

Date of Approval: 10/01/2024
Questionnaire Number: 1550

Basic Information/Executive Summary

What is the name of your project (system, database, pilot, product, survey, social media site, etc.)?

2024 Customer Experience, Expectations and Needs (CEEN) Focus Groups

Business Unit

Small Business and Self Employed

Preparer

For Official Use Only

Subject Matter Expert

For Official Use Only

Program Manager

For Official Use Only

Designated Executive Representative

For Official Use Only

Executive Sponsor

For Official Use Only

Executive Summary: Provide a clear and concise description of your project and how it will allow the IRS to achieve its mission.

The Small Business/Self Employed (SB/SE) organization conducts a variety of customer satisfaction surveys to obtain satisfaction ratings and taxpayer feedback on various aspects of the taxpayer's experience; all the current SB/SE surveys occur after an interaction with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) such as closure of an exam or collection action. These focus groups pertain to the full-scale annual survey, Customer Experience, Expectations, and Needs Survey (CEEN) which goes beyond the existing surveys by including SB/SE taxpayer who may or may not have had previous contact with the IRS. By measuring the tax experience of all SB/SE taxpayers, the survey will capture a large segment of the population that existing surveys miss. The focus groups that pertain to CEEN help gather insights and feedback from a similar group of people about a topic of interest that will pertain to a future CEEN survey.

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Will this project use, collect, receive, display, store, maintain, or disseminate any type of Sensitive but Unclassified (SBU), Personally Identifiable Information (PII), or Federal Tax Information (FTI)?

Yes

Please explain in detail how this project uses sensitive data from inception to destruction (data lifecycle).

Sensitive data is provided from contractor to Internal Revenue Service (IRS), transmitted electronically through IRS transfer method. If/when encrypted, password is provided by separate contact method than the data file. Data is stored on internal servers of IRS. Contractor houses data internal to them only with read-only, moderate level access.

Please select all types of Sensitive but Unclassified data (SBU)/Personally Identifiable Information (PII)/Federal Tax Information (FTI) that this project uses.

Address

Email Address

Employment Information

Federal Tax Information (FTI)

Language

Name

Telephone Numbers

Cite the authority for collecting SBU/PII/FTI (including SSN if relevant).

PII for federal tax administration - generally IRC Sections 6001 6011 or 6012

Product Information (Questions)

1.1 Is this survey a result of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)?

No

1.13 What is your research method(s) used (i.e., survey, telephone interview, focus group, etc.)?

Focus group

1.14 Is this a new survey, telephone interview, focus group, or usability testing? Throughout the rest of this questionnaire, we will use the term "survey" to include all of these.

Yes

1.19 Which Business Unit (BU) is requesting this survey?

SB/SE

1.21 Who will the survey be administered to?

Respondents will be selected from the National Research Opinion Center's (NORC) AmeriSpeak Panel. The AmeriSpeak panel is a probability-based panel that represents the U.S. household population, from which eligible small business and self-employed taxpayers will be surveyed.

1.22 Will this survey be administered for one year with multiple events (1-year expiration)?

Yes

1.22 What is the start date?

10/28/2024

1.22 Is this a reoccurring survey?

No

1.23 What is the end date?

12/12/2024

2.11 Will the survey capture any type of PII or is PII (names, addresses, email addresses, etc.) used to select participants?

Yes

2.12 If any PII data is collected, disclosed, or studied on individuals who choose not to participate, please describe the data.

PII is not collected for those who do not choose to participate.

2.13 List any linkable data that the survey uses, collects, receives, displays, stores, maintains, or disseminates (gender, ethnicity, parts of address, tax filing information, etc.) or uses to select participants?

Third party contractor will collect data such as tax filing information, language used or preferred, employment status and years of employment. Respondents will be selected from the National Research Opinion Center's (NORC) AmeriSpeak Panel. The AmeriSpeak panel is a probability-based panel that represents the U.S. household population, from which eligible small business and self-employed taxpayers will be surveyed.

2.14 Explain how the participants are selected. Include a detailed description. Please provide your research plan as supporting documentation.

The contractor will include the entire NORC AmeriSpeak Panel for the selection of the probability sample of small business owners and self-employed taxpayers who have received a notice from the IRS within the last five years. The focus

group target is approximately 25 completes utilizing a sample of approximately 950.

2.15 How are the participants notified (letter, postcard, email, etc.) of the survey, and if the survey is voluntary/optional, how is notice given? If it is not voluntary, please explain why it is mandatory.

Participant is notified via email that a volunteer opportunity is available to them. Notice of optional group participation is provided at the initial contact as well as at the start of the focus group.

3.11 What tool(s) is/are used to conduct the survey? Please indicate if the anonymous feature has been set for the survey, if applicable.

Focus group is completed utilizing virtual conference platform, such as Microsoft Teams.

3.12 Will the survey be audio-recorded or video-recorded?

Yes

3.13 Provide the consent method and statement.

Statement is provided in moderator guide.

- Your participation in this session is entirely voluntary. You have been invited here to offer your views and opinions, so everyone's participation is important. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer but please keep in mind there are no wrong answers.
- This session will be recorded. This allows us to capture everything that is being said today. We will include a summary of this discussion, and potentially some quotes as well, in a report to our client. However, we will not tie your name to anything specific you say.

4.11 Does this survey retrieve information by any personal identifier for an individual who is a U.S. citizen, or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence? If the answer is Yes, you must have at least one SORN name and number selected in the SORNs section.

