

Qualifications/Experiences

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A. Does your firm have a physical presence (office/campus/etc.) in the state of Washington?

The research institution has a campus in eastern Washington, where the principal researcher is located. The subcontractors have offices in Seattle, WA.

B. Describe the experience, knowledge, skills, and qualifications Bidder possesses in order to successfully complete the project scope of services. Include your experience creating and administering a survey tool.

Research institution

University. The Tier 1 research institution – a large public university – brings together the best minds across disciplines to address the challenges of today and to advance knowledge for a better future. Partnering with scholars and researchers around the globe, the university’s faculty target critical problems and questions with broad impacts. Faculty engage in collaborative scholarship and research with federal and state agencies, national laboratories, business and civic leaders, and philanthropists to find sustainable solutions. The university has five broad, interconnected research areas: Agriculture, energy and environment, equitable and thriving communities, health and well-being, and next-generation materials and technologies.

College. The principal researcher is based in the College of Communication, which has research foci in health, media, technology, and social influence. The college houses cutting-edge research laboratories and offers robust graduate studies, including residential doctoral and master’s programs. Faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students represent a diverse range of identities, including racial/ethnic backgrounds, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and age.

Survey Research Center. The institution houses the Pacific Northwest’s largest university-based survey research center, which has supported large-scale survey research for more than 50 years. The center supports social science research and responds to the policy needs of public agencies and others in Washington State and across the nation. Center leadership includes LGBTQ+ people and parents of LGBTQ+ children.

Principal researcher

The principal researcher (she/they) is a queer nonbinary woman who has conducted research with LGBTQ+ people – adolescents to adults – for nine years. She is an internationally recognized scholar focused on LGBTQ+ mental health and the effects of gender-related messaging on the attitudes of various groups. Most of her research has utilized survey-based techniques and has involved a community-based participatory approach. For example, for nine years the principal researcher has collaborated with the nonprofit organization Brave Trails, which hosts summer leadership camp and other programming for LGBTQ+ youth (ages 12 to 17) and adults. Collaboratively, the principal researcher and nonprofit organization have evaluated the impact of camp programming and the emerging camp friendship network. The principal researcher has produced peer-reviewed publications aimed at informing the development of future interventions to improve LGBTQ+ youth’s mental health and social connections. This ongoing research has

involved the creation of numerous survey tools for LGBTQ+ adolescents and adults, capturing measures such as depressive symptoms, anxiety, self-esteem, social connectedness, access to LGBTQ-affirming therapy, availability of local all-gender facilities, and identity-related support in school and at home. Beyond their community-engaged research, the principal researcher leads experimental research addressing LGBTQ+ issues, which she conducts to inform policymaking. Her recent work has tested the effects of all-gender facilities (restrooms, locker rooms) on the gender- and policy-related attitudes of adults and youth. Their survey-based work with LGBTQ+ people/issues has been published in a range of leading peer-reviewed journals and has received numerous international and national awards. Furthermore, their research has been featured by national publications, including *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and *The Miami Herald*, as well as Washington outlets, including *KOMO 4 News* (Seattle), *Tacoma News Tribune*, and *Spokane Public Radio*. Last year, the principal researcher's university awarded her its first-ever LGBTQIA+ Faculty/Staff Distinguished Achievement Award for exemplary contributions to the LGBTQ+ community through advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Representative peer-reviewed articles led by the principal researcher include the following titles:

- Effects of all-gender workplace facilities signage on adults' attitudes toward transgender and nonbinary people and policies
- Cues signaling gender segregation and gender inclusion in public spaces affect adolescents' binary conceptualization of gender and attitudes toward transgender and nonbinary people
- Explain, label, or ignore? Exploring LGBTQ-parent families' communication about family identity
- Anxiety, COVID-19 risk, and LGBTQ+ youth's participation in an affirming summer camp
- Virtual camp: LGBTQ youths' collective coping during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Network and proximity effects on LGBTQ youth's psychological outcomes during a camp intervention
- Gendered spaces, gendered friendship networks? Exploring the organizing patterns of LGBTQ youth
- Depressive symptoms and parental support-seeking in Latinx adolescents: Analyzing variation based on LGBT identity
- Longitudinal analysis of depressive symptoms among LGBTQ youth at a social media-free camp
- "She finally smiles...for real": Reducing depressive symptoms and bolstering resilience through a camp intervention for LGBTQ youth
- More than a media moment: The influence of televised storylines on viewers' attitudes toward transgender people and policies

Research assistants

Two graduate student research assistants (RAs) will support the project.

Research Assistant 1. The first RA, who has been identified and has committed to the project, is a gay male of color (he/him) completing doctoral studies in communication. The RA is passionate about conducting research to bolster health and well-being within marginalized communities. The RA has existing skills in developing and implementing surveys, interviews, and content analyses. For this project, the RA will lead outreach to communities in eastern Washington, recruit participants at events, and support data analysis. The RA has published peer-reviewed research on LGBTQ+ people and issues, including the following journal articles:

- Sexual harassment experiences of LGBT+ students in intercollegiate speech and debate activities
- Virtual camp: LGBTQ youths' collective coping during the COVID-19 pandemic

Research Assistant 2. A second graduate student RA will work as a project manager, tracking statewide outreach, scheduling research team meetings, registering for events, producing promotional materials, and coordinating participant compensation. The RA will have strong administrative skills, a background in survey research, familiarity with LGBTQ+ issues, and a desire to contribute to the well-being of the Washington LGBTQ+ community. This RA will interface regularly with the research team and will coordinate closely with the first RA around outreach for the project, working to develop and maintain positive relationships with a variety of groups.

