



# Messaging Research: LGBTQ People & the American Community Survey

**BACKGROUND:** We are at a historic moment in efforts to add sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) measures to the American Community Survey. The Census Bureau has proposed field testing to be conducted in 2024. Yet there is little research about LGBTQ people and their concerns, excitement, and motivations for participating in this specific survey, especially for LGBTQ people of color and transgender and nonbinary people. There is, however, existing research showing that SOGI questions perform well on surveys. For example, studies show that SOGI questions are not considered especially difficult or sensitive for respondents to understand and answer thereby not significantly reducing response rates.

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO BE READY?** Now is the time to conduct *the first ever* messaging research to understand LGBTQ people's motivations and concerns and to identify persuasive messages to encourage participation in the ACS. ***That's why we're seeking \$200K to conduct this groundbreaking research.***

Key questions include:

- What motivates transgender and nonbinary people uniquely to participate in the ACS and census? What concerns do they have and how do we overcome those?
- What community-specific messages resonate with Black LGBTQ people, Asian LGBTQ people, Latino/a LGBTQ people, and other communities of color?

## **WHAT WE'RE PROPOSING:**

- **6-8 focus groups** to explore the mindset of LGBTQ people; 2-3 focus groups comprised of transgender and nonbinary people and 2 groups comprised of LGBTQ cisgender people. The focus groups would be conducted online to ensure a diversity of race/ethnicity, age, gender, and geography and to reduce the costs of in-person attendance.

### **COST ESTIMATE: \$15-20K per focus group**

- **Quantitative polling** of roughly 1,200 LGBTQ people, with an oversampling of transgender people and people of color, will provide valuable information to assess familiarity with the ACS/Census, to measure perceptions of accuracy, inclusion, privacy, and support, and to identify messages informed by the focus groups that prove persuasive to various communities.

### **COST ESTIMATE: \$30-40K**

**TO LEARN MORE & WHO WE ARE:** Please contact Naomi Goldberg ([naomi@mapresearch.org](mailto:naomi@mapresearch.org)) and Caroline Medina ([cmedina@whitman-walker.org](mailto:cmedina@whitman-walker.org)) to learn more about this messaging research or the broader LGBTQ data inclusion coalition focused on the ACS and Census.

**The Movement Advancement Project** is an LGBTQ think tank with more than 17 years of policy and messaging expertise, including on issues of marriage equality, transgender youth and sports, and nondiscrimination.

**The Whitman-Walker Institute** is a leading national think tank dedicated to advancing policy, research, and education to improve health equity and has nationally recognized expertise in improving data collection on LGBTQI+ communities.