

Recruitment & Data Collection Materials for the RECS Research Use Study

About this Document

As part of the Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) Research Use study, the AIR team will conduct a survey and virtual focus groups with individuals who attend RECS 2024 (referred to as “attendees”).

This document includes communication materials that the study team will use to (A) invite and remind all RECS attendees to participate in the survey and (B) invite, remind, and thank focus group participants.

A. Survey Data Collection

1. **Survey Invite.** Following OMB approval, all conference attendees will receive an email inviting them to participate in the survey. The email will include a link to the survey. Based on the anticipated timeline for OMB approval, this invite will be sent in early August.
2. **Reminder Emails:**
 - i. **Survey Reminder Email 1.** Survey recipients who have not completed the survey will receive a reminder one week after receiving the survey invitation.
 - ii. **Survey Reminder Email 2.** Survey recipients who have not completed the survey will receive a reminder two days before the survey is closed. The survey will be closed 2 weeks after the initial survey invite is emailed to RECS attendees.

B. Focus Group Data Collection

1. **Focus Group Invite.** Following OMB approval and three weeks before the focus group, the study team will invite select attendees to participate in the focus group. This email will include the meeting link, time, and date. We plan to convene up to four focus groups, one focus group per attendee segment (diversifying segments on the basis of attendee professional affiliation and mode of RECS attendance). We will include up to six participants in each focus group, for a total of 24 participants. Based on the anticipated timeline for OMB approval, this invite will be sent in early August.
2. **Focus Group Non-Invite.** RECS attendees who expressed an interest in participating in a focus group but were not selected will be sent an email thanking them for their interest and letting them know that they have not been selected for participation.
3. **Focus Group Invite Reminder.** Five days after the focus group invitation is emailed to select attendees, those who do not confirm the status of their attendance will receive a reminder asking them to confirm their attendance.
4. **Focus Group Reminder.** One day prior to the focus group, the study team will send the participants a reminder about the focus group.

5. **Thank you Email.** Within two days after the focus group, the study team will send the participants a thank you email, which will include details to receive their honoraria.

Materials

Notes about Materials. Content highlighted in yellow indicates placeholder text that will be replaced with the relevant text (e.g., potential participant name, date). Content highlighted in green indicates documents that will be attached. Text that is *italicized and in brackets* represent notes to the AIR team and will not be included in the emails sent to interested participants. Content in blue boxes provides contextual information for emails about follow-up calendar invitations and will not be included in emails sent to participants.

A. Survey Data Collection Communication Materials

1. **Survey Invite.** All conference attendees will receive an email inviting them to participate in the survey. The email will include a link to the survey.

Timing of sending survey invite: Following OMB approval (tentatively in early August 2024)

From: RECS Inbox (via Vovici)

To: All RECS 2024 Attendees

Subject: You're Invited! RECS 2024 Research Use Survey

Email body:

Dear [first name of RECS attendee],

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE)—the office that convenes the Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS)—has contracted with [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#) to conduct a pilot study to understand whether and how RECS attendees use what they learned at the conference.

You are invited to participate in a 10-minute survey because you registered for RECS this year. This survey is different than the evaluation you may have completed immediately after the conference. This survey will ask a bit about you, your goals for attending the conference, your learning experience at the conference, and if and how you've been able to use what you learned at RECS. **The information you provide will help OPRE identify ways to improve the learning experience for future attendees.**

Interested in participating? Complete this 10-minute survey [this link will direct participants to the survey in Vovici – see Instrument I. Post-RECS Data Collection Survey Questions for survey items] **by [insert date that is two weeks from the date this survey is emailed to participants].** Please do not share the link below with anyone else as the link is unique to you.

Why did I get this invitation?

- AIR is conducting data collection (including surveys and focus groups) with individuals who attended RECS 2024.
- You received this invitation to participate in the survey because you registered for RECS 2024.

What does the survey involve?

- The survey is being conducted online. You will need access to a computer or laptop and a stable internet connection to participate.
- The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

Do I have to participate?

- Your participation is voluntary. This means that you do not have to participate or answer any questions you do not want to.
- Your decision to participate and what you share in the survey will not affect your access to Administration for Children and Families services or future conferences in any way.
- All responses will be kept private to the extent permitted by law. The study team will not use your name in any reports. They will also only use the information for the purposes of this project.

Who is AIR?

