



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

STANDARDIZED PRE/POST SURVEYS
FOR GROW GRANT RESULTS

Version 2.0

May 10, 2017

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HELPDESK CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you need help with the [Evaluation Portal](#), please contact Forum Research:

- Email: otfsurvey@forumresearch.com
- Phone: 1-866-980-0467

Additionally, Forum Research can assist you if you are unsure of how to administer your surveys. As research experts, Forum Research can help you to determine the best way to achieve the highest possible response rates from your program participants.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

Why is OTF using these surveys?

- OTF's Investment Strategy embraces an outcomes-based funding approach. To increase our impact in the community, we are focusing our investments on specific Priority Outcomes and Grant Results. To understand if our investments are resulting in the intended changes in communities, OTF requires some Grow grantees to use standardized survey tools with their program participants. The information gathered will help OTF understand the impact of its investments.
- OTF is committed to continuous learning and development of our outcomes measurement approach to granting. We welcome your input and feedback.

Who is required to administer these surveys?

- Grantees that have selected one of the 13 Grant Results listed [here](#) are required to administer pre- and post-surveys.

What's in it for grantees?

- The survey responses that you collect will help your organization tell the story about your individual project and the impact it is having in your community. We've used this approach with some of our other funding projects, and grantees have experienced many benefits. You can use the data to make improvements to your program and track progress on your impact over time. The data that you collect may also help your organization leverage funding from other sources to support the program in the future. You are encouraged to develop a separate, complementary evaluation which is specific to your program.

How will OTF use these evaluations?

- OTF will analyze the survey results at an aggregate level, to learn about OTF's overall impact through its funding. The focus will be on the impact achieved for each Grant Result, rather than the impact of any single grantee.

How did OTF choose these surveys?

- OTF reviewed over 300 validated and published surveys against several criteria, including reliability, validity, length, ease of use and fit with Grant Result. The selected surveys were deemed to have the best overall fit with the desired change OTF wants to see in communities, as outlined in each Grant Result. The surveys have also proven to be reliable and valid; some are used throughout the world.

The survey doesn't seem applicable to my program. Can I alter it, or use a different survey?

- No, the surveys are standardized and cannot be altered. While the survey might not relate to your project's specific activities, they measure progress toward the outcome you committed to achieve (i.e. the Grant Result). Since each survey was carefully selected to measure each Grant Result, projects that are well aligned with their Grant Result should typically find a good fit with their assigned survey. Because OTF funds many different projects that share the same Grant Result, the use of standardized measurement tools enables OTF to track progress using a common metric. Your organization's contributions are extremely important.

Is it mandatory for organizations to distribute the surveys?

- Yes. Grantees are required to distribute the surveys, and must apply a reasonable effort to achieve as high a response rate as possible. Reasonable effort includes, but is not limited to, allocating time and resources, documenting invitations and reminders, exploring options to increase response rates, and taking steps to contact Forum Research and OTF when barriers are encountered.

Is it mandatory for participants to complete the surveys?

- No. The completion of these surveys is completely voluntary. If the participant is under 18 years old, you may need to get a parent's or guardian's consent. We recommend including information about the survey in program enrolment documentation provided to participants when they sign up. It is important to collect data in an ethical manner, and to ensure that all survey participants provide informed and voluntary consent.

How is OTF protecting the privacy of program participants?

- All data collected through the surveys is anonymous. OTF cannot access your uploaded list of participants nor their email addresses.

What happens with the results?

- You will be able to access your anonymized survey results. These results may help you assess and learn about the impact of your program activities.
- To access your results, login to the Forum [Survey Portal](#), and click on the tab on the left of the portal titled Reporting. Look for the Export button, located at the top right of the bar chart. Click on the Export button to download the survey data. For a description on how to make sense of your results, please watch the [webinar](#).
- For its own learning, OTF will be aggregating the results from all the participant surveys for a given Grant Result, to understand the impact that our investments are having in communities across Ontario.

We already ask our participants or caregivers to fill out a lot of forms and information. How can we explain why it's important to fill out the surveys?

- Your OTF-funded project is helping to tell a larger story about the changes that are happening in communities across Ontario due to OTF granting. Your survey data will be included with survey data from thousands of people across the province to help tell that story.
- Also, the results will help OTF learn about what works, and what doesn't, which will feed into OTF's own evaluation of its current funding programs.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION:

How do we get started?

- The email you just received gives you an overview of the surveys, the English and French user manuals for an online portal for managing the surveys, username and temporary password for the portal, and details for an orientation webinar.
- Upon logging into the portal for the first time, you will be asked to answer some questions that will help set up your use of the standardized surveys. This will help identify the type, length and frequency of your program, and determine when and how often participants will be surveyed.
 - Programs that are 12 weeks or longer will have a survey administered to participants at the beginning (pre-survey), middle (mid-survey) and end of the program (post-survey).
 - Even though your program may not start right away, it's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the survey, and plan accordingly.

Who can we contact if our survey portal is not working?

- Please contact the [Forum HelpDesk](#) if you require assistance with the [Evaluation portal](#).

Can we preview the survey without saving the data?

