

NIST: Impact Program Evaluation Data for PULSE Business Accelerator

FOUR STANDARD SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Explain who will be surveyed and why the group is appropriate to survey.

The program at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) supporting the program evaluation is the Public Safety Communications Research (PSCR) division. The PSCR Division currently works with first responders and innovators to together advance communication technology for public safety. One of PSCR's newest initiatives is PULSE, a virtual business accelerator for communication technology startups that include the public safety market as a targeted commercialization market. This program evaluation questionnaire would be sent to businesses that complete the rounds of the accelerator program, a maximum of 40 program participants. The public program evaluation data will help inform NIST of the key benefits they've received of their participation, and their suggestions for improving the program. This impact questionnaire will be sent to respondents at the 6-month and 1-year intervals from completing the program to capture the impact of the program. The program evaluation data will allow the PULSE accelerator team the ability to adjust aspect of the accelerator's program design for future rounds of the accelerator and future programs aimed at supporting technology innovators in the public safety market.

2. Explain how the survey was developed including consultation with interested parties, pre-testing, and responses to suggestions for improvement.

PSCR is developing programmatic support for early-phase communication technology innovators that seek to advance their prototypes towards commercialization. When developing the business accelerator, NIST PSCR consulted with other federal and state agencies that have run business accelerators for technology businesses on key programmatic areas that they and their participants found useful. The program questionnaire will assist us in capturing the impact of the program and experiences from the program participants.

3. Explain how the survey will be conducted, how customers will be sampled if fewer than all customers will be surveyed, expected response rate, and actions your agency plans to take to improve the response rate.

The impact survey will be posted in a Google form for easy distribution and use by the recipients. PSCR will send the Google form link via email to each program participant that completes the accelerator. The survey should take an average of 30 minutes per response, or a total of 60 minutes per program participant taken once at the 6-month interval and once at the 12-month interval from completing the program. 40 Respondents (each respondent will take the survey twice, therefore 80 responses). 80 Responses x 30 minutes per response = 40 burden hours. Our team will collect all responses and use response data to confirm or change the

program design of future rounds of the accelerator. We also anticipate using the data to help guide future programs that seek to support technology innovators in the public safety market. We expect a 40-50% response rate as all the participants are familiar with the accelerator team and have expressed appreciation for participating and interest in assisting us recruit and adjust the accelerator design for future cohorts. We will send the survey out with a 2-week response request, then send one reminder after 1 week.

4. Describe how the results of the survey will be analyzed and used to generalize the results to the entire customer population.

PSCR is currently preparing for the second and third round of the accelerator, starting in fall of 2021 and early spring of 2022. The results of the questionnaire will be incorporated directly into the design of these rounds of the accelerator. Additionally, we host optional webinars, and will share anonymized results of the program questionnaire – both the components found most beneficial to and the improvements made to the design of the accelerator based on the data from the previous participants. We will also share the anonymized results of the three rounds of the program evaluation data at our PSCR stakeholder conference in the Summer 2022.