

***IES Modernization Interviews and Focus Groups***

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*Attachment 2*  
*Interview Guides*

Submitted by

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# Interview Guides

## Researchers

### 1. Introduction

- a. Participant and team intro, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_, a designer and researcher who wants to learn more about education research, data and policy making.
- b. Overview of project: “We are serving IES to help them improve customer experience and better accomplish their mission. We are interested to learn from you and your experience with IES, and/ or other tools in education research overall, related or unrelated to IES.
- c. “There are no right or wrong answers here, and even negative feedback will help us make better product and service experiences. We know that some aspects of your job are private, so if at any time you don’t want to answer a question please feel free to say so: we won’t be offended. Our interest is to learn from you. Your input is very important to us — we couldn’t do this without you and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to help us.”
- d. Any questions on context before we begin?

### 2. Role & Organization

- a. Tell me a little about what you do. What type of organization do you work for and what is your role?
  - i. What did you do in the past and what led you to this current position?
  - ii. [Probe] Size, type, sector of organization
  - iii. Why did you join this organization? What were/are your aspirations?
  - iv. What are your responsibilities?
    1. How do you measure success?
- b. What is the number one goal of your organization and/or research?
- c. What are some of the top tools, products you’ve used to do accomplish your research goals?
  - i. [Probe] specific names, use case, feature, organization
  - ii. What was the experience?
- d. How often are you looking for this type of source information?

### 3. Current state painpoints and needs

- a. Walk me through your typical day/ month/ year. What are some of the key activities you focus on?
  - i. [Probe] Grants, research, writing, teaching, conferences
  - ii. When do you focus on what?
- b. What is the best part of your job? What were some of the common obstacles that you faced working in education?
- c. [For grants or other activities] what is your current process?
  - i. What tools do you use? How do you prioritize? Who do you work with? *Map on paper with participant*
  - ii. What are the purposes of the grant, research, etc.
  - iii. [Probe] How is the experience of the current process? Painpoints and needs?
- d. Do you feel that you are accomplishing your or your organization’s mission? How do the grants and research you do align with the impact you want to have?
  - i. [probe] what could increase the impact? What blockers?

### 4. IES

- a. What do you know about IES?
  - i. [Probe] What agency are they apart of? Why do they exist? What is their purpose? Who do they serve? What products do they have?
  - ii. Do you know them? [name products here, what works clearing house, RELs, etc.]
  - iii. Do you know their process of how they produce these reports?

- iv. Why do people use it?
- v. How is it valued in the industry? How is it regarded?
- vi. [Probe] General observations, opinions, attitude
- b. How have you engaged with them in the past?
  - i. Tell me all the different ways you've engaged with them. Feel free to go into detail. (start with most recent or most frequent use case)
    - 1. How do you typically access that information?
    - 2. Painpoints?
  - ii. What types of tools or products do you typically use? Which department?
  - iii. How often?
- c. What was your experience with these tools/ products/ data/ reports?
  - i. What worked and didn't for you?
  - ii. Probe on digital vs. non-digital
- d. Have you applied for or received research grants from IES?
  - i. How was that process?
- e. If you could improve on what IES offers and how they would offer, what would it be? Why?
- f. Are there products or tools they provide that you know of that you haven't used? Why and why not?
- g. I'd like to read you their mission from their website: **"To provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public"**
  - i. Do you think they are doing that right now? Why and why not?
  - ii. What might be some challenges they are facing?
- h. Who do you think should their top 3 target audience be?
  - i. Why would they find IES useful?
  - ii. How do you use them engage with IES?

## 5. Education Trends

- a. Any general trends, gaps and opportunities you see in the education world when it comes to policy making, data research both in policy making or research?
  - i. If you have the ability to make a change, what would that be?
  - ii. What do people want to read about? What do people want to write about?
- b. What are some of the current and/or future research questions in education? What are people asking for?
  - i. Where to find future education trends?
- c. Who are the leading voices, most influential organizations or press or thinktanks in workforce and education?
  - i. What do they do? Who they work with?
  - ii. Why are they influential? Anyone we can talk to?
  - iii. What is working and not working for them?