- Yes, you can go through as many practice (test) surveys as you like and the data will not be saved. We encourage you to go over the survey to get an idea of what the survey is assessing. That way, you can help program participants with any questions they may have.
- To access the test survey, log onto the [Evaluation portal](#) and go to the Grantee Settings tab on the left. On the Grantee Settings page, you will see a green button under the Survey Type column labelled Test. Clicking on this button will open a new survey window, where you can go through the survey as would a program participant. There is no limit to the number of practice surveys you can do, and the data will not be saved. You can also view the [video explanation](#).

Is it mandatory to complete all questions listed in the survey?

- Yes. All questions are mandatory except for the demographic questions. Participants may select the “Not Applicable” response option if they prefer not to answer a question. However, it is important that all survey participants select a response to every question to ensure that OTF has reliable data.

What if my program participants do not have access to email?

- While email is the most convenient method of inviting survey participants, there are other options available to complete the surveys. You can choose any combination of these alternative methods below to encourage program participants to complete the surveys:
 - Set up a computer in a common area which has a direct link to the surveys. You can ask participants to drop by this computer to complete the survey.
 - Use a tablet to administer the surveys. This could be passed around during your program and you would ask participants to complete the survey at some point before, or after your program. If you would like to use this method and do not have tablets available, please contact the [Forum HelpDesk](#) to borrow a tablet.
 - Conduct the surveys in an interview format. This would require one of your staff or volunteers to read the question and response options aloud to the participant, and record their answers. Staff can open the manual survey link on a computer, tablet, or their smart phone, and walk your participants through the survey. If you proceed with this option, we recommend you introduce your staff to the survey beforehand. You can view your survey through the ‘Test Link’ in the Evaluation Portal which is in the ‘Grantee Settings’ section.

Can we get paper copies of the survey?

- Yes. We've learned that the easiest way to fill out the surveys is to use the online Evaluation portal. However, we know that sometimes grantees will need to use paper copies of the surveys. If you do need paper copies, please contact the [Forum HelpDesk](#) to ask for copies and let them know how many copies you think you will need.
- If you use paper copies, you will need to collect the copies and enter them manually into the Evaluation portal. This takes more time and opens up opportunities for errors, so please contact Forum Research and the [Forum HelpDesk](#) will work with you to see if there is a way for you to use the online Evaluation portal to administer the surveys.

Are there French copies of the survey?

- Yes. The online surveys are provided in both English and French. Additionally, we also have paper versions of the survey in both languages.

Are there surveys in other languages? Some of our organization participants do not speak English or French.

- Some, but not all, surveys have been translated and validated in other languages. Please contact to your Program Manager, or [Forum Helpdesk](#) to check if there is a survey available in a language other than English or French.

What if my program participants have language or literacy issues?

- In this case, we recommend conducting the surveys in an interview format. This would require one of your staff or volunteers to interview a participant and assist with understanding the questionnaire. Staff members can open the manual survey link on a computer, tablet, or their smart phone, and walk your participants through the survey.
- If you proceed with this option, we recommend you introduce your staff to the survey beforehand. You can view you survey through the 'Test Link' in the Evaluation Portal which is in the 'Grantee Settings' section.

Can a staff member complete the survey in lieu of a participant or parent?

- Yes, if it is easier or more comfortable for staff member(s) to work with the participant to fill out the survey. Please instruct your staff members to complete the surveys through an interview style conversation where your staff member would ask your participants the questions and record their answers. The first question of each survey asks if the survey is being self-administered or staff-administered.

If the survey is anonymous, why are there demographic questions at the end of the survey?

- At the end of each survey, there are some optional demographic questions (and a matching question) that OTF encourages participants to fill out. The answers to these questions will help us get a better understanding of the impact OTF is having on different demographic groups (i.e. gender and age). As well, the answers to these questions can assist with matching pre- and post-survey responses, which will provide us with a more accurate understanding of the impact that programs are having.

What is the Participant ID field at the end of the survey?

- At the end of each survey, there is a field titled "Participant ID". Some Grantees use their own codes to track their program participants. The Participant ID field can be used to write down these codes for each participant. This is an optional field that can be filled in, which will help OTF match pre- and post-surveys. At no point will OTF or Forum be able to match a Participant ID with any personally-identifying information.

Is it mandatory to conduct the mid-point survey?

- The mid-point survey is not mandatory. It is generally being used for programs that run 12 weeks or longer.

Do post-program surveys need to be completed right away?

- No. Post-surveys can be done up to a few months after the program, to give participants/guardians enough time to observe any changes that the program may have had. Post-surveys are required for all programs that have a set schedule of programming.

Is there a maximum for how many surveys should be administered?

- The maximum number of surveys that should be administered is 1,200. If your organization has more than 1,200 participants, please try and select randomly.
- Due to the nature of the evaluation process, it is difficult to predict how many participants per day need to be invited to the evaluation process. As such, we suggest that you try to initially achieve as many responses as possible, and if you are reaching the 1,200 limit rapidly, then you can scale back your efforts and begin randomly selecting program participants. If you have any questions about achieving this limit or how to select participants randomly, please contact [Forum Helpdesk](#).