

Date of Approval: 03/01/2024
Questionnaire Number: 1018

Basic Information/Executive Summary

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

IRS.gov Personalization & Login 1

Business Unit

Office of Online Services

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 original goal of IRS online accounts and services was to provide the public with a safe, straightforward way to interact with the IRS. Over time user needs have evolved and thus online accounts and services have evolved in response to support those needs, resulting in the robust suite of digital tax tools for various audiences - US taxpayers, tax professionals, businesses, charities and non-profits, and other government or fiduciary entities. Yet with this evolution, two opportunities have emerged: 1. To develop an intuitive and seamless user experience across the IRS digital ecosystem. Currently the entry point for OLA (Online Account) is hidden and does not align with industry norms. 2. To personalize the experience across the IRS digital ecosystem. IRS online experiences are not dynamic or tailored to the unique needs of our audience groups. Objective: Identify IRS.gov audiences' understanding of the login process, information, and content needs as relates to the login process, and opportunity areas for the IRS to improve the login process. Additionally, identify opportunities for offering personalization to core audiences by learning from

people what information they want and how they define and expect for personalization. We will conduct one, 45-minute one-on-one interviews with each of the three core audiences identified by IRS.gov team “Individual Taxpayers, Tax Professionals and Business Taxpayers” to identify overarching themes. We will overrecruit by three participants for each core audience for twenty-seven participants to ensure we reach a total quota of eighteen completed sessions. Backup participants will be paid and dismissed upon reaching the quota. This method will uncover users' mental models and expectations for login and personalization and can serve as a platform for co-creation for concepts for a new product or service offering.

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).

This Project will utilize sensitive data only for recruiting purposes. Participants will be recruited by a third-party vendor, who will use PII to select and schedule participants for the usability session. Once the session has taken place, whether completely or not, the recruitment vendor will provide incentive amounts to participants using their contact information, namely name and email address. After the study is complete, the recruitment vendor will no longer maintain any of the SBU/PII data and will delete any SBU/PII data within 90 days of the completion of the project.

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

Address
Biometric Information
Email Address
Federal Tax Information (FTI)
Internet Protocol Address (IP Address)
Name
Telephone Numbers

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

PII for personnel administration - 5 USC

Product Information (Questions)

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

Yes

1.12 What is the IRA Initiative Number?

IRA 1.4.6

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

Telephone interview

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?

Office of Online Services

1.21 Who will the survey be administered to?

Individual Taxpayers

1.215 Is this a reoccurring survey?

No

1.22 What is the start date?

February 1, 2024

1.23 What is the end date?

May 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.

The PII for participants and non-participants is in the recruitment vendor's database.

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?

Parts of address, tax filing information, age, residence in the United States, speak English well or very well, do they have an online account with IRS or regularly access authenticated IRS systems, they have accessed IRS online services in the last year, who has one vs multiple accounts with IRS (e.g., individual and business).

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

Recruitment participants recruited for formative research sessions will be invited to take part via a third-party panel. Participants will opt in to take part in the study and then be directed to questions which will screen them based on eligibility criteria. To be deemed eligible, participants must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Reside in the United States
- Speak English well or very well
- Have an online account with IRS or regularly access authenticated IRS systems
- Have accessed IRS online services in the last year
- A mix of participants who have one vs multiple accounts with IRS (e.g., individual and business). As well as meet additional criteria based on one of the three audience groups they ascribe to:
- Individual Taxpayers
- Tax Professionals
- Businesses (varying sizes from sole proprietors to large businesses).

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.

The recruitment vendor provides an open call for volunteers and screens participants with screener. Participants are notified of selection via email.

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.

Zoom has an anonymous feature and will be used to conduct the Usability Test; observers will remain anonymous.

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

Yes

3.13 Provide the consent method and statement.

The authority requesting this information is 5 USC 301. The primary purpose of asking for the information is to determine steps the IRS can take to improve our services to you. The information may be disclosed as authorized by the routine uses published in 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. Providing the information is voluntary. Not answering some or all the questions will not affect you.

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.

Yes

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?

Yes

4.13 Please provide the Privacy Act Statement.

The authority requesting this information is 5 USC 301. The primary purpose of asking for the information is to determine steps the IRS can take to improve our services to you. The information may be disclosed as authorized by the routine uses published in 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. Providing the information is voluntary. Not answering some or all the questions will not affect you.

4.14 Does the IRS administer (conduct) the survey?

No

4.18 Does the IRS perform analysis of the survey results?

No

4.19 Provide the name of the IRS office performing the analysis of the survey.

Not Applicable

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?

The recruitment vendor will maintain the participant's privacy and protect PII by keeping data in a secure database stored in an encrypted format on the vendor's private server. No PII will be shared electronically or physically with the IRS at any stage of the study. The recruitment vendor has a privacy policy that precludes sharing PII for anything other than recruitment purposes with clients, including the IRS, and has implemented a procedural firewall that prevents IRS Federal employees and the vendor client team supporting them from accessing the PII. PII records for participants who have opted into the vendor's participant database are presently retained for 30 days and then deleted.

