

**Generic Information Collection Request:
Communications Research for Annual Integrated Economic Survey**

Request: The Census Bureau plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725) for the Annual Integrated Economic Survey (AIES).

The Annual Integrated Economic Survey (AIES) is a re-engineered survey designed to integrate and replace seven annual business surveys into a streamlined single survey. It is designed to be easier for businesses to complete, result in better and more timely data, and allow the Census Bureau to operate more efficiently. The AIES replaces the following surveys: Annual Capital Expenditures Survey (ACES), Annual Retail Trade Survey (ARTS), Annual Survey of Manufactures (ASM), Annual Wholesale Trade Survey (AWTS), Manufacturers' Unfilled Orders Survey (M3UFO), Report of Organization (COS), and Service Annual Survey (SAS). Statistics that the AIES produces include capital expenditures, employment, expenses, inventories, payroll, and sales, shipments, receipts, or revenue.

For more information about the AIES: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/aies.html>.

The Census Bureau would like to test revised emails requesting and reminding businesses to participate in the AIES. Staff from the Data Collection Methodology & Research Branch (DCMRB) within the Economic Statistical Methods Division (ESMD) and the Office of the Division Chief within the Economy-Wide Statistics Division (EWD) of the Census Bureau will be conducting moderated testing regarding AIES communications materials.

Purpose: The results of this study will be used to determine the communications materials that will be used for the AIES. Researchers will assess how respondents comprehend the survey communications and the effectiveness of those communications.

This project will explore the following research questions:

- What are respondents' impressions of the AIES communication materials?
- Are the messages in these materials motivating?
- Is it clear that respondents are being asked to respond to a mandatory survey?
- Do respondents have any concerns about confidentiality and data security?
- Is there any information missing from the communication materials that respondents need?
- Is there anything else that should be included in the communication materials to motivate response?

Population of Interest: U.S. companies, across a variety of sizes, industries, and locations that are not in sample for the 2024 AIES.

Timeline: Testing will run from June through August 2025.

Language: Testing will be conducted in English only.

Method: The method of research will be moderated testing. These interviews will be conducted via Microsoft Teams.

Sample: We plan to conduct two rounds of testing, with up to 15 moderated interviews per round. The sample size necessary for this test was determined by qualitative research experience. This sample will yield a suitable, broad representation of U.S. businesses for this research, and it should be large enough to provide reactions to the communications to identify meaningful findings. Participants will be informed that participation in this research is voluntary.

Recruitment: Participants will be recruited from the Business Register. Before answering the questionnaire, participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential under Title 13. Respondents will be recruited via email.

Communications Materials: The interview protocol is enclosed. We anticipate that the moderated interviews (see Attachment A) will take about 45 minutes per session.

Use of Incentive: Monetary incentives for participation will not be offered.

Below is a list of materials to be used in the current study:

1. **Attachment A:** Interview Protocol
2. **Attachment B:** Consent Form for Interviews
3. **Attachment C:** Data Visualizations
4. **Attachment D:** Initial Email
5. **Attachment E:** Reminder Email
6. **Attachment F:** Nudge Email
7. **Attachment G:** Final Email
8. **Attachment H:** Recruitment Email for Interviews

Burden Estimate: We expect that each interview will last no more than 45 minutes (30 participants * 45 minutes = 22 hours and 30 minutes). To recruit participants, we expect to reach out via email up to two times per completed case. The emails are expected to take on average three minutes to read and act upon (Two email contacts per completed case * 30 cases * three minutes per case = three). The total burden estimate is 25 hours and 30 minutes.

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

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