No

4.12 The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC § 552a(e)(3)) requires each agency that maintains a system of records to inform each individual requested to supply information about themselves. Do survey participants provide information about themselves?

No

4.14 Does the IRS administer (conduct) the survey?

No

4.21 If a contractor administers (conducts) and analyzes the survey, is all work performed and contained in the United States?

Yes

4.22 How does the administrator of the survey protect employees' or taxpayers' SBU/PII from compromise, loss, theft, or disclosure?

Sensitive IRS data resides on a secure server and the contractor uses the appropriate encryption to secure the data. The encryption method will be disk, director or file level. Workstations that access and require working with sensitive data located on the secure server use the appropriate encryption method. The contractor utilizes a secure server to house the projects, and it is protected inside of ICF's Login Protected Network that can only be accessed by the contractor authorized personnel.

4.23 Where and how is the PII stored and protected?

Sensitive IRS data resides on a secure server and the contractor uses the appropriate encryption to secure the data. The encryption method will be disk, director or file level. Workstations that access and require working with sensitive data located on the secure server use the appropriate encryption method. The contractor utilizes a secure server to house the projects, and it is protected inside of ICF's Login Protected Network that can only be accessed by the contractor's authorized personnel.

4.24 Provide the Cyber Security approved security and encryption used when data is transferred electronically from the IRS to contractors and back to the IRS.

Data is transferred through electronic method from contractor to IRS. PII such as name, address, telephone or email are not transferred to IRS. IRS does not send information to the contractor.

4.25 How is the survey PII protected and stored when it is housed at a contractor site on contractor computers? Provide a detailed explanation of the physical and electronic security and protection of the data before, during and after the survey.

Sensitive IRS data resides on a secure server and the contractor uses the appropriate encryption to secure the data. The encryption method will be disk, director or file level. Workstations that access and require working with sensitive data located on the secure server use the appropriate encryption method. The contractor utilizes a secure server to house the projects, and it is protected inside of ICF's Login Protected Network that can only be accessed by the contractor's authorized personnel.

4.26 Has a Contracting Officer or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) verified the contract included privacy and security clauses for data protection and that all contractors have signed non-disclosure agreements which are on file with the COR?

Yes

4.27 Identify the roles and their access level to the PII data.

Contractor users, managers, developers and system administrators have moderate background investigation levels with read-only access to data.

4.28 Explain the precautions taken to ensure the survey results will not be used for any other purpose not listed in the Detailed Business Purpose and Need section and to ensure that employees or taxpayers who participate in the survey cannot be identified or re-identified under any circumstances and no adverse actions taken.

Contractor does not transmit PII to IRS. Data collected from previous CEEN survey to solicit focus group volunteers are only used for such. Contractor (ICF) and IRS take care to ensure no PII is transmitted to ensure the anonymity of survey participation. Statement is outlined in the "ground rules" of the focus group that everything said will be kept confidential to extent of the law; use first names in the group, however no names are provided in the report; participating is volunteer, and no right/wrong answers. Moderator invites all opinions and differing ones for a healthy conversation.

4.28 Identify the roles and their access level to the PII data and indicate whether their background investigation is complete or not.

Contractor conducts internal background checks which are completed prior to project start. Contractor has - User, Manager, Developer and System Administrator - read only, moderate access level.

4.29 Does the administrator of the survey have access to information identifying participants?

Yes

5.11 For employee or taxpayer satisfaction surveys explain how you have ensured that no "raw" or unaggregated employee or taxpayer data will be provided to any IRS office.

Focus groups are held by the contractor. Contractor compiles data and provides a summary only to the IRS. Summary report is given to ensure anonymity. No PII is transmitted to IRS.

5.13 Does the individual about whom the information was collected or maintained expressly authorize its collection/maintenance?

Yes

Interfaces

Interface Type

IRS or Treasury Contractor

Agency Name

ICF

Incoming/Outgoing
Incoming (Receiving)
Transfer Method
Electronic File Transfer Utility (EFTU)

Systems of Records Notices (SORNs)

SORN Number & Name

IRS 00.003 - Taxpayer Advocate Service and Customer Feedback
and Survey Records

Describe the IRS use and relevance of this SORN.

To improve quality of service by tracking customer feedback
(including complaints and compliments), and to analyze trends and
to take corrective action on systemic problems.

Records Retention

What is the Record Schedule System?

General Record Schedule (GRS)

What is the retention series title?

Public Customer Service Records

What is the GRS/RCS Item Number?

6.5, item 010

What type of Records is this for?

Electronic

Please provide a brief description of the chosen GRS or RCS item.

Records from operating a customer call center or service center
providing services to the public. Services may address a wide
variety of topics such as understanding agency mission-specific
functions or how to resolve technical difficulties with external-
facing systems or programs.

What is the disposition schedule?

Temporary. Destroy 1 year after resolved, or when no longer
needed for business use, whichever is appropriate

Data Locations

What type of site is this?

Shared Drive

What is the name of the Shared Drive?

SBSE Team 4 Shared Drive

What is the sensitivity of the Shared Drive?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Shared Drive.

IRS provided Team 4 Shared Drive

What are the incoming connections to this Shared Drive?

Raw data is not provided for focus groups. Focus groups are summarized into a report by the contractor. IRS research team uses this drive to share data within the team. Data is transferred from EFTU, a contractor-IRS tool then IRS employees move any data to the shared drive.