C. Does the principal researcher have a doctoral level, terminal degree such as PhD, from an accredited institution? What is that degree?

The principal researcher holds a PhD in Communication from the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism.

D. How many years of experience does the principal researcher have conducting research on LGBTQ issues?

The principal researcher has nine years of experience conducting research on LGBTQ+ issues in partnership with LGBTQ+ people and organizations.

E. Describe the qualifications of your staff that will be working on this project.

The research team includes leadership, staff, advisors, and community partners, which are described in the following.

Subcontractors

The subcontractors who will be members of the research team consist of the following:

Subcontractor 1. This individual is an equitable research and evaluation scientist (she/they) with over 20 years of research and evaluation experience in Washington State. She is a white queer cisgender woman who has lived and worked in western Washington for 30 years. They will serve as co-principal researcher on this study. They bring the following knowledge and skills to the research team:

- Facilitator of culturally responsive and equitable communities of learning to ensure that the survey process and results build trust across ecosystem actors, support continuous learning, and result in policies and practices that will improve the quality of life for Washington's LGBTQ+ communities.
- Designed and administered over 200 surveys to evaluate programs across different sectors including Pre-K-graduate school education, health and medicine, environmental science, design and construction, municipal, county, state, and federal governments (in the U.S.), clean energy and environmentally friendly products and services, STEM, data science, affordable housing, court systems, and DEI consulting.
- Deep and wide LGBTQ+ network across the Washington State built over 30 years with Greater Seattle Business Association (their DEIB measurement, evaluation, and assessment consulting firm has been a certified LGBTBE for 10+ years), Leadership Tomorrow (they are a 2011 LT alum), University of Washington (they are a UW alum and former UW research scientist), Washington Education and Research Association, community colleges across the state, Million Women Mentors (she is the Washington State's co-chair), and the Seattle Chapter of the Association for Women in Science. This network will be important to leverage to realize a robust and representative response to this first-of-its-kind survey.
- Commitment to reduce inequalities and improve social justice by leveraging quality evidence to support collective action and co-creation of more equitable institutions and communities where everyone thrives.
- Their equitable research and evaluation work principles, which are heavily influenced by the [principles of LGBTQ+ evaluation](#) published by Phillips et al. (2022), include:
 - engage with the history of oppressed groups and their liberation
 - remain critical of our assumptions
 - de-center whiteness
 - prioritize allyship
 - value lived experiences
 - require community ownership
 - require representation in leadership
 - commitment to liberation for all
 - use data as flashlight, not a weapon
- Served/serving as an equitable measurement and evaluation consultant for education, social, and public sector organizations including the University of Washington, UCLA, Howard University, Brandeis University, University of Chicago, University of Texas, Austin, Rochester Institute of Technology, Washington State University, The Nature Conservancy, Big Brothers and Big Sisters, U.S. Department of Energy, King County, Snohomish County, and City of Seattle
- A graduate certificate in the advanced study of evaluation science from Claremont Graduate University
- MS in electrical engineering with a focus on neuroscience research from the University of Washington

Subcontractor 2. This individual (she/her) is a queer BIPOC researcher with over 15 years of experience crafting community-based research projects with BIPOC and other marginalized groups. She brings expertise in community-based methodologies, trauma-informed approaches to data collection and reporting, as well as equity-based initiatives across intersectional identities within the LGBTQIA+, BIPOC community, and front-line leaders. She is a research and evaluation consultant who has partnered with Subcontractor 1 for two years on decolonizing the publication of a [New Directions for Evaluation](#) volume on intersectionality in evaluation. Additionally, she holds academic appointments at California State University – East Bay (Department of Political Science) and Simmons University (Master of Public Health – Healthy Equity program). She has been a member of the National Black Justice Coalition (NBJC) National Advisory Council and an elected board member for COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere). She is the board chair of the Seeding Justice foundation (PDX).

- Ph.D. in Transformative Inquiry from the California Institute of Integral Studies (Department of Transformative Studies); Masters or Arts in Social Sciences (concentration in Sociology); Bachelors of Science in Political Science.
- Health and Human Rights (2013) Executive & Continuing Professional Education, School of Public Health. Harvard University.
- [Community-Engaged and Community-Based Participatory Research](#) - (CITI Program - Credential ID: 49979762)
- [Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research](#) - (CITI Program - Credential ID: 49978205)
- [Essentials of Public Health Research](#) - (CITI Program - Credential ID: 49979761)
- Published author of university textbooks (A People’s Primer: Dispatches on Politics and Social Change (2022); California Public Policy: Community, People, & Place (2023); The Reimagination of Black Political Spaces (2024)
- Editor of open access journals *CATALYST* and *The Beauty of Black Creation* (2020-2022)

Subcontractor 3. This individual (he/him) is a BIPOC management consultant and small business founder of a 6-year-old, Seattle-based monitoring, evaluation, and learning consulting firm with the mission to provide evaluation and impact advisory in service of equity. The founder has 25 years of combined professional experience in academia, applied social science research, management consulting, grant development, and project management to support clients to develop customized solutions for measurement, evaluation, and learning. He will serve as advisor on survey development and recruiting of BIPOC respondents. He brings the following knowledge and skill to the research team:

- Served as a senior social scientist and consultant for organizations including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Packard Foundation, the Kellogg Foundation, and the Ford Foundation
- Conducted research and has published on the interrelationships among social, political, and economic development
- Holds a Ph.D. in Socioeconomics & International Development from Ohio State University
- Able to address barriers/concerns that respondents may have to respond to the survey (e.g., apprehension and lack of trust)