- AIR is an independent, nonprofit research organization.
- AIR is working with OPRE on a pilot study to understand whether and how RECS attendees use what they learn at the conference.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [the RECS Research Use Study Team](mailto:RECS@air.org) at RECS@air.org.

Best,

[AIR Team Signature]

2. **Reminder Emails.** Reminder emails will be sent to survey recipients who have not completed their survey at two points to encourage participation.
- a. **Survey Reminder Email 1.** Survey recipients who have not completed the survey will receive a reminder two weeks after receiving the survey invite.

Timing of sending recruitment email: One week after the initial survey invite is emailed.

From: RECS Inbox (via Vovici)

To: RECS 2024 Attendees who have not completed the survey

Subject: Reminder: RECS 2024 Research Use Survey

Email body:

Dear [first name of RECS attendee],

On [date that survey invite was sent] you received an email inviting you to participate in a 10-minute survey. We are reaching out to you with a friendly reminder to complete this survey via the link below as soon as possible and no later than [survey closing date]. Please do not share the link below with anyone else as the link is unique to you.

Survey Link: [link will direct participants to the survey in Vovici – see Instrument I. Post-RECS Data Collection Survey Questions for survey items]

This survey is part of a Research Use Study initiated by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) to understand how Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) attendees use what they learn at the conference. The study, conducted by the [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#), aims to develop an in-depth understanding of conference attendee goals, their learning experience at RECS, and whether and how they use information shared at RECS after the conference.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [the](#) RECS Research Use Study Team at RECS@air.org.

Sincerely,

[AIR Team Signature]

- b. **Survey Reminder Email 2.** Survey recipients who have not completed the survey will receive a reminder two days before the survey period closes.

Timing of sending recruitment email: 1.5 weeks after the initial survey invite is emailed.

From: RECS Inbox (via Vovici)

To: RECS 2024 Attendees who have not completed the survey

Subject: Final Reminder: RECS 2024 Research Use Survey

Email body:

Dear [first name of RECS attendee],

On [date that survey invite was sent] you received an email inviting you to participate in a 10-minute survey. We are reaching out to you with a friendly and final reminder to complete this survey via the link below as soon as possible and no later than [survey closing date]. Please do not share the link below with anyone else as the link is unique to you.

Survey Link: [link will direct participants to the survey in Vovici - see Instrument I. Post-RECS Data Collection Survey Questions for survey items]

This survey is part of a Research Use Study initiated by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) to understand how Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) attendees use what they learn at the conference. The study, conducted by the [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#), aims to develop an in-depth understanding of conference attendee goals, their learning experience at RECS, and whether and how they use information shared at RECS after the conference.

If you have any questions, please reach out to [the](#) RECS Research Use Study Team at RECS@air.org.

Sincerely,

[AIR Team Signature]

B. Focus Group Data Collection Communication Materials

1. **Invitation to Focus Group.** Following OMB approval, the study team will make invitations to select individuals who have expressed interest in participating in a focus group. This email will include the meeting link, time, and date.

Timing of sending focus group invitation: After OMB approval (tentatively in early August 2024) and 3 weeks before focus group

From: RECS Inbox

To: RECS attendees who expressed an interest in participating in a focus group and meet the selection criteria

Subject: Invitation to Participate in RECS Research Use Focus Group on [insert date between July 22 and Aug 2]

Attachment(s): [Informed Consent Form](#)

Email body:

Dear [recipient's name],

Thank you for previously indicating interest in participating in a focus group about your learning experience at RECS 2024. The purpose of this email is to share the focus group timing and logistics and confirm your availability to participate.

Background

As you may recall, the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) has contracted with [American Institutes for Research \(AIR\)](#) to conduct a pilot study to understand whether and how Research and Evaluation Conference on Self-Sufficiency (RECS) attendees use what they learn at the conference.

Following up on your expression of interest in this study's focus groups, we would like to invite you to participate in a 90-minute virtual focus group. During this focus group we will ask you about your goals for attending RECS, learning experience at RECS 2024, and whether and how you have been able to use what you learned at the conference. **The information you provide will help OPRE identify ways to improve the learning**

experience for future attendees. *As a thank you, AIR will offer each focus group participant a \$100 honorarium.*

Focus Group Timing and Logistics

Here are the details about your focus group:

Day, Date: [day, date in the mm/dd/yyyy format]

Time: [xxx with time zone]

[Click Here to Join the Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting Link: [placeholder]

Meeting ID: [placeholder]

We will follow up with a calendar invite shortly.