## 6. Wrap up

- a. Are there any things you thought we'd talk about today that we didn't cover? Anything else to add?
- b. "Thanks again for allowing us to come spend this time with you today!"

# Policy Makers and Associations

## 1:1 interviews

### 1. Introduction

- a. Participant and team intro, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_, a designer and researcher who wants to learn more about education research, data and policy making.
- b. Overview of project: “We are serving IES to help them improve customer experience and better accomplish their mission. We are interested to learn from you and your experience with IES, and/ or other tools in education research overall, related or unrelated to IES.
- c. “There are no right or wrong answers here, and even negative feedback will help us make better product and service experiences. We know that some aspects of your job are private, so if at any time you don’t want to answer a question please feel free to say so: we won’t be offended. Our interest is to learn from you. Your input is very important to us — we couldn’t do this without you and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to help us.”
- d. Any questions on context before we begin?

### 2. Role & Background

- a. Tell me a little about your background in education and your current role.
- b. What were some of the common obstacles that you faced working in your role?
- c. What tools and data are most critical for you?
- d. Who are your users and what is your or your organization’s mission?

### 3. Education research and policy making

- a. What are some of the top tools, products you use to do your job? [Probe] specific names, use case, feature
- b. How often are you looking for this type of source information?
- c. How is that experience?
- d. What is missing in the [education policy maker’s/research] world? What do you think are the gaps and opportunities?
  - i. How has this changed last few years?
  - ii. What are some upcoming trends you’ve observed?
- e. What are some of the current and/or future big research questions in education?
- f. Who are the leading voices, most influential organizations / press / thinktanks in workforce and education?

### 4. IES

- a. Do you know anything about IES?
  - i. [Probe] What agency are they a part of? Why do they exist? What is their purpose? Who do they serve? What products do they have?
  - ii. Do you know them? [name products here, what works clearing house, RELs, etc.]
  - iii. Do you know their process of how they produce these reports?
- b. How have you engaged with them in the past?
  - i. Tell me all the different ways you’ve engaged with them. Feel free to go into detail. (start with most recent or most frequent use case)
    1. How do you typically access that information?
    2. Painpoints?
  - ii. What types of tools or products do you typically use? Which department?
  - iii. How often?
- c. What was your experience with these tools/ products/ data/ reports?
- d. What worked and didn’t for you?
  - i. Probe on digital vs. non-digital
- e. If you could improve on what IES offers and how they would offer, what would it be? Why?
- f. Are there products or tools they provide that you know of that you haven’t used? Why and why not?

- g. I'd like to read you their mission from their website: **"To provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public"**
  - i. Do you think they are doing that right now? Why and why not?
  - ii. What might be some challenges they are facing?

5. Wrap up

- a. Magic wand - if you could have any tool to help you better do your job, what would that be?
- b. Are there any things you thought we'd talk about today that we didn't cover? Anything else to add?
- c. "Thanks again for allowing us to come spend this time with you today!"

## Focus Groups

### 1. Introduction

- a. Participant and team intro, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_, a designer and researcher who wants to learn more about education research, data and policy making.
- b. Overview of project: “We are serving IES to help them improve customer experience and better accomplish their mission. We are interested to learn from you and your experience with IES, and/ or other tools in education research overall, related or unrelated to IES.
- c. “There are no right or wrong answers here, and even negative feedback will help us make better product and service experiences. We know that some aspects of your job are private, so if at any time you don’t want to answer a question please feel free to say so: we won’t be offended. Our interest is to learn from you. Your input is very important to us — we couldn’t do this without you and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to help us.”
- d. We want you to do the talking. We would like everyone to participate. I may call on you if I haven’t heard from you in a while.
- e. Please be tolerant of others’ thoughts and opinions and let’s have just one speaker at a time.
- f. The discussion will last for a little over one hour. Please silence your mobile phones. Please give everyone the chance to express his/her opinion during the conversation. You can address each other if you like. I am here to facilitate the discussion.
- g. Any questions on context before we begin?

