved primarily in providing any of the following: (READ LIST. IF "YES" TO ANY, THANK & TERMINATE.)

YES NO

Financial services? 01 02

In advertising, marketing research or public relations? 01 02

Banking? 01 02

Utility services? 01 02

– NOTE: IF YES TO ANY, THANK & TERMINATE.–

8. When, if ever, was the last time that you participated in a market research group discussion or focus group?

01 Within the past 6 months → CONTINUE

02 More than 6 months ago → CONTINUE

03 Never → CONTINUE

10. Are you \_\_\_\_\_?

01 Hispanic or Latino → CONTINUE

02 Not Hispanic or Latino → CONTINUE

99 DECLINED TO ANSWER → CONTINUE

11. Do you consider yourself...?

01 American Indian or Alaska Native

02 Asian

03 Black or African American

04 Asian

05 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

06 White

99 DECLINED TO ANSWER

INVITE QUALIFIED RESPONDENT TO GROUP.

We are conducting a group discussion among local area business people such as yourself on behalf of the U.S. Census Bureau regarding their reactions to the business information surveys required by the Federal Government. Please be assured that this will not be a sales meeting. It is a part of a market research study. We think that you will find the discussion very interesting and we'd very much like to include your opinions.

Group A – Medium/Large Businesses 6:00 pm

Group B – Small Businesses 8:00 pm

The discussion is scheduled for DATE at 0:00 pm at FACILITY LOCATION. You will be provided \$75 for attending as a token of our appreciation for your time and opinions. This discussion will last about 2 hours and refreshments will be served.

Will you be able to attend?

01 Yes → CONTINUE

02 No → THANK AND TERMINATE

Also, so that I may send you a reminder and confirmation letter with directions, may I please have your complete mailing address including zip code? Or if you prefer I can send you an email with the information. If so, may I please have your email address? (PLACE ALL INFORMATION ON FRONT OF SCREENER)

To repeat, the group is scheduled for: DATE at 0:00 pm at FACILITY LOCATION. If for some reason you are unable to attend, please call us immediately so we can invite another participant. We are only inviting a small number of people to the discussion.

**Protocol:** Participants will first be asked to complete a demographics questionnaire and mobile experience questionnaire. Then participants will complete the most up-to-date 2017 Census Test online survey using a think-aloud protocol. Participants will either be given mailing materials with their login information containing a Census ID or they will be told to complete the census without a Census ID. After completing the online form, each participant will be

asked to complete a satisfaction questionnaire, and asked debriefing questions about different screens.

**Use of Incentive:** We are aware that in past years the standard compensation for Census Bureau focus groups has been \$75 for each participant.

Recruiting executives from large and medium size businesses to participate in a focus group discussion for a \$75 incentive is a challenge, particularly in larger metropolitan markets like Chicago and Los Angeles. \$75 was offered to participants in the first two rounds of the focus group research to support the 2017 Economic Census Publicity & Outreach efforts. In the first round, eleven focus groups were conducted between July 20th and August 4th, 2015. In four of the eleven groups we were unable to meet our goal of providing 8 – 10 participants. The second round consisted of eight focus groups held between February 3rd and 10th, 2016. In five of the eight groups we were unable to meet our goal of providing 8 – 10 participants. While conflict of schedule was an important reason given for not attending, many respondents were not interested because they felt the incentive was not adequate.

**Length of Focus Groups:** The 2017 Census Business Response Promotion team has reviewed and internally tested the moderators guide for these discussions for content appropriateness. Each focus group or roundtable discussion will include 8 - 10 participants. We estimate that each focus group or roundtable session will last 2 hours each for a total respondent burden of 20 hours. Therefore, between the respondent burden for the recruiting process (125 hours) and participation in the focus group session (20 hours) the total anticipated respondent burden will be 145 hours per group.

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

Charles Brady

301-763-6707

charles.f.brady@census.gov