

Date of Approval: 11/15/2024  
Questionnaire Number: 1545

## Basic Information/Executive Summary

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

IRS.gov Unauthenticated Experiences Ad Hoc Recurring Research

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.

User Experience Services will undertake the redesign of IRS.gov, employing a standard User-Centered Design (UCD) process that includes designing, prototyping, testing, and iterating. Our objective is to create an experience that is straightforward, efficient, and satisfying for taxpayers, business owners, and tax professionals. This study includes the ongoing redesign and improvement of the Unauthenticated Experiences and Open Access Experiences (OAE) apps on IRS.gov, including but not limited to Tax Withholding Estimator, Where's My Refund, Earned Income Tax Calculator, Free File, as well as other OAE products receiving funding. We will conduct ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities with a diverse audience with different attitudes, aptitudes, abilities, and access needs. The approach will be iterative, ensuring all products adhere to the Online Design Guide parameters and deliver an intuitive, user-friendly experience that enables users to accomplish their tasks efficiently. The study will provide insights about taxpayers' behavior, needs, and barriers that Internal Revenue Service (IRS) will use qualitative and quantitative data from other studies to iteratively design and

improve the IRS.gov experience. We will collect feedback and conduct iterative testing of prototypes and working versions of IRS.gov features with diverse populations that represent a wide variety of audiences with different attitudes, aptitudes, abilities, and access needs. Research will focus on select pieces of the experience and involve a small number of participants with different characteristics, so we gain insights into what is and isn't working well and make iterative changes. OLS will be working with a vendor to support some participant recruitment for some of their studies. Participant information is protected by the vendor's proprietary and fully secure database store in an encrypted format on their private servers. Participant information is never transferred or stored on IRS employee local laptops or IRS cloud servers.

## 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).

PII is not collected during the user experience (UX) research study (i.e. ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities). PII data may be collected during recruitment. Data will be collected via IRS Microsoft Teams, IRS Microsoft Forms and secure email. When storing the data on our computers we will encrypt the data and only store it in approved folders, making sure only those who are approved to have access can get to the data. It may also be stored in encrypted files on IRS UXD SharePoint. It will be viewed only by the Office of Online Services Open Access Experience team, with a need to know. Transfer of data will be via secure email and secure server link. Notes and data collected during the UX research (i.e. ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities) will be anonymized and therefore will not include names of participants. Notes and data will only be viewed by researchers with a need to know. Transfer of data will be via secure email, and secure server link. All data collected from IRS Microsoft Teams, IRS Microsoft Forms and secure email and each instance of a UX research study (i.e. ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities) will be destroyed in accordance with IRS destruction guidelines and no later than 1 year after study completion. For Vendor recruitment, vendor PII Statement: Participant information is protected by the vendor's proprietary and fully secure database store in an encrypted format on their private servers.

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  
Centralized Authorization File (CAF)  
Citizenship or Migration Status  
Education Information  
Email Address  
Employment Information  
Family Members  
Federal Tax Information (FTI)  
Financial Account Number  
Geographical Indicators  
Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN)  
Internet Protocol Address (IP Address)  
Language  
Name  
Other  
Preparer Taxpayer Identification Number (PTIN)  
Social Security Number (including masked or last four digits)  
Telephone Numbers

Please explain the other type(s) of PII that this project uses.

Gender, Marital Status, US residency, Ethnicity, Language proficiency

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

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

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?

1.2, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8, 1.10, 1.12

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

Ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities i.e. Usability Testing (in person, remote moderated, remote unmoderated), Interviews, Task Analysis, Focus Groups, Card Sorting, Tree Testing, Ethnography, Design Experiments, Diary Studies, Field Studies, Contextual inquiry, Direct observation / site visit, Surveys, Eye Tracking, A/B Testing, Web analytics (heat map, scroll map, traffic analytics, etc.)

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?

User feedback activities will be administered to taxpayers, businesses, tax professionals, internal IRS employees.

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

Yes

1.22 Is this a reoccurring survey?

No

1.22 What is the start date?

11/15/2024

1.23 What is the end date?

3/29/2025

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.

Yes. Email addresses will be collected to invite participants who did not participate to future research sessions.

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?

First and last name , Email, Phone Number, Age, Gender, Household size, Marital Status, US residency, Ethnicity, Education, Language proficiency, disability status/impairment type (assistive technologies used, need for American Sign Language interpreter, etc.), employment status/type (Part Time/Full Time/Unemployed; federal/state/local govt, employment in tax services industry, self-employed, small business, military, non-profit, etc.), tax account information (filing status - Single/Married Filing Jointly/Married Filing Separately/Head of Household, number of dependents, withholding status - employer/estimated

payments/pay at filing, filing habits - electronic/paper/self/pro, balance due - refund or pay, types of IRS forms filed - 1040/940/1065, types of letters/notices received - CP2000: Proposed Changes to Your Tax Return, etc.), use of bank or other types of financial institutions/services, technology proficiency/comfort/access (internet use, device use, device type, email account, familiarity with web conferencing software, etc.), types of IRS interactions/services/touchpoints, Voice/audio recording (for post-collection analysis only).

