

Survey PCLIA ID Number: 4898
Date of Approval: April 06, 2020

SURVEY DESCRIPTION

Full name and acronym of the Survey.

EITC Assistant Initial User Testing - Spring 2020, EITC - UT - Spring 2020

Type of Survey:

Survey

Note: the remaining questions will be simplified to refer to *the Survey* but still apply to Telephone Interview or Focus Group. If Telephone Interview or Focus Group, a copy of Interview Questions or the Moderator's Guide will be requested by the Privacy Analyst.

Is this a new Survey?

Yes

Is this a reoccurring Survey?

No

Provide the dates collection of information will begin and end:

Data collection will begin and end in April 2020

Does this survey have an SOI (Statistics of Income) control number?

No

Does the Information Collection Request require OMB clearance?

No

GENERAL BUSINESS PURPOSE

What is the general business purpose of this Survey? Provide a clear, concise description of the Survey, the reason for the Survey, and the benefits to the IRS mission.

Improve the overall quality of the taxpayer experience for those who use the EITC Assistant on IRS.gov. Specific objectives include: 1. Determine if the current EITC Assistant is meeting taxpayer needs, 2. Obtain qualitative feedback to understand how taxpayers think about the EITC Assistant before, during and after use, 3. Learn how taxpayers interpret results from the EITC Assistant.

PII DETAILS

Is Personally Identifiable Information (PII) used, collected, received, displayed, stored, maintained, or disseminated in the Survey; or is PII used to select participants? (i.e. names, addresses, email addresses, etc.)?

Yes

Please specify the types of PII:

Name
Phone Numbers
E-mail Address
Photographic Identifiers
Biometric Identifiers
Tax Account Information

Are there other types of PII collected in the Survey?

Yes

Describe the other types of PII that are applicable to this Survey:

During participant screening, tax filing habits, internet usage patterns, marital status, homeownership status, number of dependents, age, ethnicity, gender, and income range are collected. All of these data elements are aggregated and de-identified. In person testing participants will be observed real-time during the test sessions. Audio and video recordings of the test sessions will be produced. The recordings are used exclusively for post-testing analysis. They are created and stored on a local device and are not shared with anyone outside of the Booz Allen Hamilton research team or User Works facilitation lab. No transcripts are produced. The moderator from Booz Allen Hamilton reviews the recordings to cover gaps in his/her notes and to collect quotes for the final report. The quotes, which are de-identified, bring the research findings to life and remind readers that the designs will ultimately be seen and used by real people. Remote testing participants computer screens and audio will be recorded. Audio and video recordings of the test sessions will be produced. The recordings are used exclusively for post-testing analysis. They are created and stored on a local device and are not shared with anyone outside of the Booz Allen Hamilton research team. No transcripts are produced. The moderator from Booz Allen Hamilton reviews the recordings to cover gaps in his/her notes and to collect quotes for the final report. The quotes, which are de-identified, bring the research findings to life and remind readers that the designs will ultimately be seen and used by real people.

Is any PII data collected, disclosed, or studied on employees, taxpayers, stakeholders or other individuals who choose not to participate?

Yes

PRIVACY ACT & SYSTEM OF RECORDS

Is there a System of Records Notice(s) or SORN(s) that addresses the PII records in this Survey?

Yes

Enter the SORN number(s) and the complete name of the SORN(s):

IRS 00.001 Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files

IRS 10.004 Stakeholder Relationship Management and Subject Files

PRIVACY ACT NOTICE

Based on the information you have provided, does the Survey require a Privacy Act Notice to be provided to the participants?

Yes

Please provide the Privacy Act Statement:

The authority requesting the information is 5 USC 301. The primary purpose of asking for the information is to determine steps the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) can take to improve our services to you. We are interested in collecting trends on the taxpayer experience, and individual responses will never be singled out. Please also note, that your results are anonymous, and reported as a summary of everyone we talk to. The information may be disclosed as authorized by the routine uses published for the following Privacy Act System of Records: (1) IRS 00.001 Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files, and (2) IRS 10.004 Stakeholder Relationship Management and Subject Files. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to exit the session at any time. While we would like the benefit of your insight to improve our website and service to you, there are not adverse consequences to you to not taking the survey. This interview should take approximately 30 minutes.

RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INCOMING PII INTERFACES

Does the employee/taxpayer PII come from the IRS, Treasury, or other Government system(s), application(s) or data base(s)?

No

Does the data come from other sources?

Yes

Describe the source of the information:

Taxpayer information will be collected by UserWorks, a third-party vendor who will be responsible for handling recruitment and scheduling of participants for in-person and remote usability test sessions.

PII SENT TO EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

Are the Survey results disclosed to any other Federal or State Government? (For example, the Federal Viewpoint Survey/Questionnaire - OPM gets the results.)

No

Are any external resources used to create the database of the participants?

No

SURVEY PARTICIPATION

Who will the Survey be administered to?

Taxpayers

Explain how participants are selected. Include a detailed description of the method and reason of selection. If selection is random, please explain.

Participants are recruited from a database maintained by UserWorks. All participants have voluntarily opted into a number of potential market research studies. Participants for this survey must: 1. Be at least 18 years of age. 2. Have filed taxes at least once in the past three years. 3. Have either wage/salary income or collect a pension in which federal income taxes are withheld.

How are participants notified of the Survey?

A "call for participants" email will be sent by UserWorks (a third-party recruitment vendor) to individuals who have previously participated in UserWorks recruitment efforts and meet the study requirements. Those who are interested will be asked to complete a screener questionnaire via email or by phone by UserWorks. The remote or in-person interviews will be schedule over email or by phone by UserWorks.

Is the Survey voluntary?

Yes

How is notice given that the Survey is optional?

The "call for participants" email states that participation is voluntary. During the session, the moderator will reiterate that participation is optional within the introductory section, "thank you for participating in this study. Today's session will take approximately 30-45 minutes. Participation in this study is voluntary and can be terminated at any time with no risk of penalty".

How will the Survey be conducted?

Web Based

Explain the procedure:

Remote usability tests will be conducted via WebEx. Usability tests will be used to obtain qualitative information from participants. We will assess and gauge the usability and comprehension of the EITC Assistant and identify areas for improvements. At the scheduled date and time, the Booz Allen Hamilton moderator will speak with the respondent over a WebEx conference line. The respondent will use his/her own equipment to view and test the application over WebEx. To supplement notes taken during the session, the WebEx session may be recorded using Booz Allen's locally run software. For these remote sessions conducted over the WebEx (video and audio), observers will be able to watch the video and listen to the audio in real-time through WebEx. Participants are informed and asked to consent to being observed as part of the introduction script of the usability test moderator's guide which states, "Please note, that this study will be recorded for the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to better understand taxpayers. If you agree to be recorded, your name will not be tied to your recording. It will be purely anonymous. Do you understand these guidelines, and consent to being recorded?" At no time will the observers interact with the participant. While observers will be able to see participants on a screen, only aggregated and de-identified PII will be shared. Information about a specific participant will never be attributed to specific responses or insights. Observers will be stakeholders from both Treasury/IRS and Booz Allen: Treasury/IRS employees or their representatives who are either a) assisting with the administration of the user research activity or b) have a vested business interest in the insights from the user research activity. Booz Allen (vendor) employees who work on administering the user research activity to include the moderator, project lead, notetaker, designers, and content creator/developer. There will be up to 10 observers each from Treasury/IRS and vendor (Booz Allen). The moderator and designated notetaker will take the notes that will be used for report synthesis. Observation by stakeholders provides a number of benefits including, but not limited to, creating an empathetic connection to the taxpayer as they attempt to use a product or a website to achieve their goals; allows stakeholders to experience the participant's emotional and mental burden for themselves; and fosters collaboration and insights in order to improve the taxpayer's experience.

