DATA COLLECTION:

BEFORE YOU START!

Data collection, be it a survey, interview, or focus group, represents valuable time and resources from your constituents that takes them away from their core work. Compensate participants for their time and expertise if solicited.

Be transparent about what you plan on doing with the data and communicate how it will be used in decision-making or other processes that may impact your constituents. Build in opportunities for feedback along the way.

Ask yourself:

• Is the answer to the research question actionable?
• Is my organization planning to act on the results we receive?
• What data do I need to answer the question I have right now?
• Do I already know what the findings would tell me?
• Is there an existing body of research that answers my question? If so, what questions haven’t been answered? How can I complement and build on existing research?

Consider the following:

• Do you have the trust to collect the data you need?
• Is there a trusted peer who can conduct the interviews?
• Establish a clear interview protocol.
• Confidentiality is key.

If conducting a focus group, consider:

• Identifying an external person with expertise to manage the focus group.
• Having the facilitator reflect the individuals of the focus group which can engender further trust and transparency.
• Designing a well-structured process.
• Making sure you are documenting the process well.

Don’t marry yourself to the metric alone. Progress on one metric does not tell the whole story. Be open to changing or adapting your metrics if they’re not moving you closer to your larger goal.

Structure your questions to go as deep as you need in a way that respects and acknowledges the complexity of your community.

There will always be a lag between the speed of research and the evolving ways of how communities self-identify. Consider acknowledging this gap on the front end in your communications to participants.

Select the appropriate methodology and acknowledge the type of data it can solicit.

Be aware of the biases associated with the methodologies you select and who may or may not participate in your data collection efforts as a result.

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UNDOING POOR DATA INCLUSIVE QUESTIONS HOW TO ASK ABOUT:

HOW TO DESIGN CULTURAL/ETHNIC HERITAGE

SEXUAL 
IDENTITY

DISABILITY

IDENTITY

Whatever form your data collection surveys take, it is important to

Consider how you will collect data.

• Explain why you are asking for demographic data and

• Consider how you will use the data and

• Clarify and be able to express the reasons why

Best practices for data collection:

• Caribbean descent

• Latin American descent

• South American descent

• Central American descent

• North American descent

• North African descent

• East African descent

• Central African descent

• Southern African descent

• African descent/Diaspora

• Multiracial descent

WHAT IS YOUR AGE RANGE?

• 25-34

• 35-44

• Under 25

• 55-64

• 75 or older

• Don't ask people about disability using negative,

• Don't ridicule people for their pronoun or prioritize

• Don't use the binaries of male and female or woman

• Don't use “other” for fill-in-the-blank options.

• Don't offer incomplete, inaccurate, or offensive

DO

• Ask about personal pronouns. Knowing a person's pronoun

• Ask if people identify as transgender separate from other

• Ask about gender identities and allow people to check

• Use “prefer to self-identify” for fill-in-the blank options.

Don’t

• ask people if they have accessibility needs and the

• ask about personal pronouns. Knowing a person's pronoun

• ask if people identify as transgender separate from other

• ask about gender identities and allow people to check

• use “prefer to self-identify” for fill-in-the blank options.

++ In their AMEMSA Fact Sheet, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy

+ Jerome Foundation expands beyond Indigenous peoples to include Native

• I prefer to self-describe

• I decline to state

• Nondisabled person

• Disabled person

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS:

IDENTITY-FIRST APPROACH

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS TRANSIDENT?

DO YOU IDENTIFY AS DISABILITY COMMUNITY?

WHAT IS YOUR GENDER IDENTITY?

• Intersex

• Hijra

• Genderqueer/gender non-conforming

• Fa’afanime

• I decline to state

• I prefer to describe my gender identity

• Man

• Female

• Male

• Female

• I prefer to self-describe

• I decline to state

• No

• Yes

DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE:

• I prefer to self-describe

• I decline to state

• Woman

• Two Spirit

• Nadleeh

• Man

• Intersex

• Hijra

• Genderqueer/gender non-conforming

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WHAT IS YOUR AGE RANGE?

• 0-17

• 18-24

• 25-34

• 35-44

• Under 25

• 55-64

• Under 25

• 55-64

• Under 25

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UNDOING POOR DATA COLLECTION

When preparing a data collection project, Foundant Technologies recommends centering data within a triangle framed by three categories: People, Technology, and Processes.

When determining who can access the data, consider:
- What data will be shared?
- Who will access it?
- Why is it important?
- What level of access is appropriate?

When determining the life cycle, consider the timeline from collection to closure. This includes:
- Data retention policies, or following state transparency laws.
- Aggregate form; keeping data anonymous.
- Instructing respondents how to archive or dispose of data.

When collecting identifiable information de-identify the input to close of project and how long the information is retained. Should it be archived or disposed?

When determining how the data will flow through your agency to its lifecycle and who can respond to security questions.

When determining the type of storage provider, or in-house security measures. For each device and for levels of security information tracked for integrity?

When storing the data, decide whether the data will be backed up on a cloud, on a server, through a service.

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Funders recommend asking the following questions:
- Consider purpose, data integrity, and bias.
- Be clear on what the data will and won't represent.
- Ensure consent and transparency for collecting and sharing.

More determining areas to consider:
- Stakeholder's privacy and preserving their trust.
- For funding institutions working to improve the lives of the artists they work with, secure access to personal information may be necessary for the wellbeing and safety of these individuals. For each stage of the process, it is important to understand the potential threats and take necessary precautions.

Respondents underscored the importance of making a “stress test” of their data security protocols, as they are bountiful and are embedded in many facets of the relationship-building process, which is a crucial stage in the trust-building process. While opportunities to foster trust are bountiful and are embedded in many facets of the relationship-building process, which is a crucial stage in the trust-building process.

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