4.23 Where and how is the PII stored and protected?

Files generated by the vendors, such as participants' grids, session recordings, and session transcripts may contain linkable data. However, this data will only be used for the purposes of facilitating recruitment and analysis. All files with linkable data will be stored on the vendor's SharePoint which is housed on a private, secure server. Only cleared vendor staff will have access to the records during the period of recruitment, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The vendors will take precautions to ensure files and data are not stored on individual staff computers and will only be accessible via a secured SharePoint site. After sessions are complete and there is no further use for the participant data, all raw data, linkable data, or any other implicated files will be deleted in within a year.

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.

No sensitive data is exchanged with the IRS. User findings, insights and recommendations are de-identified and aggregated into a report and will be transferred via secure encrypted email.

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.

Survey PII is protected at each stage of the study by the research contractor and the recruitment vendor. Procedures at each stage - before, during, and after the study - are outlined below. The recruitment vendor will maintain the participant's privacy and protect PII by keeping data in a secure database stored in an encrypted format on the vendor's private server. No PII will be shared electronically or physically with the IRS at any stage of the study. The recruitment vendor has a privacy policy that precludes sharing PII for anything other than recruitment purposes with clients, including the IRS, and has implemented a procedural firewall that prevents IRS Federal employees and the research contractor client team supporting them from accessing the PII. PII records for participants who have opted into the vendor's participant database are presently retained for one year and then deleted. Files generated by the vendors, such as "participants grids," session recordings, and session transcripts may contain linkable data, however, this data will only be used for the purposes of facilitating recruitment and analysis. All files with linkable data will be stored on the research contractor's SharePoint which is housed on a private, secure server. Only cleared vendor staff will have access to the records during the period of recruitment, data collection, analysis, and reporting. The research contractor will take precautions to ensure files and data are not stored on individual staff computers and will only be accessible via a secured SharePoint site. After sessions are complete and there is no further use for the participant data, all raw data, linkable data, or any other implicated files will be deleted in within a year.

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 - Access Level Read Only, Contract Managers - Access Level Read Only, Contract System Administrator - Access Level Read Only

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.

The survey results will be generalized and no PII or details about individual responses will be shared. The research contractor team maintains a list of who participated in each study. This information is not forwarded to the IRS.

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

Contractor Users Yes

Contractor Managers Yes

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.

The deliverable will be a report that details aggregated user perceptions and usability issues containing no PII.

5.12 If the survey maintains records describing how an individual exercises their rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, explain the First Amendment information being collected and how it is used.

Not Applicable

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

Yes

5.14 If the First Amendment information will be used as the basis to make any adverse determination about an individual's rights, benefits, and/or privileges, explain the determination process. Consult with IRS General Legal Services to complete this section.

First Amendment information will not be used to make adverse determinations about individual's rights, benefits, and/or privileges.

Systems of Records Notices (SORNs)

SORN Number & Name

IRS 00.001 - Correspondence Files and Correspondence Control Files

Describe the IRS use and relevance of this SORN.

To track correspondence including responses from voluntary surveys.

SORN Number & Name

IRS 10.004 - Stakeholder Relationship Management and Subject Files

Describe the IRS use and relevance of this SORN.

To track stakeholder relationships and inform individuals about tax administration.

Records Retention

What is the Record Schedule System?

General Record Schedule (GRS)

What is the retention series title?

Public Service Operations Records

What is the GRS/RCS Item Number?

GRS 6.5, Item 010

What type of Records is this for?

Electronic

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

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.

What is the disposition schedule?

The data records from any given study are redacted and given a numeric code with an assigned participant number that is specific to that study. Only the administrator of the Survey has access to the raw data of the study and is retained for 60-90 days. The reason

for maintaining the data for 60-90 days is in case if any questions or clarification needed should arise about the data that would require further contact with a given participant. If clients should request this information from the third-party vendor, then the third-party vendor will delete all PII about the participant. The third-party vendor would retain the redacted data in order to preserve the integrity of the data records from that study along with all PII. All PII elements will be deleted from this key.

Data Locations

What type of site is this?

Environment

What is the name of the Environment?

Master recruitment list

What is the sensitivity of the Environment?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Environment.

List of all possible participants in the Vendor database

What are the incoming connections to this Environment?

Unknown

What are the outgoing connections from this Environment?

Participant recruitment list

What type of site is this?

Environment

What is the name of the Environment?

Interview notes

What is the sensitivity of the Environment?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Environment.

Word documents with data from each user session

What type of site is this?

Environment

What is the name of the Environment?

Participant Spreadsheet

What is the sensitivity of the Environment?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Environment.

Once participants have accepted the invitation and qualify, they are added to the list.

What are the incoming connections to this Environment?

Master recruitment list

What are the outgoing connections from this Environment?

Actual participants

What type of site is this?

Environment

What is the name of the Environment?

Interview recordings database

What is the sensitivity of the Environment?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Environment.

Database of the recordings of the sessions

What type of site is this?

Environment

What is the name of the Environment?

Data Analyses

What is the sensitivity of the Environment?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

Please provide a brief description of the Environment.

Word document used to analyze the raw data from other databases

What are the incoming connections to this Environment?

Interview notes, recordings

What are the outgoing connections from this Environment?

Final de-identified report