- Experienced designing and administering surveys focused on the BIPOC community
- Has survey expertise in designing survey items that are sensitive and responsive to the need of different segments within marginalized populations and address barriers/concerns that respondents may have to responding to a survey (e.g., apprehension and lack of trust)

Evaluation officer. Subcontractor 1 will hire an evaluation officer (EO) to lead outreach to communities in western Washington, recruit participants at events, support data analysis, and coordinate western Washington outreach efforts with RA 2 in eastern Washington. This individual will be able to speak and translate Spanish. The RA will have strong administrative skills, a background in survey research, familiarity with LGBTQ+ issues, and a desire to contribute to the well-being of the Washington LGBTQ+ community.

Advisory panel

This project will be conducted in collaboration with an advisory panel of trusted subject matter experts and community partners.

Large-scale survey experts. To extend the breadth and depth of our large-scale survey expertise, our advisory board will contain experts from one of the largest independent social research organizations in the U.S. These experts have experience conducting large-scale survey research pertaining to gender and sexuality. They will provide advice at key junctures during the project, including finalizing questionnaires and outreach planning. Leveraging this body of knowledge will ensure that the first Washington state LGBTQ+ survey will leverage gold standard survey science practices for our community that will protect community member privacy, build trust in and support of this government effort, and increase the quality and quantity of data collected. Our advisory board experts will also contribute to the dissemination of survey findings, including sharing best practices for future large-scale survey research with LGBTQ+ people.

Community partners. Community partners will be essential to achieving a robust and representative sample of the state’s LGBTQ+ community (Hughes et al., 2021). A select group of highly engaged community partners will be invited onto our advisory panel. Our confirmed and potential partners are described in the table below.

Table 1: Community partners

Community Partner	Subpopulation	Description	Involvement
Confirmed Partners			
Washington State 4-H	Rural, youth	Youth development program serving youth in every Washington county	4-H will conduct outreach to affiliated youth and adults, many of whom are in rural areas
Brave Trails	Youth	Non-profit organization focused on LGBTQ+ youth development	Brave Trails will harness its social media presence, which reaches highly engaged LGBTQ+ youth and adults (on TikTok, Brave Trails has 407,000 followers, on Instagram, 49,000 followers)

Community Partner	Subpopulation	Description	Involvement
Confirmed Partners			
FAVS News/Tracy Simmons	Religious communities	Nonprofit news organization covering religion news in the Pacific Northwest and hosting events to build interfaith community	Professor Tracy Simmons is the founder and Executive Director of FAVS News; through her work, Simmons has established relationships with religious leaders across Washington who she will contact and collaborate with to engage their LGBTQ+ community members with the survey
GSBA/Gabriel Neuman	Business and leadership communities	Washington State's LGBTQ+ and allied chamber of commerce and the largest in North America, which represents small business, corporate, and nonprofit members who share the values of promoting equality and diversity in the workplace	Gabriel Neuman is GSBA's Policy Counsel & Government Relations Manager; Neuman will share the survey with GSBA members through their advocacy newsletter, online dashboard, events, and connect us with organizations throughout the state as well as national organizations that have local connections through GSBA's extensive network
Potential Partners			
Jordan Remington	Native/Indigenous /Two-Spirit	Indigiqueer drag performer in Seattle, WA and UW student focused on how planning policies can foster urban Native communities	Incorporate their undergraduate-developed outreach methods to Native communities using storytelling traditions
Northwest Two-Spirit Society (NWTSS)	Two-Spirit	Group open to Two-Spirit people aimed at providing education about Two-Spirit histories and traditions	Share information about the survey through Facebook group
Entre Hermanos	Latino/a/e/x	Social services organization focused on improving the health and well-being of the Latino/a/e/x LGBTQ+ community in and around Seattle	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
Somos Seattle	Latino/a/e/x	An organization for LGBTQ+ Latinx folks, aimed at building active community and sharing resources	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
Latinos en Spokane	Latino/a/e/x	Nonprofit advocacy organization aimed at building Latino/a/e/x community	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
TrikoneNW	Asian	TrikoneNW is an organization for, by, and about LGBTQIA+ South Asians and allies in the Pacific Northwest	Share information about the survey online and at events

Community Partner	Subpopulation	Description	Involvement
Potential Partners			
UTOPIA Washington	Pacific Islander, transgender	Grassroots organization based in Kent, WA led by queer and transgender people of color	Share information about the survey online and at events
Pacific Northwest Black Pride	Black	Nonprofit organization based in Seattle that produces events and activities to achieve inclusivity, equality, and respect	Share information about the survey online and at events
Lavender Rights Project	Black intersex/gender diverse	Nonprofit organization based in Seattle that elevates the power, autonomy, and leadership of the Black intersex and gender diverse community through legal and social services	Share information about the survey online and at events
Community Pride Walla Walla (CPWW)	Rural	CPWW is a coalition of citizens, service providers, and social organizations interested in local LGBTQ+ issues who build community, plan social events and to help spread awareness about LGBTQIA+ health needs	Share information about the survey online and at events
Tri-Cities Latinx LGBTQ+	Rural, Latino/a/e/x	Group focused on creating safe community in the Tri-Cities area	Share information about the survey through Facebook group
Haven Fellowship	Rural, religious	Multiethnic, affirming faith community in Walla Walla, WA	Share information about the survey online and at events
Gender Justice League (GJL)	Transgender, gender diverse	Civil and human rights organization focused on elevating the rights of trans and gender diverse people	Share information about the survey online and at events
Odyssey Youth Movement	Youth	LGBTQ+ youth center in Spokane	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
Inland Oasis	Youth	LGBTQ+ youth center serving southeastern WA	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
United States Gay Sports Network (USGSN)	Sports-oriented LGBTQ+ people of all ages	USGSN is the only LGBTQ+ sports network; they have a website enabling the LGBTQ+ community to locate local leagues, and to guide players to online websites and social network platforms	Share information with the USGSN sports leagues in Spokane, Seattle, and Tacoma
Seattle Storm	Sports-oriented LGBTQ+ people of all ages, queer women and girls	The woman-owned WNBA franchise has strong ties to queer women and families in Seattle and WA; retired Storm player, 20+ year Seattle resident, and basketball superstar Sue Bird is a role model for queer athletes	Share information about the survey through the Seattle Storm events and network