Are You Still Willing and Available to Participate? We've saved you a seat in this virtual conversation and can't wait to speak with you. Please respond to this email by [insert date that's 4 days after the sent date of this email] to let us know if you are interested and available to participate in this focus group.

Not Interested or Cannot Participate? Please respond to this email to let us know if you are no longer interested in or available to participate in this focus group.

I have attached an informed consent form, which summarizes the goal of this study and your rights as a participant.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

[AIR Team Signature]

CALENDAR INVITATION: Within 24 hours of this invitation email being sent, we will send the participant a calendar invitation for the scheduled day and time. We will include the meeting link and attach the informed consent form.

2. **Focus Group Non-Invite.** RECS attendees who expressed an interest in participating in a focus group but were not selected will be sent an email thanking them for their interest and letting them know that they have not been selected for participation.

Timing of sending focus group invitation: One week before first focus group is conducted

From: RECS Inbox

To: RECS attendees who expressed interest in participating in the focus group but were not selected.

Subject: RECS Research Use Focus Group: Thank you for your interest

Email body:

Dear [recipient's name],

Thank you for previously indicating interest in participating in a focus group about your learning experience at RECS 2024. Focus group participants were selected on the basis of their professional affiliation and mode of RECS attendance. Due to limited focus group capacity, we are writing to you to let you know that you have not been selected to participate in the focus group. We truly appreciate your willingness to support this research.

Best,

[AIR Team Signature]

3. **Focus Group Invite Reminder.** One week after the focus group invitation is emailed to select attendees, those who do not confirm the status of their attendance will receive a reminder asking them to confirm their attendance.

Timing of sending focus group invitation: One week after the focus group invitation has been emailed to participants

From: RECS Inbox

To: RECS attendees who were emailed the focus group invitation but have not informed AIR of the status of their focus group participation.

Subject: Response Requested: Invitation to Participate in RECS Research Use Focus Group on [insert DATE]

Attachment(s): Informed Consent Form

Email body:

Dear [recipient's name],

On [date that focus group invite was sent] you received an email inviting you to participate in a 90-minute virtual focus group. **The information you provide will help the conference organizers identify ways to improve the learning experience for future RECS attendees.** As a thank you, AIR will offer each focus group participant a \$100 honorarium.

We have saved you a seat in a virtual focus group on:

Day, Date: [day, date in the mm/dd/yyyy format]

Time: [xxx with time zone]

[Click Here to Join the Zoom Meeting](#)

Meeting Link: [placeholder]

Meeting ID: [placeholder]

Please respond to this email by [insert date that's 2 days after the sent date of this email] to let us know if you are still interested and available to participate in this focus group. Alternatively, please respond to this email to let us know if you are no longer interested or available.

I have **attached an informed consent form**, which summarizes the goal of this study and your rights as a participant.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

[AIR Team Signature]

4. **Focus Group Reminder.** One day before the focus group, the study team will send the participant a reminder email.

Timing of sending focus group reminder: one day before the focus group

From: RECS Inbox

To: Focus Group Participant

Subject: Reminder: RECS Research Use Focus Group

Attachment(s): Informed Consent Form

Email body:

Dear [first name of focus group participant],

We look forward to speaking with you tomorrow about your experience and use of what you learned at RECS 2024! As a friendly reminder, the focus group with AIR has been scheduled for [tomorrow/Monday, <Date> at XX:XX time zone]. Join the focus group by clicking on this link: [meeting link].

The focus group will last up to 90 minutes and will be conducted online via Zoom. You will need access to a computer or laptop and a stable internet connection to participate.

If you are no longer able to attend the focus group, please let us know by responding to this email.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,

[AIR Team Signature]

5. **Thank you Email.** Within two days after the focus group, the AIR team will send the participants a thank you email.

Timing of sending focus group reminder: Within 2 days of the focus group

From: RECS Inbox

To: Focus Group Participant

Subject: Thank you for attending the RECS Research Use Study Focus Group

Attachment(s): Honoraria

Email body:

Dear [participant name],

On behalf of the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, thank you for participating in the *RECS Research Use Study Focus Groups*.

The session provided valuable information for OPRE staff on ways to enhance the learning experience of RECS attendees in future conferences. We are grateful for your time and contributions to the discussion.

In appreciation of your participation in this session, we are offering a \$100 honorarium to each participant. If you choose to **access your honorarium, please follow the instructions in the message attached to this email.**

If you have any additional thoughts to share, or questions, please email [project inbox].

Thank you,

[AIR Team Signature]