

Peace Corps
OMB Control Number 0420-0575
Supporting Statement-Peace Corps National Survey of U.S. Adults

PART B. COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Respondent Universe, Sampling Method, and Response Rate

The respondent universe for this study includes all residents of the United States who are age 18 years or older. This universe is estimated at 249,502,946 individuals (the total US population minus the 27% who are minors), based on U.S. Census population estimates from July 1, 2025 (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US#PST045221>). The sample will be drawn primarily by the contractor. It includes approximately 60,000 average monthly active adult individuals who fit the study’s target criteria. Therefore, the number of individuals who have the possibility of responding to this survey is 60,000. See Exhibit 1.1 for a summary.

Exhibit 1.1: Sampling Universe, Sampling Frame, and Survey Sample Size*

Group	Size
Respondent universe	249,502,946
Panel sample (active monthly)	60,000
Survey invitations estimated	6,200
Survey completes expected	3,200

** Estimate is for each wave of the survey. Survey to be completed twice.*

Sampling will be done primarily through the contractor’s proprietary panels designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. By default, and for this study, the contractor uses non-probability sampling, aiming to use sampling best practices defined by the industry and AAPOR, ARF, & ESOMAR such as stratified random sampling, quotas on completes in field, and if needed, weighting on the back end to help approximate as closely as possible a probability-based approach.

The contractor may have its own supply of samples. In addition, the contractor may partner with many different types of external suppliers to source sample when needed to fulfil project requirements. This includes other traditional research panels, reward/loyalty communities, intercept/offer wall providers, and sample exchanges. The contractor may access respondents directly through social media platforms.

The demand for respondents is defined by multiple criteria, such as: sample size, response rate, target audience, incidence rate, dropout rate, and exclusion rules.

The Agency will require that the contractor have checks and balances at three different levels:

- Internal sample → panel-level vetting

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- External sample → supplier-level vetting
- In-study validation of responses

Data quality begins with recruitment. The Agency will monitor what is happening in the contractor's industry, what works and what does not work against fraud, and to vet any external sample partners to meet our own internal criteria. Email lists, banners, website and text ads, co-registration, and search engine marketing are also used.

Panelists are only added to the panel if they meet specific quality checks:

- Unique emails identification: Panelists cannot create multiple accounts with the same email address.
- Unique contact details detection: At panel registration, respondents provide name, surname, street address, phone numbers and email address. Using this information, the contractor can identify panelist accounts that are very likely to be duplicates.
- Accounts not on the contractor's "block list" (including emails of clients, competitors, and employees) → Accounts connected to the "block list" are not allowed.
- Duplicate device detection through digital fingerprint: An external digital fingerprinting tool gathers a large number of data points from a respondent's device, such as operating system version, browser version, plug-in, etc., and assigns a relative weight to each data point. The data gathered is put through machine-learning models and algorithms to create a unique digital fingerprint of each computer. The contractor does not allow respondents to create multiple panelist accounts from the same device.
- Fraud check: A digital fingerprint supplier also assigns a fraud or risk score to all devices, using machine-learning algorithms and global identity network technologies. Respondents with high-risk scores are denied entry into the panel.
- Country Geo-IP validation: A respondent connected from an IP outside the surveyed country is not allowed to participate.
- Anonymous open proxy detection: Someone connected from an open, anonymous proxy is hiding their device identity and geo-location. This behavior is highly correlated with deliberate fraud attempts.
- Device settings and Geo-IP location validation: Certain combinations of device settings and geo-location proved to be good predictors for fraudulent behavior. These rules were implemented at panel and survey level to prevent future fraud attempts.
- Validation via CAPTCHA security code: This prevents automated registration and stop robot answers. It is applied at panel registration.
- Double opt-in email confirmation: This ensures validity of the email address provided. Respondents who want to join the panel receive a confirmation link to the email address provided. Once they click on the confirmation link, they are allowed to continue.
- SMS checks: In some markets, respondents are required to provide a mobile phone number, and they must activate their account by using a code provided via SMS.

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- Email domain validation: “Disposable email” providers (websites that generate email addresses that are available only for a few minutes or only for a limited number of messages received) are not allowed; accounts using these domains are blocked.
- Detection of anomalies and patterns in panel registration data: Accounts having multiple elements in common are inactivated. AI-based, automated procedures built and maintained in-house are employed at an early panel stage.
- Town and postal/ZIP code validated according to official lists.
- Validations between correlated questions (title and gender, age of parents and children, etc.).