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

To stay within the bounds of Office of Management and Budget/Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requirements for collecting information and to ensure sufficient data to make meaningful conclusions, we will be conducting user ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities. When recruiting internally, our objective is to recruit participants through a combination of online and in-person methods while ensuring stringent data privacy and protection. Online recruitment will leverage social media platforms, potential email campaigns, website pop-ups (IRS.gov and Online Account), online forums, and surveys. In-person recruitment will focus on local events, public spaces, flyers, posters, and partnerships with local organizations. When the vendor BLN24 will recruit participants for user experience (UX) research they will use their internal database of volunteer participants. They will send an email to potential participants asking to take an online screener to determine their eligibility. The participants have self-registered with BLN24 to conduct their surveys. The participants have voluntarily accessed the vendor's website to self-register and in doing so have volunteered to be contacted by phone or email to be part of future market research studies. The BLN24 maintains a database for these potential participants. As part of the BLN24 contract, they will contact the third-party vendor who will then use the potential participants listing to contact possible participants by email. Within the email they are notified of an upcoming survey event, the dates and times are shared with the potential participants. The participants are asked to indicate if they can participate in a screener survey (also referred to as a qualifying questionnaire). The selection for this study is based on certain criteria, the participants responses to a screener questionnaire and their availability to participate. The recruitment vendor will maintain the participant's privacy by keeping their data in a secure database stored in an encrypted format on their private server. Upon study completion, any recruitment data will be destroyed within 1 year.

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.

Email, in-person, letter, phone.

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.

Microsoft Teams - anonymous feature, Microsoft Survey - anonymous feature, Medallia - anonymous feature, Microsoft Outlook Whiteboard, and Microsoft Office Suite

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

Yes

3.13 Provide the consent method and statement.

Consent will be asked for during the introduction of the session: "We would like to record this interview. The recording is for research purposes only and your name will not be associated directly with the content in the recording. Recordings will be kept in a secure location and shared only with persons with a valid need to know. Do you consent to the use of the recording by the IRS?"

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.

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. Not answering some or all the questions will not affect you.

4.14 Does the IRS administer (conduct) the survey?

Yes

4.15 Provide the name of the IRS office administering the survey.

Office of Online Services

4.18 Does the IRS perform analysis of the survey results?

Yes

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

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

IRS UX Researchers: Read-Write Access to secure server where PII is stored.  
Session Notetaker - No access to PII Observers - No access to PII Designers - No  
access to PII Stakeholders - No Access to PII BLN24 will not provide any PII  
gathered in recruitment or during the testing sessions to IRS. Their PII will not be  
stored on IRS computers.

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.

Raw data of emails collected from interested participants will be stored in secure  
IRS SharePoint, and only OLS Unauthenticated Experience team members who  
administer the ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities with a need to know will  
have access. No video, audio, or notes taken will include names. Only OLS  
Unauthenticated Experience team researchers will have access to the video, audio  
and notes. Findings from ad hoc, iterative user feedback activities will be  
aggregated with no names attached to any feedback in final reports.

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.  
Yes

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

## Interfaces

### Interface Type

IRS Systems, file, or database

### Agency Name

Limited Access SharePoint

### Incoming/Outgoing

Outgoing (Sending)

Transfer Method  
Other  
Other Transfer Method  
Secure SharePoint

**Interface Type**

IRS or Treasury Contractor  
Agency Name  
BLN24  
Incoming/Outgoing  
Incoming (Receiving)  
Transfer Method  
Secure email/Zixmail

## **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 stakeholder relationship information, correspondence,  
newspaper clippings, email and other forms of communication.

## **Records Retention**

What is the Record Schedule System?

General Record Schedule (GRS)

What is the retention series title?

6.5 - Public Customer Service Records

What is the GRS/RCS Item Number?

10

What type of Records is this for?

Electronic

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

Public Service Operations Records

What is the disposition schedule?

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

# Data Locations

What type of site is this?

SharePoint Online (SPO) Collection

What is the name of the SharePoint Online (SPO) Collection?

UXD Home

What is the sensitivity of the SharePoint Online (SPO) Collection?

Personally Identifiable Information (PII) including Linkable Data

What is the URL of the item, if applicable?

<https://irsgov.sharepoint.com/sites/IECATRQB/Documents?viewpath=%2Fsites%2FIECATRQB%2FDocuments&id=%2Fsites%2FIECATRQB%2FDocuments%2FUnauthenticated%20Experiences&viewid=29b58c1f%2Df78a%2D4f7b%2D806e%2Dafc66590406d>

Please provide a brief description of the SharePoint Online (SPO) Collection.

UXD Home is a secure SharePoint Collection used by User Experience Services to store documentation.

What are the incoming connections to this SharePoint Online (SPO) Collection?

IRS Systems, files or database. Raw data of emails collected from interested participants will be stored in secure IRS SharePoint.