

**Annual Integrated Economic Survey (AIES) Phase II Pilot Research Program**  
 Addendum Submitted Under Generic Clearance for Field Tests and Evaluations

This document is an update to our plans for the AIES Phase II Pilot test, scheduled to launch on February 21, 2023, and using Generic Clearance for Census Bureau Field Tests and Evaluations (OMB Control Number 0607-0971 expiration: 12/31/2025). Please reference the original submission to compare to updates outlined below.

**Recruitment:**

In the original submission, we proposed phone recruitment for up to 500 companies as described below:

*Once the cases are decided, phone recruitment can begin. We aim to recruit 500 companies in total, and so will need more than 500 identified firms to begin with. Phone recruitment may include an initial email contact, particularly for those companies already in contact in previous iterations of research. As an incentive to participate in the pilot, respondents can answer the pilot to meet their mandated reporting obligations for the annual surveys through survey year 2023.*

After conversations within the Economic Directorate and across the Census Bureau, and after considering the timing and resources to engage in this activity, we have decided to move from this active consent model to a passive consent model. Instead of calling companies until we get to the target of 500 companies that agree to participate, we selected 965 companies for inclusion in the pilot and will be making informative phone calls to about  $N \approx 360$  companies based on existing relationships with account managers at the Census Bureau, participation in Phase I of the pilot, availability of an email address, and size. We do not anticipate that the number of burden hours requested for this work will shift dramatically. We are targeting a response rate of about 60% for this effort. See Table 1 for a comparison of the original burden request and the updated burden estimate.

*Table 1: Original and Updated Burden Estimates*

Category of Response	Original Burden Estimate			Updated Burden Estimate		
	Number of Respondents	Participation Time (in minutes)	Burden (in hours)	Number of Respondents	Participation Time (in minutes)	Burden (in hours)
Recruitment conversations	800	20	267	360	20	120
Survey	562	210	1967	562	210	1967
Response Analysis Survey	300	10	50	300	10	50
Debriefing interviewing recruitment logistics	75	20	25	75	20	25
Debriefing Interviews	50	60	50	50	60	50

<b>Total</b>	<b>2,359 hours</b>	<b>2,212 hours</b>
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### **Debriefing interviews**

As we continued to refine the instrument and work through the process of launching the Phase II pilot, we updated the debriefing protocol to reflect additional questions of interest. This includes debriefing interviews to test the performance of two questions on behalf of the Business Trends and Opportunities Survey (BTOS), framing up issues that might impact future usability testing, and exploratory research on willingness to return-to-office interviewing, a topic of interest to the field overall. The fifty available debriefing interviews will be carefully delegated to collect information across combinations of these topics – not all interviews will cover all topics. See Attachment I for the updated protocol.

Because we shifted from an active to a passive consent model, we will now be gaining consent to participate in the debriefing interview prior to or at the time of interviewing. Once we have recruited a respondent to participate in an interview, we will send them an online consent form. See Attachment II for an updated consent form.

In preparation for this Phase II Pilot, we have developed updated respondent communications. To prepare for the production survey in 2024, we would like to conduct targeted communication-focused interviews. We are dedicating 10 of the 50 in-depth interviews to communications testing. We will use the letters, emails, and website developed to support these efforts, and ask respondents for feedback on the tone, clarity, content, and mode of delivery. See Attachment III for the communications testing interview protocol.

### **Additional Respondent Materials**

We have further refined our respondent materials; see Attachment IV for the instrument master spreadsheet, Attachment V for the instrument screens, Attachment VI respondent online survey response guidelines, and Attachment VII for the updated RAS.

### **Updated Timeline**

Finally, here is an update on the timeline of these efforts:

- Early February: Account managers and other response support staff make informative calls to in-scope companies
- Late February: Test survey instrument is deployed
- Early March: First debriefing interviews begin
- Late March: Survey response due
- Early April: Cut-off date for research results inclusion
- Early May: Interviewing ends
- Early June: Preliminary pilot results

**Enclosures:**

Included in this update are the following enclosures:

- Attachment I: Updated Respondent Debriefing Protocol
- Attachment II: Respondent Debriefing Informed Consent
- Attachment III: Communications-focused Debriefing Protocol
- Attachment IV: Master Response Spreadsheet
- Attachment V: Instrument Front Screens
- Attachment VI: Online Survey Response Guide
- Attachment VII: Phase II Response Analysis Survey

**Contact:**

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

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