Community Partner	Subpopulation	Description	Involvement
Potential Partners			
Seeding Justice Foundation	BIPOC	The Seeding Justice Foundation is an Indigenous-led Foundation focused on social justice movement funding in Oregon	Share information about the survey with their network
Social Justice Fund	BIPOC	Social Justice Fund NW is a foundation working at the frontlines of social change serving Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming	Share information about the survey with their network
LGBTQ+ centers at Washington universities and community colleges	College students, rural	LGBTQ+ centers are present at the University of Washington (Q Center), Washington State University, Western Washington University (LGBTQ+ Western), Eastern Washington University, Whitman College (PRISM), Spokane Falls Community College, Tacoma Community College, Everett Community College, and more	Share information about the survey at physical location and online (with faculty/staff and student listserv, when available)
LGBTQ+ resources/groups at high schools	Youth (high school age)	High schools such Seattle Public Schools have LGBTQ+ groups like GSAs (Gender and Sexuality Alliances)	Share information about the survey at physical location and online, when applicable
GenPride	Older adults	Community-based organization serving aging LGBTQ+ people in Washington	Share information about the survey at physical location and online
Goldsen Institute at the University of Washington (UW)	Older adults	Research center examining health and well-being of older adults, including LGBTQ+ individuals	Share information about the survey online
Top 10 largest employers in the state	General	Amazon, Boeing, Microsoft, Starbucks, Deloitte Digital, Costco Wholesale, Providence Health & Services, Nordstrom, Avana, and SPIE	Share information about the survey through employee listserv
Washington Center for Women in Business	Women and small businesses in rural communities	Center providing professional training and coaching for women-owned and other small businesses	Share information about the survey at physical location and via their network online

F. Describe your ideas on how to best engage hard-to-reach communities, such as Two-Spirit, rural, or older LGBTQ.

We will engage hard-to-reach LGBTQ+ communities through community partnerships, recruitment at key events with bilingual/multilingual staff, provision of survey materials in multiple languages, and respondent-driven sampling, if needed.

As described above, our close collaborations with community partners will allow us to engage hard-to-reach LGBTQ+ communities. Our community partners will include organizations serving Two-Spirit, rural, and older LGBTQ+ people, as well as other potentially hard-to-reach communities such as BIPOC LGBTQ+ people.

Additionally, we will have a presence at key events reaching a wide range of LGBTQ+ people as well as events for LGBTQ+ people from the aforementioned communities. See table below.

Table 2: Events

Event	Subpopulation	Description	Approach
Pride	General LGBTQ+, rural	Pride events are hosted annually in Seattle, Spokane, Tri-Cities, Olympia, South Whidbey, the Palouse region, and other Washington locations	Our staff will share information about the survey at Pride events by hosting a booth
Spokane Falls Two-Spirit Powwow	Two-Spirit	The first Spokane Falls Two-Spirit Powwow was held in 2023	Our staff will share information about the survey at the event
GenPride events	Older adults	GenPride events include movie nights for older LGBTQ+ people	Our staff will share information about the survey at key, highly attended GenPride events

To enhance our ability to reach diverse communities, we will develop English, Spanish, and Mandarin questionnaires, as these represent the most-spoken languages in Washington (Migration Policy Institute, 2021). Certified translators will be hired to translate English questionnaires into Spanish and Mandarin questionnaires, which will be reviewed by bilingual/multilingual members of our advisory panel. We will have bilingual/multilingual and BIPOC staff present at events and outreach efforts. When possible, these individuals will be members of our research team (e.g., Research Assistants). When needed, we will hire professional translators.

Furthermore, we will implement respondent-driven sampling (RDS) to increase engagement with the hardest-to-reach LGBTQ+ communities, if and where such an approach is needed. RDS is a network-based sampling method in which study participants can recruit others like them and receive compensation for each successfully recruited participant they refer. The RDS process and compensation details are explained in our response to Question H.

G. Explain your familiarity and competency of LGBTQ culture and history.

Our principal researcher, our leadership team, and many of our staff members, advisors, and community partners are queer. The principal researcher's active engagement with the LGBTQ+ community in eastern Washington and beyond resulted in her being awarded the University's first-ever LGBTQIA+ Faculty/Staff Distinguished Achievement Award. Furthermore, one of the lead members of our research team, who is a bisexual woman married to a woman, has lived in western Washington since 1991 and was involved in the Hands Off Washington movement and the design and construction of Bailey-Boushay House, the first AIDS hospice care facility in the United States. She was also active in the movement to gain marriage equality in Washington State, is the founder of a 15-year old LGBTBE research and evaluation firm, and is an active member in the GSBA. Our research team is not only familiar with LGBTQ+ culture and history, we are trusted members of the queer community in Washington.

