

IMLS GENERIC CLEARANCE TO CONDUCT PRE-TESTING OF SURVEYS

Supporting Statement Part B: Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. Universe and Respondent Selection

The data collected will be used for quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instrument development activities rather than to produce estimates about populations. Generally, the testing activities undertaken as part of this clearance will involve purposive or quota samples, with respondents selected either to cover a broad range of demographic subgroups or to include specific characteristics related to the topic of the survey. In some instances, a probability sample may be drawn to permit statistical comparisons about the effectiveness of alternative procedural treatments. A description of the plans for selecting respondents for each individual test will be provided to OMB at the time each questionnaire is submitted.

2. Procedures for Collecting Information

Data collection procedures for the testing conducted under this clearance will be varied, and will most likely include group administration, personal visits, telephone, Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)/Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), in-person interviews, online or in-person focus groups, user experience testing, and online surveys. Specific data collection procedures will depend on the nature of the issues to be addressed. For example, cognitive interviews of questionnaire items can be effectively completed via online platforms or phone, while tests of data collection technologies may require work in an in-person modality. The choice of collection procedures will also consider the relevant methodological literature and Federal guidance and practices. Statistical results will generally be limited to response rates, item nonresponse rates, frequency distributions of data items, reliability estimates, and analysis of behavior coding and respondent debriefing data. More specific information about data collection procedures will be contained in the description provided to OMB at the time each questionnaire is submitted.

3. Methods to Maximize Response

In general, callbacks will be used to maximize response rates in personal visits or telephone field tests; reminder phone calls, letters, e-mail messages, or second questionnaires will be used to maximize response rates in group administration, mail, and internet surveys. For cognitive interviews and focus groups, participants may be provided with a token of appreciation for their time and effort consistent with OMB guidelines. Reminder phone calls and/or e-mail messages to participants will be used to encourage them to keep their appointments. Tallies will be kept of the number of non-respondents to all testing activities. More specific information will be contained in the description provided to OMB at the time each questionnaire is submitted.

4. Testing of Procedures

This entire submission consists of tests of quantitative and/or qualitative data collection instruments and survey/assessment procedures and materials. We expect that all the tests conducted under this clearance will result in more refined and clearer questionnaires and/or procedures and thus reduce respondent burden while improving data quality.

5. Contacts for Statistical Aspects and Data Collection

IMLS staff will have the primary responsibility for data collection and analysis, and depending on the nature of the research, may seek outside advice on statistical aspects of individual surveys as the testing program proceeds. Each specific research project will also determine whether the data will be collected by IMLS or by a contractor. Contact persons for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design will be provided to OMB at the time each questionnaire is submitted.

6. Individuals Responsible for Study Design and Performance

The following individuals are responsible for the study design and data collection and analysis.

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