### 2. Role & Background

- a. Each person introduce yourselves, background in education, current role

### 3. Education research and policy making

- a. What are some of the top tools, products you use to do your job? [Probe] specific names, use case, feature
- b. How often are you looking for this type of source information?
- c. How is that experience?
- d. What is missing in the [education policy maker’s/research] world? What do you think are the gaps and opportunities?
  - i. How has this changed last few years?
  - ii. What are some upcoming trends you’ve observed?
- e. What are some of the current and/or future big research questions in education?
- f. Who are the leading voices, most influential organizations / press / thinktanks in workforce and education?

### 4. IES

- a. Do you know anything about IES?
  - i. [Probe] What agency are they a part of? Why do they exist? What is their purpose? Who do they serve? What products do they have?
  - ii. Do you know them? [name products here, what works clearing house, RELs, etc.]
  - iii. Do you know their process of how they produce these reports?
- b. How have you engaged with them in the past?
  - i. Tell me all the different ways you’ve engaged with them. Feel free to go into detail. (start with most recent or most frequent use case)
    1. How do you typically access that information?
    2. Painpoints?
  - ii. What types of tools or products do you typically use? Which department?
  - iii. How often?
- c. What was your experience with these tools/ products/ data/ reports?
- d. What worked and didn’t for you?
  - i. Probe on digital vs. non-digital
- e. If you could improve on what IES offers and how they would offer, what would it be? Why?
- f. Are there products or tools they provide that you know of that you haven’t used? Why and why not?

- g. I'd like to read you their mission from their website: **"To provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public"**
  - i. Do you think they are doing that right now? Why and why not?
  - ii. What might be some challenges they are facing?

5. Wrap up

- a. Magic wand - if you could have any tool to help you better do your job, what would that be?
- b. Are there any things you thought we'd talk about today that we didn't cover? Anything else to add?
- c. "Thanks again for allowing us to come spend this time with you today!"

6.



# Education Subject Matter Experts

## 1. Introduction

- a. Participant and team intro, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_, a designer and researcher who want to learn more about education research, data and policy making.
- b. Overview of project: “We are serving IES on helping them improve customer experience to better accomplish their mission. We are interested to learn from you and your experience with IES, and/ or other tools in education research overall, related or unrelated to IES.
- c. “There are no right or wrong answers here, and even negative feedback will help us make better product and service experiences. We know that some aspects of your job are private, so if at any time you don’t want to answer a question please feel free to say so: we won’t be offended. Our interest is to learn from you. Your input is very important to us — we couldn’t do this without you and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to help us.”
- d. Any questions on context before we begin?

## 2. Role & Background

- a. Tell us a little about your background in education and your journey to your current role.
  - i. What did you do in the past and what is your role now? What led you to where you are now? Why did you leave these roles?
  - ii. What types of organization have you worked with? [Probe] Size, type, goals of organizations
  - iii. What are the different types of roles you’ve played?
- b. What were some of the common obstacles that you faced working in your current role?
- c. What are some of the top tools, products you use to do your job? [Probe] specific names, use case, feature

## 3. IES

- a. What do you know about IES?
  - i. [Probe] Why do they exist? What is their purpose? Who do they serve? What products do they have?
  - ii. Do you know them? [name products here, what works clearing house, RELs, etc.]
  - iii. Do you know their process of how they produce these reports?
- b. How have you engaged with them in the past?
  - i. Tell me all the different ways you’ve engaged with them. Feel free to go into detail. (start with most recent or most frequent use case)
    1. How do you typically access that information?
    2. Painpoints?
  - ii. What types of tools or products do you typically use? Which department?
  - iii. How often?
- c. What was your experience with these tools/ products/ data/ reports?
- d. What worked and didn’t for you?
  - i. Probe on digital vs. non-digital
- e. If you could improve on what IES offers and how they would offer, what would it be? Why?
- f. Are there products or tools they provide that you know of that you haven’t used? Why and why not?
- g. I’d like to read the mission based on their website: **“To provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public”**
  - i. Do you think they are doing that right now? Why and why not?
  - ii. What might be some challenges they are facing?
- h. Who do you think should their top 3 target audience be?

