Organization
The US Census Bureau

Project Title

Organizational Background
The Census Bureau is the federal government’s largest statistical agency. Our mission is to serve as the nation’s leading provider of quality data about its people and economy. We are dedicated to providing current facts and figures about America’s people, places, and economy. Federal law protects the confidentiality of all the information the Census Bureau collects.

The Decennial Census is the once-a-decade population and housing count of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Island Areas as required by the U.S. Constitution. Thomas Jefferson directed the first census in 1790. As required by the U.S. Constitution, a census has been taken every 10 years thereafter. The results of the decennial census determine the number of seats for each state in the U.S. House of Representatives and are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts and to distribute more than $675 billion in federal funds each year.

The goal of the 2020 Census is to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place. To support the national headcount in 2020, the Census Bureau implemented the Community Partnership and Engagement Program (CPEP). CPEP engages community partners to build and leverage the strength of trusted community voices for a successful enumeration. Grassroots partnerships are essential for reaching historically undercounted communities, and for achieving a fair and accurate census more broadly. Specifically, CPEP aims to achieve three key objectives:

• Educate people about the 2020 Census and foster cooperation with enumerators
• Encourage community partners to motivate people to self-respond
• Engage grassroots organizations to reach out to hard-to-count (HTC) groups and those who are less motivated to respond to the national campaign

Project Description
The Community Partnership and Engagement (CPEP) program is part of the US Census Bureau’s strategy to get a complete and accurate count of all residents within the Decennial Census. In this project,
students will examine several of the hard-to-count groups within Washington, or those who are less motivated to respond to the 2020 Census. Students will develop strategies for reaching these groups, use existing Census Bureau data to help analyze response rates, and research best practices for the CPEP program.

Travel Required?
No

Deliverables
Part 1: Literature Review

• What is the Census, why is it conducted, and who does it benefit?

• What specific decisions are made based upon census data? For example, the number of hospital beds within a community, the number of police units dispatched within a community, the number of vaccinations given to a community.

• What does current research tell us about the level of community awareness of the Census? Do people have a general understanding of what the Census is and does?

• What does current research tell us about typical hard-to-count populations nationwide? What are the socioeconomic characteristics of these population, where are they geographically and what are their typical barriers to response?

• Using research developed by George Washington University, what do we know about the impact of an undercount? What is the dollar amount that Washington State stands to lose from an undercount? What federally-funded programs will an undercount affect the most?

Part 2: ROAM Analysis

• Using the Response Outreach Area Mapper (ROAM), build a profile for areas as risk for undercount.

• Where are these areas located?

• What are the socioeconomic characteristics of these areas? Why are they considered at risk for undercount?

Part 3: Best Practices Analysis

• Provide an overview of the Community Partnership and Engagement (CPEP) Program.

• Research and identify other organizations who use a similar partnership outreach model to the CPEP or that serve similar hard-to-count populations.
• Conduct interviews with key organizations to synthesize lessons learned about accessing hard-to-count-populations.

• Define key strategies used by other organizations to connect with the hard-to-count populations.

Part 4: Recommendations

• Recommend tools and techniques for reaching hard-to-count populations and overcoming barriers to response throughout Washington.

• Recommend which tools should be used for each area identified in the ROAM analysis.

• Recommend priority next steps that the CPEP can implement to ensure an accurate count.

Deliverables-

• A full report summarizing findings

• A 1-2 executive summary of key findings and recommendations

• CPEP Program recommendations

• A brief PPT presentation which summarizes findings to CPEP Program Managers.

Key Tasks for Consultants

Research, data analysis, interviews of key stakeholders and experts.