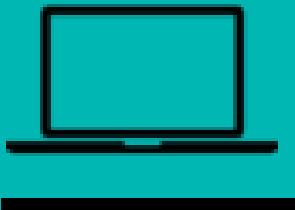


# NatCen

Social Research that works for society

## A probability-based web panel for the UK:

What could it look like?



University of Essex, June 2013



# Why a prob-based web panel in the UK?

- More scientifically robust than opt-in panels (Yeager et al 2011)
- Cheaper than probability-based omnibus surveys using traditional modes of data collection
- More timely and flexible than existing large scale surveys
- A vehicle for methodological research that will aid transition to web on other surveys
- Opens up possibilities of collecting new types of data
- Could lead to unanticipated social scientific discoveries

# Population and sample

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## Population of inference:

- UK general population (Eng, Wales, Scotland, N. Ireland)
- Aged 16+, or should there be an upper age limit?
- Inclusion of younger age groups would be possible

## Sampling frame:

- Dependency on Postcode Address File (PAF)
- NB. Random Digit Dialling not feasible: response rates too low

## Sample of households versus individuals?

# Recruitment

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## Mode of recruitment:

- Face-to-face doorstep recruitment
- Or sequential mixed mode (postal -> f2f)?

## Treatment of those without internet access:

- Do we need to include the 20% of UK hholds that are offline?
- If so, provide equipment & internet access to those without, or tablet with app to all, or second mode (postal)?

# Maintaining representativeness

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## Participant engagement:

- Email invites & reminders: how many, multiple modes?
- Intrinsic motivation
- Incentives: monetary, points, tailored, targeted?

## Refreshment samples:

- How often?
- How long to keep panel members?

## Weighting for differential non-response:

- Complex

# Response Rates

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How low can we go?

- Response rate at recruitment stage
- Wave response rates
- Non-response bias

# Frequency of data collection:

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- At least every one or two months
- Why not more often?

# Technology:

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- Desktop, laptop, tablet, mobile web
- Apps versus web browsers
- Should we be designing primarily for mobile?
- Complementary data collection using other real-time data collection modes and remotely collected biomeasures & biomarkers



# Questionnaire

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- Provision of questions by academics, govt researchers, others?
- Core questions: topics of interest to main sponsors
- Open question space: timeliness
- Ratio of core questions and open question space
- Mix of cross-sectional and longitudinal questions
- Questionnaire length

# Financing

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## European model:

- European model = Grant funding, based at university
- Commercial model, e.g. Knowledge Networks
- Other model, e.g. government funded?

## Investment:

- What is the right cost metric to compare to alternatives?
- What is the added value of a UK prob-based web panel?

# For discussion

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## Three key issues for the UK:

- Is there a business case for a UK probability-based web panel?
- What business model would work in the UK?
- Trade-offs between cost and quality  
e.g. exclusion of those without internet access

# Thank you

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