LGBTQ+ people have historically experienced marginalization and victimization across the United States, including being the targets of identity-based hate crimes (Flores et al., 2022) and experiencing workplace discrimination (Sears et al., 2021). Only recently have some rights of LGBTQ+ become federally protected (e.g., marriage in 2015), while other rights have been protected at the state or local level. For example, Washington has enacted state [laws](#) protecting LGBTQ+ people from discrimination in the adoption and foster care contexts. Within Washington, some localities have taken additional steps toward inclusion of LGBTQ+ people. For example, Seattle and Tacoma mandated that single-occupancy restrooms be designated all-gender (Leins, 2019).

The historic marginalization of LGBTQ+ people has contributed to health disparities facing the community (Hatzenbuehler, 2009). LGBTQ+ people – adults and youth alike – experience higher rates of mental health challenges, such as depression and anxiety (Fish & Pasley, 2015; Jones et al., 2017; Marlay et al., 2022). Furthermore, many LGBTQ+ individuals seeking support do not have access to affirming medical care in their local communities (Safer et al., 2016).

The number of people identifying as LGBTQ+ in the U.S. is increasing. Nationwide, 7.1 percent of U.S. adults identify as LGBTQ+ (Gallup, 2022). Younger adults do so at higher rights. About 21 percent of U.S. adults ages 20 to 26 are LGBTQ+ (Gallup, 2022). In Washington, a state of 7.79 million people (U.S. Census, 2022), these figures suggest that nearly one million Washingtonians may be LGBTQ+. Yet, existing research is notably outdated and likely underestimates the prevalence of LGBTQ+ people in Washington. For example, the Movement Advance Project, an independent, nonprofit think tank addressing equity issues in the U.S., points on its [website](#) to 2019 Gallup data indicating that 5.2% of adult (ages 18+) Washingtonians are LGBTQ+. The UCLA School of Law's Williams Institute draws from the same data for its online [map](#). Likewise, existing research does not capture the experiences of LGBTQ+ Washingtonians in a nuanced way.

H. Would your survey tool include both virtual and in-person options to administer the tool?

We provide a research study outline here that includes both virtual and in-person options for administration of the survey tool. The proposed statewide survey seeks to elucidate the experiences of LGBTQ+ Washingtonians, with four overarching aims:

1. Capture demographics and geographic distribution
2. Assess economic disparities

3. Understand health and safety experiences, including medical care and hate incidents
4. Explore familiarity with and impact of current laws and protections

We have drafted our proposed approach to achieve these aims, which we will more fully develop in partnership with the LGBTQ Commission.

Methodology

To collect data informing our aims, we will design a survey tool and conduct a statewide survey of LGBTQ+ people across the lifespan, from adolescents to older adults, using online and in-person recruitment. Our approach will be guided by prior large-scale survey research with LGBTQ+ people (Hughes et al., 2021; Stern et al., 2020), including statewide efforts in California (Grant et al., 2015), Nebraska (Petto, 2019), Pennsylvania (Weymouth-Little et al., 2021), and Kentucky (Schirmer, 2017).

Grounding session

In order for the survey findings to be used to shape state policy in ways that will improve the lives of LGBTQ+ Washingtonians, it is important to 1) co-create a continuous learning culture 2) deepen trust and mutual understanding of why the Governor's Office is engaging in this work and its goals for the work and 3) build trust and communication between the research team and the LGBTQ Commission. To achieve these goals the principal researcher and team leaders will facilitate a three-hour grounding session (virtual or hybrid) with the LGBTQ Commission and others who will be working with the research team over the course of the study to establish shared norms, agree on our expectations of each other and how we want to work together to achieve desired results, and finalize the key questions to be answered by the study. This session will inform the development of the survey tool and recruitment approach. A research assistant will be present to take notes and capture follow-up items.

Phase 1: Survey design and pilot testing

To answer the key questions posed by the LGBTQ Commission, the research team will design a survey tool suitable for adolescents and adults. The research team will consult with the Survey Research Center to ensure survey questions are designed appropriately to measure the topics of interest and are formatted to minimize item nonresponse. The Center will also review the overall flow and organization of the survey questionnaire to follow survey best practices. The research team will create a first draft of the survey, which will be reviewed and approved by the LGBTQ Commission prior to pilot testing and the statewide survey launch. The research team will submit the materials to the Washington State Institutional Review Board (IRB). IRB-approved questionnaires will be programmed by the research team in Qualtrics, an online survey platform which is licensed by the University for use in research.

Privacy. In the survey introduction, participants will be assured that their survey response will be treated confidentially, and no names or postal addresses will be collected. Participants will be asked to provide their zip code so that the research team will be able to summarize the distribution of results in the state. Participants will be informed that the survey results, including zip code, will be

summarized in such a way that no single individual can be identified. Furthermore, data will be stored in the University’s secure, password-protected cloud space.

Screeners. An initial screener will be used at the beginning of the survey to confirm potential participants live in Washington. Participants will see a [map](#) of Washington regions and will be asked to select the region in which they live (Peninsula/Coastal, Northwest, North Puget Sound, South Puget Sound, Southwest, North Central, South Central, Northeast, Southeast). Participants will also have the option to select “I do not live in Washington state”. Participants who select that they do not live in Washington will be redirected to the end of the survey.