4. Education research and policy making do you think we should start with this? So they aren’t biased by IES and tell us what they really need?

- a. Outside of IES, what other organizations or tools, research sources or products have you used to help do what you do?
    - i. What is the tool/product? Who makes it?
  - b. How is that experience?
  - c. What is missing in the education research world? What would you want to see?
  - d. What is missing in the education policy maker's world? What do you think are the gaps and opportunities?
    - i. How has this changed last few years?
    - ii. What are some upcoming trends you've observed?
5. Wrap up
- a. Are there any things you thought we'd talk about today that we didn't cover? Anything else to add?
  - b. Our current plan is to talk to 1) policy makers, 2) researchers, 3) media, 4) associations, anyone else that you think might be helpful for us? Eg. Parents, educators?
  - c. "Thanks again for allowing us to come spend this time with you today!"

## Media

1. Introduction
  - a. Participant and team intro, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_, a designer and researcher who want to learn more about education research, data and policy making.
  - b. Overview of project: “We are serving IES on helping them improve customer experience to better accomplish their mission. Part of that experience is understanding how IES disseminates knowledge. Our goal is to better understand that process from your perspective – the process, what’s working well, what’s not.
  - c. “There are no right or wrong answers here, and even negative feedback will help us make better product and service experiences. We know that some aspects of your job are private, so if at any time you don’t want to answer a question please feel free to say so: we won’t be offended. Our interest is to learn from you. Your input is very important to us — we couldn’t do this without you and can’t thank you enough for taking the time to help us.”
  - d. Any questions on context before we begin?
2. Role & Background
  - a. Tell us a little about current role and your work with education.
  - b. What are your responsibilities?
  - c. What are your top priorities?
  - d. What were some of the common obstacles that you faced working in your role?
3. Reach
  - a. How do you think about your audience?
  - b. What do people want to read about? What do you typically write about?
  - c. What is your selection process for writing and publishing? [Probe] timeline, stakeholders, metrics
  - d. What are some of the top tools, products you use to do your job? [Probe] specific names, use case, feature
  - e. How is that experience?
  - f. What is missing in the [education policy maker’s/research] world? What do you think are the gaps and opportunities?
    - i. How has this changed last few years?
    - ii. What are some upcoming trends you’ve observed?
4. IES
  - a. Why do you use IES?
    - i. [Probe] credibility, products, data
  - b. How do you use IES?
    - i. Tell me all the different ways you’ve engaged with them. Feel free to go into detail. (point us to specific use cases)
      1. How do you typically access that information?
      2. [Probe] What about their data helpful? Unhelpful?
      3. What types of tools or products do you typically use? Which department?
      4. How often?
    - ii. What was your experience with these tools/ products/ data/ reports?
  - c. What worked and didn’t for you?
  - d. If you could improve on what IES offers and how they would offer, what would it be? Why?
  - e. Are there products or tools they provide that you know of that you haven’t used? Why and why not?
  - f. I’d like to read you their mission from their website: **“To provide scientific evidence on which to ground education practice and policy and to share this information in formats that are useful and accessible to educators, parents, policymakers, researchers, and the public”**
    - i. Do you think they are doing that right now? Why and why not?
    - ii. What might be some challenges they are facing?

5. Wrap up

- a. Magic wand - if you could have any tool to help you better do your job, what would that be?
- b. Are there any things you thought we'd talk about today that we didn't cover? Anything else to add?
- c. "Thanks again for allowing us to come spend this time with you today!"