Other

Please explain:

UserWorks In-lab testing. At the scheduled time, the respondent will meet with the Booz Allen Hamilton moderator to test a locally run prototype. To supplement notes taken during the session, the screen and audio will be recorded using locally run software. For these in-person sessions, observers who are also on-site will be able to watch and listen from another room. Observers who are not on-site will also be able to watch the testing screen and listen in real-time through WebEx (as in the remote sessions above). Participants are informed and asked to consent to being observed. At no time will the observers interact with the participant. While observers will be able to see participants on a screen, only aggregated and de-identified PII will be shared. Information about a specific participant will never be attributed to specific responses or insights. Observers will be stakeholders from both Treasury/IRS and Booz Allen Hamilton: Treasury/IRS employees or their representatives who are either a) assisting with the administration of the user research activity or b) have a vested business interest in the insights from the user research activity. Booz Allen Hamilton (vendor)employees who work on administering the user research activity to include the moderator, project lead, notetaker, designers, and content creator/developer. There will be up to 10 observers each from Treasury/IRS and vendor (Booz Allen Hamilton). The moderator and designated notetaker will take the notes that will be used for report synthesis. Observers are provided a scoresheet to track participant behavior/responses to tasks/questions. At the end of the session, the scoresheets are collected by the vendor (Booz Allen Hamilton), not incorporated into analysis of the study and promptly destroyed as they are merely used as a technique to keep observers focused and quiet during the session. Observation by stakeholders provides a number of benefits including, but not limited to, creating an empathetic connection to the taxpayer as they attempt to use a product or a website to achieve their goals; allows stakeholders to experience the participant's emotional and mental burden for themselves; and fosters collaboration and insights in order to improve the taxpayer's experience.

SURVEY PROCESS

Does the IRS administer or perform analysis of the survey?

Neither

Does a contractor/vendor administer or perform analysis of the survey?

Both

Provide the name of the contractor/vendor:

contractor: Booz Allen Hamilton

Has a Contracting Officer or Contracting Officer's Representative (COR) verified:

That all applicable FAR requirements are met to engage a contractor to perform the survey.

Yes

That all required "non-disclosure" clauses are contained in the contract.

Yes

That all contractor employees who will have access to the data have signed non-disclosure agreements and the non-disclosure forms are on file with the COR.

Yes

What is the level of access and background investigation completed on contractor employees prior to access to PII about employees or taxpayers? Any contractor or subcontractor who will have access to the PII should have at least a "Moderate Risk" (NACIC) investigation. See Publication 4812 - Contractor Security Controls.

Contractor Users: Read-Only Moderate

INFORMATION PROTECTION

What information/results will be provided to the business owners (IRS Requestors) of the Survey?

The deliverable will be a report that highlights aggregated and de-identified user findings, insights, and recommendations to improve the EITC Assistant.

Can you confirm that employees or taxpayers who participate in the survey cannot be identified under any circumstances?

Yes

Can you confirm that no adverse actions can be taken against participants regarding the participant's answer?

Yes

For employee or taxpayer Satisfaction Surveys, can you verify that no "raw" or un-aggregated employee or taxpayer data will be provided to any IRS office?

N/A

Are there any employee or taxpayer identifiers that are obtained as a result of responding to the survey?

No

RECORDS SCHEDULE

Are the Survey records covered under the General Records Schedule (GRS), or have a National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) archivist approved a Record Control Schedule for the retention and destruction of official agency records stored in this Survey?

Yes

How long are the records required to be held under the corresponding RCS and how are they disposed of? Explain how long any PII data will be retained by the contractor if they are conducting the Survey on behalf of the IRS. In your response, please include the complete IRM number and specific item number and title.

