

Instrument 5: Program Staff Recruitment for Focus Group Participants

Email to Focus Group Recruiters

A team of researchers from the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago is conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) for programs for youth and young adults out of foster care. ACF is particularly interested in programs that help young people succeed in college/become employed. As part of that study, we will be conducting focus groups with young people in your program on **insert dates**. The purpose of the focus groups is to learn more about their experiences as program participants.

We need to recruit between 10-12 young people 18 and over for each focus group and are asking your staff to help us with recruitment by distributing the enclosed flyer to current program participants. We are looking for participants who can speak knowledgeably about the program based on their own experience, including both those who have experienced success in the program and those who have faced challenges. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the focus group or the larger study, please contact XXX.

Thank you.

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Please use the following script to inform the young people you work with about the focus groups.

Researchers from the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago are conducting a study to identify programs for youth and young adults transitioning out of foster care for the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an agency in the federal government. ACF is particularly interested in programs that help young people succeed in college/become employed.

As part of that study, the researchers will be conducting focus group with some of the participants 18 and over in this program. Focus group participants will take part in a discussion that will last no more than 2 hours, which includes introductions and the 90 minute discussion. During the discussion, you will be asked about your experience with the program and the support the program provides. For participating in the focus group, you will receive a \$25 thank you for participation.

It's completely up to you whether or not you want to participate in the focus group. Regardless of whether you decide to participate in the focus group, the services and supports you receive from this program will not be affected. Responses will be kept private (in that they will not attribute responses to a specific name).

Do you want to participate in the focus group?

IF YES → CONTINUE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEDULED DATE AND TIME

IF NO → STOP.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number for this information collection is 0970-0489 and the expiration date is XX/XX/XXXX.

ALUMNI ORGANIZATION OUTREACH EMAIL

Outreach for alumni organizations to contact young adult program participants for focus groups

Dear [NAME],

My name is [NAME] and I am writing on behalf of a team of researchers at the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, which has been contracted by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the US Department of Health and Human Services to learn about the experiences of youth who have participated in the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program [also called [Local name of ETV program]]. The ETV program provides youth currently or formerly in foster care with up to \$5,000 per year to use for the cost of postsecondary education and training. The funds can be used for tuition, fees, books, housing, and other postsecondary education and training related costs. To learn more about the ETV program, please visit <https://www.fc2sprograms.org/faqs/>.

We are contacting you today to ask if you could reach out to foster care alumni in your network to let them know about an opportunity to participate in a program participant focus group in order to learn about their experience with the ETV program. We are interested in speaking with young adults age 18 and older who received ETVs within the last 2 years.

We will be conducting focus groups on [INSERT DATES] where program participants can share their experiences with the ETV program. Focus groups will consist of a handful of young adults and participants will take part in a discussion that will last no more than 2 hours. Program participants will receive a \$25 thank you for participating.

Participation in this focus group is completely voluntary. Participating or choosing not to participate in this research will have no effect on the services they currently receive. Responses will be kept private in that we will not attribute responses to a specific name. We will share what we learn with ACF and with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as part of our evaluation activities. All information provided will be kept private to the extent permitted by law.

Please let me know if you are open to helping us recruit alumni or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[RESEARCHER NAME and CONTACT INFORMATION]

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A team of researchers from the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago is conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) of the Education and Training Voucher (ETV) program [also called [Local name of ETV program]]. The ETV program provides youth currently and formerly in foster care with up to \$5,000 per year to use for the cost of postsecondary education and training. As part of that study, we will be conducting focus groups with young people who have received ETVs on **[INSERT DATES]**. The purpose of the focus groups is to learn more about their experiences as program participants.

We need to recruit a handful of young people 18 and over who have received ETVs within the last two years for this focus group and are asking your staff to help us with recruitment by distributing the enclosed flyer to young adults who might be interested in participating. We are looking for participants who can speak knowledgeably about the ETV program based on their own experience, including both those who have experienced success and those who have faced challenges. Any assistance you can provide would be greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about the focus group or the larger study, please contact XXX.

Thank you.

RECRUITMENT SCRIPT

Please use the following script to inform the young people you work with about the focus groups.

Researchers are conducting a study about how the Education and Training Voucher program (ETV) [also called [Local name of ETV program]], which provides post-secondary education and training vouchers that help cover some of the costs for tuition, fees, books, housing, and more for 2-year and 4-year colleges and other training programs like vocational and trade schools, is used for youth. The study is being conducted by the Urban Institute and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago for the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an agency in the federal government.

As part of that study, the researchers will be conducting focus group with some of the participants 18 and over who have received ETVs within the past two years. Focus group participants will take part in a discussion that will last no more than 2 hours, which includes introductions and the 90 minute discussion. During the discussion, you will be asked about your experience with the program. For participating in the focus group, you will receive a \$25 thank you for participation.

It's completely up to you whether or not you want to participate in the focus group. Regardless of whether you decide to participate in the focus group, the services and supports you receive from this program and any other program will not be affected. Responses will be kept private (in that they will not attribute responses to a specific name).

Do you want to participate in the focus group?

IF YES → CONTINUE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEDULED DATE AND TIME

IF NO → STOP.

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Organization Stan

Dear [INSERT YOUNG ADULT/PROGRAM PARTICIPANT'S NAME],

Researchers are conducting a study about how the Education and Training Voucher program (ETV) also called [Local name of ETV program], which provides post-secondary education and training vouchers, is used for youth. The ETV program provides youth currently and formerly in foster care with up to \$5,000 per year to use for tuition, fees, books, housing, and other costs related to postsecondary education and training. The study is being conducted by the Urban Institute, a non-profit, non-partisan research organization located in Washington, DC, and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago for the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families (ACF), an agency in the federal government.

As part of that study, the researchers will be conducting focus groups on [INSERT DATES] where you can share your experiences with the ETV program. We are looking for participants who are over the age of 18 and who have received an ETV within the last two years. Between 2-10 young people like you will take part in a discussion that will last no more than 2 hours. During the discussion, you will be asked about your experience with the program and the support the program provides. For participating in the focus group, you will receive \$25.

If you meet the criteria mentioned above (must be over the age of 18 and received an ETV within the last two years), then you are eligible to participate. It's completely up to you whether or not you want to participate in the focus group. Regardless of whether you decide to participate in the focus group, the services and supports you receive from this program will not be affected. Responses will be kept private (in that they will not attribute responses to a specific name).

Please let me know if you are interested in participating or if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME and CONTACT INFORMATION]

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