Participants who pass the residence screener will then be asked to complete an age screener, which will sort participants into two groups: Adults (ages 18 and older), adolescents (ages 17 and younger). The survey flow for adults will begin with an adult consent form before presenting the questionnaire. Adolescents will be redirected to a youth assent form with age-appropriate language. The principal researcher expects the Washington State IRB will waive the parental permission requirement for adolescents in this case, due to the risk it would pose for some LGBTQ+ youth to disclose their identity to a parent or guardian. The voices of such adolescents are valuable for this survey. However, if the IRB does not waive this requirement, parental permission will be obtained for adolescents wanting to participate in the research.

Fraud prevention. Because the survey will be promoted online, the researchers will take steps to prevent fraudulent responses. First, the survey will be programmed with Google ReCAPTCHA. ReCAPTCHA is a free software that asks users to click a check box to confirm they are not a robot. ReCAPTCHA may also ask participants to select a series of images (e.g., select all images of a bus). Second, we will program an internal check that will identify if duplicate email addresses are used to enter gift card raffles. This approach aligns with best practices from recent survey research with LGBTQ+ youth (Fordyce et al., 2021).

Measures. Measures will represent established scales, researcher-developed/tested items and scales, and open-ended questions. The table below outlines potential measures and their corresponding plans and considerations. Due to the need to keep the survey to an average completion time of 15 to 20 minutes to avoid participant drop-off, pilot testing will be used to determine the number and type of items to include.

Table 3: Measures

Measure	Plans and Considerations
Demographics: Age, disability status, education, veteran status, immigration status, income/socioeconomic status, working status, family composition, race/ethnicity, primary language use at home	Established survey items will be used.

Measure	Plans and Considerations
Sex	<p>The principal researcher has successfully used the following question in survey research with LGBTQ+ people: “What sex is on your birth certificate?” Response options: Male, female, intersex, something else (please specify), prefer not to answer.</p> <p>The following item, supported by a Research with LGBTQIA+ Populations Guidance document written by the University’s IRB will be included to assess differences in sex development: “To the best of your knowledge, are you physically intersex? That is, do you have a difference of sex development (“DSD”)? Response options: Yes, no, unsure, prefer not to answer.</p>
Gender	<p>The principal researcher has successfully used a variation of the following question in prior survey research with LGBTQ+ people: “Which best describes your gender?” Response options: Man, woman, transgender man, transgender woman, nonbinary, unsure/questioning, something else (please explain), prefer not to answer.</p>
Sexual orientation	<p>The principal researcher has successfully used the following question in survey research with LGBTQ+ people: “Please select the sexual orientation below that best describes you.” Response options: Straight/heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, asexual, unsure/questioning, something else (please specify), prefer not to answer.</p> <p>Questions capturing participants’ romantic orientation and/or sexual behaviors, which may differ from their sexual orientation, may also be posed, if time allows.</p>
Geographic distribution	<p>We will use home residence zip codes to determine participants’ geographic location, which we will be able to map. We will ensure we recruit participants from every Washington zip code.</p>
Economic disparities	<p>We will begin to understand economic disparities by asking participants to rank their perceived socioeconomic status, aligning with the MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status (Goodman et al., 2001).</p> <p>Additionally, if time allows, we will pose an open-ended question asking participants to describe their economic experiences. This may help identify fruitful routes for future research.</p>
Health disparities	<p>Scales can be used to assess participants’ health (mental, physical, sexual) at the time of survey completion. For example, scales assessing mental health outcomes, should the commission wish to capture such data, include the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale Short Form (CES-D-4) (Lewinsohn et al., 1997) and Generalized Anxiety Disorder subscale of the Youth Anxiety Measure for DSM-5 (YAM-5-I) (Muris et al., 2017), which the principal research has successfully used in prior research with LGBTQ+ individuals. See Appendix A for complete example scales.</p> <p>Posing an open-ended question asking participants to describe their health experiences can help us identify routes for future research.</p>
Safety disparities	<p>Scales can be used to capture safety experiences. For example, the authors may develop items pertaining to safety issues facing LGBTQ+ people (e.g., identity-based bullying), using validated scales as references (e.g., Safety Feeling Scale, Dabaghi et al. (2023)).</p> <p>An open-ended question would allow participants to describe their experiences related to safety, which may reveal possibilities for future research.</p>
Impact of and familiarity with current laws and protections	<p>The researchers will develop a list of Washington laws/protections and ask participants to select which they have benefitted from in their lives (e.g., adoption protections).</p> <p>Additionally, open-ended questions would allow participants to describe their experiences and familiarity with current laws and protections. Participants may also be asked about protections they wish Washington would enact.</p>
Hate incidents	<p>A list of types of hate incidents may be provided (e.g., physical assault, verbal abuse, incitement to hatred), with participants selecting any that they have experienced.</p> <p>An open-ended question would allow participants to describe in a more nuanced way their experiences with hate incidents, should we want to collect this information.</p>

Measure	Plans and Considerations
Access to comprehensive medical care	<p>A list of types of medical care may be provided (e.g., primary care, mental healthcare, gender-affirming hormone therapy, STD/STI testing), with participants selecting any that they have accessed. A second question asking participants asking participants to select any types of care they have tried to access but were not able to will be posed.</p> <p>An open-ended question would allow participants to describe whether they have access to LGBTQ-affirming care or have experienced discrimination/etc in medical care contexts, should we want to collect this information.</p>
Other points to discuss with the LGBTQ Commission prior to tool development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Religion - Preferred relationship structure 	<p>We noticed religiosity and religious affiliation were not included in Demographics. Capturing the diversity of religiosity among LGBTQ+ Washingtonians may provide useful information for future policy recommendations.</p> <p>More than 20% of U.S. adults have engaged in consensual nonmonogamy (CNM), such as polyamory, according to national samples (Haupt et al., 2017), with rates of CNM being higher among LGBTQ+ people. In 2020, Somerville, Massachusetts passed a law granting domestic partnership rights to people in polyamorous relationships (Barry, 2020). Thus, collecting preferred relationship structure may inform policy in Washington.</p>

