

## Supplemental Computer and Internet Use Questionnaire (CIU) Cognitive Interviews

**Request:** The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). We propose to conduct an iterative cognitive evaluation of the Supplemental Computer and Internet Use Survey (CIU), part of the Current Population Survey (CPS), sponsored by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration in the Department of Commerce. As part of this current submission we are seeking approval for cognitive interviews conducted by Census Bureau staff.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this cognitive research is to (1) test added or revised questions in the Computer and Internet Use Supplement to reflect the changes in technology since 2010, (2) evaluate respondents' understanding and thinking of existing and new internet-connected devices, and (3) assess the possibility that these questions could be answered accurately by proxy respondents. The survey questions are asked of each household member that is 18 years or older. The full questionnaire is attached and includes core questions from the CPS used to roster the household members in order to determine household member eligibility for the CIU instrument. The roster will be conducted according to standard CPS interviewing protocols including the use of flashcards to present responses for some questions (see Attachment I: CIU Questionnaire; Attachment II: CPS Roster Questionnaire).

We plan to cognitively test all items in the CIU instrument using specific probes designed as part of the cognitive test (see Attachment III: CIU Protocol). The cognitive testing will also evaluate the feasibility of eligible household members (either related or unrelated) to accurately provide a proxy response for all items in the survey questionnaire. We will do this by recruiting two household members from the same household (we call these paired respondents) and independently interviewing them. By comparing the answers between each interview, we can assess the level of inconsistent answers the sponsor may expect when allowing proxy responses within a household. However, we will not question either household member about the discrepancy between responses. The results of the cognitive testing will inform the final revised CIU instrument content that will be used in data collection in 2017.

**Population of Interest:** The planned cognitive pretesting evaluation will focus on assessing and improving the questionnaire content for the general population.

**Timeline:** Round 1 of testing will be conducted from December 2016 through January 2017. If additional pretesting is needed, there is the potential for a second round of cognitive interviewing which will be conducted from February 2017 to March 2017. Recruiting will begin early December 2016.

**Language:** Testing will be conducted in English only.

**Method:** From December 2016 to March 2017, staff from the Center for Survey Measurement

will conduct two rounds of cognitive interviews. We will conduct the interviews with a maximum of 50 respondents (20 non-paired respondents and 15 paired (30 total) respondents) using a paper version of the interviewer-administered instrument. In the event that there are any outstanding issues in the questionnaire that have not been addressed by the first round of interviewing, we may conduct iterative interviews from February and March of 2017 but not to exceed 50 respondents total..

**Sample:** Our recruiting efforts will target respondents with the following characteristics who would be eligible for the survey supplement:

- Ages 18 years old or older
- Living in households with related adult household members with 1 or more eligible respondents, or living in households with unrelated adult household members with 1 or more eligible respondents
- Known internet experience
- Computer, tablet, and or smartphone ownership

**Recruitment:** Participants will be recruited using a combination of word-of-mouth, fliers posted at local community organizations that serve low-income populations such as churches and recreation centers, advertisements on Craigslist.com, and broadcast messages distributed through the Census Bureau's daily online newsletter. Interviews will be conducted at the Census Bureau's Response Research Laboratory and at locations convenient to interviewees in the local metropolitan area (DC, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia).

**Protocol:** We will inform participants that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be accessed only by employees involved in the research project. The consent form will also indicate that the respondent agrees that the interview can be audio-taped to facilitate analysis of the results. Participants who do not consent to be audio-taped will still be allowed to participate.

Participants will first be asked a list of roster questions to obtain information about their demographics and household size. They will then be asked the complete list of questions from the Computer and Internet Use supplement. We will conduct our cognitive interviews using retrospective methods which allow the respondent to hear the questionnaire in its entirety and respond for all eligible household members before being asked probes about particular questions of interest. During probing respondents will be asked about their comprehension of specific words and terms in the questionnaire, as well as how comfortable they felt providing responses on behalf of other household members.

**Use of Incentive:** Due to the length of the interview and the necessity to travel to test locations, we plan to offer an incentive of \$40 to offset the costs of participation, such as travel and parking.

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

- I. Attachment I: CIU Questionnaire
- II. Attachment II: CPS Roster Questionnaire
- III. Attachment III: CIU Protocol

**Length of interview:** For the first round of interviews, we estimate that each interview (50 interviews) will take approximately one hour (50 hours total). Respondents will be screened using the Census Bureau's generic screener; thus the burden hours for screenings are covered under a separate request.

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

Amber Henderson  
Center for Survey Measurement  
U.S. Census Bureau  
Washington, D.C. 20233  
(301) 763-3679  
[Amber.Henderson@census.gov](mailto:Amber.Henderson@census.gov)