Promoting Inclusivity When Collecting Information About Sex and Gender, Race and Ethnicity, and Sexual Orientation

The following represent examples for researchers measuring demographic questions regarding sex and gender, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. These examples encourage researchers to be sensitive in their measurement of demographic questions assessing individuals’ social identities by recognizing the diversity among people. The examples also encourage researchers to provide participants a “prefer not to respond” or “write in” option (as appropriate).

Although these are not formal recommendations and best practices may change over time, they are based on current best practices for promoting inclusive measurement of demographic questions regarding various social identities, such as sex and gender, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation. Researchers should not to collect more information from participants than is needed to answer their research questions.

Example for Measuring Sex

1. Assigned sex at birth:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Prefer not to respond

Examples for Measuring Gender

Example 1 -- One-Step Approach:

2. Gender:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Non-binary
   d. Write in:_____________
   e. Prefer not to respond

Example 2 -- Two-Step Approach

3. Assigned sex at birth:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Prefer not to respond

4. Current gender identity:
   a. Male
   b. Female
   c. Transgender male to female
   d. Transgender female to male
   e. Gender non-conforming
   f. Do not identify as female, male, or transgender
Example for Measuring Sexual Orientation

5. Sexual orientation:
   a. Straight
   b. Gay or lesbian
   c. Bisexual
   d. Write in: ________________
   e. Prefer not to respond

Example for Measuring Race and Ethnicity

6. Race/Ethnicity (please circle/mark all that apply):
   a. Native American/Alaskan Native
   b. Asian/Asian American
   c. Black/African American
   d. Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   e. Hispanic American or Latino/a
   f. Non-Hispanic White/Caucasian
   g. Middle Eastern or North African
   h. Multiracial/Multiethnic
   i. Write in: __________
   j. Prefer not to respond

Resources for further reading