The survey will be managed using GRS 6.5, Item 010 Public Service Operations Records, temporary. Destroy 1 year after resolved or when no longer needed for business use, whichever is appropriate. Any additional records developed from the study maintained by the IRS will be scheduled as coordinated with the IRS Records and Information Management (RIM) Program and IRS Records Officer. IRM 1.15.1, Records and Information Management, The Records and Information Management Program. The PII records for people in UserWorks opt-in participant database are presently retained indefinitely, unless they opt-out (unsubscribe), in which case we delete their registration information from the database at that point. The PII from people that they recruit by other means (e.g., personal contacts, social media, contacts with community or professional organizations) which occurs more on a one-time basis for a particular study, are also retained indefinitely, so that they can contact them for future studies that have similar requirements. Such participants are encouraged to register in our participant database so that they would see the email announcements of all our subsequent studies. If they are not interested in that level of involvement, UserWorks asks if they are willing to be contacted if we have a future study that we think they may qualify for. Almost all participants agree to that. But if they don't, we delete their PII at that point. In each of UserWorks email announcement messages about current studies there is a link to unsubscribe from receiving these announcement messages. If someone clicks this link, or sends us a separate email, or calls us by phone and requests to unsubscribe, they delete their PII from our participant database at that time. Likewise, those who have agreed to be contacted for specific future studies, can opt-out (request to have their PII deleted) at any time. The data records from a given study are anonymized by being coded with an assigned participant number that is specific to that study. The key file that ties these anonymized records to PII (contact information for the people who participated in that study) are also retained indefinitely, in case any questions should arise about the data that would require further contact with a given participant (e.g., "what did you mean by ..."). If anyone should request that we delete ALL PII that we have about them UserWorks will delete their PII from this key file as well but would retain the anonymized data in order to preserve the integrity of our data records from that study.

DATA SECURITY

How does the administrator of the survey guarantee that the PII regarding employees or taxpayers will not be compromised, lost or stolen when housed on IRS computers? Where and how is it stored and protected?

There will be no participant PII housed on IRS computers. All participant PII is managed by UserWorks (third party recruitment vendor). In regards to protecting the personal information we collect from research study participants, during the research data collection itself, UserWorks, Inc. adheres to the following policy and practices: All personally identifiable information ("PII") obtained shall be lawfully collected, compiled, stored, allowed access to, processed and utilized only by personnel authorized by UserWorks. All PII obtained shall not be disclosed to any client or other third party other than for lawful research purposes. Clients will not receive the full name or contact information of any recruited respondent for any research study. Participants will typically be identified to clients only by a uniquely assigned participant number, specific to a given study. If it is necessary for clients to otherwise be able to identify a participant, for example when UserWorks recruits the participants for a study being conducted by the client, the participant will typically be identified to the client by the participant's first name and first initial of their last name. Their contact information and other PII will not be shared except for key characteristics that were the basis for their selection for the study (e.g., that they have Type 1 diabetes; that they live in Baltimore). If further sharing of PII is required (e.g., for participants to gain access to secure client facilities where they need to show a valid ID), the receiving organization will sign a non-disclosure agreement.

Does a contractor/vendor administer or perform analysis of the survey?

Yes

Please provide the Cyber security approved security and encryption used when data is transferred electronically from IRS to Contractors and back to the IRS.

The deliverable will be a report that highlights aggregated and de-identified user findings, insights and recommendations and will transferred via secure email.

When data is not sent electronically, provide in detail the information regarding the transfer back and forth from the IRS to contractors?

N/A

How is the survey PII protected and stored when it is housed at a contractor's site, on contractor's computers? Please provide detailed information that the contractor uses regarding the physical and electronic security and protection of the data before, during, and after the survey.

UserWorks (third-party recruitment vendor) will manage and protect PII. Neither Booz Allen Hamilton (BAH) nor the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will have access to any unaggregated demographic information or PII. UserWorks data security policy stipulates that

UserWorks will assign a unique participant ID to each candidate participant. Any screening data that is shared with non-UserWorks personnel will include this ID only. During all phases of participant recruitment, screening, and scheduling, UserWorks will secure the confidentiality and PII data of both candidate and accepted/scheduled research participants through the following practices consistent with UserWorks data security policy and procedures. UserWorks' Practice and Policy regarding protection of PII responses to all online survey questionnaires and telephone interview questions will be stored on a secure, password-protected server, behind a firewall. The server is physically located at UserWorks offices in Silver Spring, MD in a locked and alarmed facility. A cloud-based secure data back-up service is used, and the data are encrypted before transmission to or retrieval from the cloud.

CIVIL LIBERTIES

Does the Survey maintain records describing how an individual exercises rights guaranteed by the First Amendment (including, but not limited to information regarding religious and political beliefs, freedom of speech and of the press, and freedom of assembly and petition)?

No

Will this Survey have the capability to identify, locate, and monitor individuals or groups of people?

No