Pilot testing will be conducted with at least 30 LGBTQ+ U.S. residents of various demographics living outside of Washington, recruited through the researchers’ personal networks. Pilot participants will be asked for quantitative and qualitative feedback within the questionnaire space (e.g., ratings, written responses to open-ended questions) about their experiences completing the questionnaire. They will also be asked about sources of confusion (e.g., language, terminology) and technical issues or challenges. Comments from pilot testing will be summarized and shared with the research team for discussion and modification of the survey instrument. The revised instrument will be resubmitted to the LGBTQ Commission for final approval.

A data collection and analysis plan will be finalized at the end of the phase to guide the work in Phases 3 and 4.

Phase 2: Communication plan design

It is vital to approach this research study as a trust building opportunity. Not only is it important to ensure that the survey data is collected and analyzed in ways that are technically the gold standard, it is critical to collect and analyze the data in ways that will build trust between the LGBTQ Commission/Governor’s Office and LGBTQ+ Washingtonians. Building trust means that the communication about this study, recruitment for study participation, sharing of findings, and reporting on how those findings have been used to inform policy must be tailored to meet LGBTQ+ people where they are. We want to invite LGBTQ+ people to join in this journey in ways that work for them and keep engaging them in dialogue every step of the way. This survey will be the first of many, so we want to prepare the soil for a vital, healthy, and strong relationship that grows stronger into the future. This project will allow the research team to make recommendations for future research with LGBTQ+ Washingtonians. We believe this approach is best because of the trust and relationships it will build and because it is a viable approach for locating LGBTQ+ individuals.

One of the biggest challenges for conducting a statewide survey of the LGBTQ+ population is that there is no viable sampling frame from which to draw a random sample that is representative of

LGBTQ+ individuals to contact for the survey. One approach would be to mail to a random sample of U.S. Postal addresses statewide and screen to determine eligibility for the survey. Typical in surveys using postal mail contacts, a series of reminder mailings are needed to increase the survey response rate (typically 15%-18%). If the LGBTQ+ population comprises less than 10% of the total population, for example, for every eligible LGBTQ+ individual screened into the survey, another nine to 11 would screen out as ineligible. The relatively low eligibility rate, combined with the need for multiple follow-up mailings to increase response rates, means that this approach is very costly. A starting sample of 50,000 addresses would be needed to obtain around 500 completed surveys from LGBTQ+ individuals. According to the Survey Research Center, securing a response from one LGBTQ+ Washingtonian through mass mailings can cost between \$500 and \$1,000. That means a survey of 500 LGBTQ+ Washingtonians would cost as much as \$500,000. In contrast, our approach, grounded in relationships, will garner a larger sample of completed surveys for a lower cost per participant. Furthermore, our approach will build trust and relationships, both of which are so important for reaching the LGBTQ+ population and are challenging to generate through mailings alone.

The research team in partnership with the LGBTQ Commission will design a communication/outreach plan that will map out the overarching key messages of the research study and create communication strategies for each audience that speak to each audience. We will create a cascading plan that includes strategies for LGBTQ+ people based on their age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, education, and geographic location.

Phase 3: Survey recruitment and administration

Recruitment will involve online, in-person, and respondent-driven efforts. Additionally, the research team has contacts with news outlets across the state and will communicate with their media contacts to share information about the survey. Data collection will launch in the second quarter of 2024 and will end in the first quarter of 2025. Our recruitment approach, including participant compensation, is described in detail below.

Online recruitment will be conducted in collaboration with community partners that the leadership team has relationships with or will connect with through their deep and broad network. See Table 1 for a list of committed and potential partners. Community partners will be asked to share information about the survey on their websites, listservs, newsletters, and other channels. The researchers will provide a brief statement about the survey and why it is important that will be included along with the survey link and QR code.

Additional online recruitment will be conducted by the researchers. For example, we will use the online tools Everywhere is Queer and Intentionalist to supplement the GSBA network to connect with queer-owned businesses in Washington and to contact these business owners to establish relationships and explore sharing the survey information in partnership with these businesses.

In-person recruitment will be led by our research team and will include presence at key Pride events across Washington: Seattle Pride (June 2024), Spokane Pride (June 2024), Tri-Cities Pride (July 2024), and Palouse Pride (August 2024). The researchers will host booths/tables at each event and will recruit participants to complete the survey on researcher-provided tablets and/or on their

own devices. Potential participants at these events who would prefer to complete the survey later will have the option of taking a preprinted postcard with information about the survey and the survey URL and QR code. Those who prefer to take a postcard will be asked to provide the researchers with their email address for the sole purpose of emailing them a reminder to complete the survey. Researchers will explain that once the reminders have been sent, the list of email addresses will be destroyed at the completion of the study. Researchers will also provide a paper survey packet to those potential participants who prefer not to complete the survey online. The completed paper surveys can be returned to the researchers using the self-addressed business reply envelope that will be included with the paper survey. These individuals will also be asked to provide an email address so that reminders can be sent to them, reminding them to complete and return the paper survey. The researchers will work with the Survey Research Center to send out reminder emails. The mailed in completed survey will be returned to the Survey Research Center where they will be data entered and verified by trained social science assistants at the center into the online survey tool.