The contractor will utilize multiple sample sources to support client needs. Consistent and controlled blending across multiple sample sources is a proven research practice. By blending across a defined combination of panels/sources, the contractor can ensure access to a larger pool of quality sample and maintain consistency across studies/waves. The decision on what kind of sample sources to use for a study is based on the nature of the study and what is important to research quality for that study.

The selection of sample sources for a study is made considering the nature of the project requirements and if there are any specialized operational or respondent needs. For product testing or other recruit/recall situations other third-party double-opt panels are recommended.

2. Procedures for Collection of Information

The sample for a specific study is selected from the contractor’s proprietary panels and partners using sampling strata based on age, race/ethnicity, education, gender, and sexual orientation (53 sampling strata in total). The size of the selected sample per sampling stratum is determined by the population distribution for each stratum. In addition, sample selection takes into account expected differential survey completion rates by demographic groups so that the set of panel members with a completed interview for a study is a representative sample of the target population. If panel household has one more than one active adult panel member, only one adult in the household is eligible for selection (random within-household sampling).

In this study, surveying will be conducted online. Online surveying necessitates an invitation email, which will be delivered to respondents in the panels.

Panels include a probability-based panel representative of the total U.S. population. Since the panel is not a simple random sample, a design effect reflects the multi-stage panel recruitment design, which includes subsampling of initial non-respondents in the non-response follow-up stage. The margin of error for a 50% statistic at the 95% confidence level would be +/- 4.1 percentage points. The sampling margin of error decreases for survey statistics below or greater

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than 50%. Therefore, the sampling margin of error estimate of +/-4.1 percentage points is a conservative estimate of the margin of error.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with No Response

Participants in this study are registered with the contractor and will be offered survey choice “reward points” to redeem for prizes, which are commonly provided to survey panel respondents who complete online surveys. The points will be provided by the online panel provider to respondents who complete the survey. This is part of the business model of the online panel provider.

All panel-based research organizations, whether probability-based or non-probability, motivate panel members to continue participating in the surveys through an internal rewards program. Relatively small amounts of points are used for panel surveys based on an understanding of what would keep the participants engaged and motivated to obtain maximum retention of panelists and survey participation. For this particular study, points worth \$4-\$12 will be awarded to panelists for completing the survey.

Panelists who do not respond to the initial survey invitation may receive up to two reminders emphasizing the importance of their participation.

The contractor will calculate non-response rates and carry out a non-response bias analysis following the guidelines in Standard 3.2 of the OMB Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys. The contractor will assess and measure non-response bias by evaluating the demographic and geographic representativeness of the survey participants compared to the Current Population Survey (CPS) population benchmarks. For this study, the contractor will use non-probability sampling, aiming to use sampling best practices defined by the industry, such as stratified random sampling, quotas on completes in field, and if needed, weighting on the back end to help approximate as closely as possible a probability-based approach. And as such, calculating response rates is difficult to achieve across varying sample sources.

4. Tests of Procedures or Methods to Be Undertaken

The survey will be tested and reviewed thoroughly both before and after initial deployment. After the survey is programmed, the programming team will conduct quality control reviews to ensure the work is error-free; then, the Agency will review the study again for quality and accuracy. In its testing, the contractor will test for missing survey components; incorrect or missing survey or question routing logic; inaccuracy in conveying initial instructions for programming, misspellings, poor formatting, language or content that may be confusing when displayed on the screen for online survey takers; and phrasing that may be unclear or convoluted.

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After testing has been completed and any corrections or revisions made, the contractor will deploy the survey to a subset of the total sample size before suspending the survey progress to allow for the checking of the raw data files. This pause after “soft launch” typically occurs at 10% of survey completes. At this point, all teams will review the raw data question by question to ensure programming and logic is displaying correct questions to correct audiences (where applicable), all questions have proper base sizes, and there are no highly unusual initial findings to suggest that a question needs rephrasing or clarification. Once this soft launch review has been completed, the Agency will authorize deployment of the survey to the remaining sample.

5. Individuals Consulted On Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

Below lists the project team members consulted on aspects of research design and, separately, those who will be collecting and analyzing the data.

- Peace Corps is responsible for oversight of the contractor overseeing the research.

The Peace Corps and the contractor will neither collect data from nor interact with research participants. No individual identifiers will be linkable to collected data, and no individually identifiable private information will be shared with or accessible by Peace Corps. See Exhibit 5.1 for a summary.

Exhibit 5.1: Statistical Consultants and Project Team Members

Team Member	Organization	Phone	Email
Mary Linnell-Simmons	Peace Corps	202-948-5004	mlinnellsimmons@peacecorps.gov