Respondent-driven sampling (RDS) will be implemented, if and where it is needed, to increase engagement with the hardest-to-reach LGBTQ+ communities, such as rural, Two-Spirit, and BIPOC LGBTQ+ people. We will rely first on our recruitment through community partners and presence at relevant events. We will monitor our data as it is collected, intermittently checking the demographics of our survey participants. RDS will be used if certain identities are underrepresented in our sample, compared to information available about the general Washington population.

RDS is a network-based sampling method in which study participants can recruit others like them into the study and receive compensation for each successfully recruited participant they refer. Compensation for participants involved in RDS will be such that participants will receive \$10 for completing the survey and \$5 for each successful recruit, up to 18 recruits. Initial RDS participants – that is, participants who were recruited by the researchers, rather than by their peers – will each receive a coupon (digital or printed) with a unique identification number for themselves as well as their recruits. This aligns with Hipp and colleagues' (2019) approach.

Media outreach will also be conducted by our research team, which has existing relationships with Washington journalists who cover LGBTQ+ issues. The team will communicate with their contacts at Washington outlets, including *The Seattle Times*, *Tacoma News Tribune*, *The Spokesman-Review*, *Crosscut*, *KOMO4 News*, *KREM2 News*, *Spokane Public Radio*, *Puget Sound Public Radio*, *KEXP*, *KNKX*, and *Northwest Public Broadcasting* to share information about this news-worthy, first-ever survey opportunity and its potential to improve the lives of Washington residents by better understanding the needs of LGBTQ+ Washingtonians of all ages.

General participant compensation will be in the form of multiple raffle drawings for e-gift cards (\$50 each). Participants learning about our survey online will be eligible for one raffle. Participants completing the survey at events such as Pride will be eligible for separate raffles. Using this approach can help engage people immediately at key events, as we will communicate that a raffle drawing will occur at the end of the event and only individuals who completed the survey during or as a result of the event will be eligible. Our questionnaire will include an item capturing where/how each participant heard about the survey.

Phase 4: Data analysis and reporting

Data will be analyzed using SPSS v 28. The researchers will construct tables showing descriptive statistics and will conduct analyses examining intersections between participant characteristics (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) and outcomes such as safety experiences, medical care access, and socioeconomic status. Specific analyses will be determined during the survey design phase, in collaboration with the LGBTQ Commission.

During the data analysis and reporting phase we will provide monthly updates on preliminary findings.

When submitting the comprehensive report with findings disaggregated by key demographic areas (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender identity, socio-economic status) to the LGBTQ Commission, we will submit a first draft for review. Once the commission has shared feedback (within one month of our first submission), we will make any edits needed, then we will share the final comprehensive report.

Phase 5: Sharing findings and recommendations

We will share the survey findings with LGBTQ Commission and other groups per the communication plan that we design collaboratively. They will consist of interpretation and identification of themes from analysis of both qualitative and quantitative survey data. The findings will also include the story of the data collection process and the building of a community of learning through that process. We will also make recommendations for the LGBTQ Commission to consider in terms of practice and policy for Washington State government. We will include recommendations of possible areas for further studies and research as well as strategies for continuing to build trust and grow a dialogue with people across the state in the LGBTQ+ community in the years to come.

Sharing the findings with the LGBTQ+ community and other state residents to communicate what was learned and how the Commission will use the findings will be important to ensure transparency and to build trust that the voices of the community have been heard. We will map out in the communication plan how we will work with community partners to share findings and recommendations across the state in ways that support the LGBTQ Commission's priorities. This will lay the foundation for the Commission's recommendations to the Governor's Office.

It is also important that both the process and results of this first-of-its-kind Washington state survey be shared with practitioners and scholars in order to grow the body of knowledge and practice for effective and equitable data collection with LGBTQ+ communities. The research team will work to publish the findings in peer-reviewed journals and to share our learnings at conferences.

Timeline

The timeline for survey material preparation and testing, data collection and analysis, and final report delivery are outlined below.

Table 4: Timeline

	Year 1	Year 2				Year 3	
Quarter	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Phase 1: Survey design (3 months) Phase 2: Communication plan design (3 months)							
Phase 3: Survey recruitment and administration							
Phase 4: Data analysis and report production							
Phase 5: Share findings and recommendations							

Project and Budget Management

The lead principal researcher and co-principal researchers will have shared responsibility for project and budget management to ensure that the survey study is efficient and effective in terms of using both time and money.

We will provide the LGBTQ Commission with monthly reports for the duration of the study that will include a study progress update and next steps.

We propose meeting with our key LGBTQ Commission contacts for the study at least once a month.

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Appendix A

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale Short Form (CES-D-4) (Lewinsohn et al., 1997)

Below is a list of ways people may feel or behave. Please indicate on how many days you have felt each way during the past week.

[Matrix of 7 days to 0 days.]

I felt depressed.

I felt lonely.

I had crying spells.

I felt sad.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder subscale of Youth Anxiety Measure for DSM-5 (YAM-5-I) (Muris et al., 2017)

Please indicate on how many days during the past week you have had these experiences.

[Matrix of 7 days to 0 days displayed.]

I worried about a lot of things.

I thought a lot about what could go wrong.

I found it hard to stop worrying.

I worried a lot about all the bad things that could happen in the world.

I didn't feel well because I worried so much.