

Practice Abstract #22

Creating and distributing effective surveys in your multi-actor project

Surveys are a key tool for multi-actor projects, especially those aiming to address the needs of end-users. But how to create and distribute a good survey? The EUREKA project (www.h2020eureka.eu) identified some simple ‘tips and tricks’:

- When creating the survey, first define the target length (number and type of questions) and target audience.
- Make each question as clear, simple, and easy to answer as possible to reach your goal. Avoid complex questions, gather only the necessary information. Try to ask about something relevant and interesting for the respondents.
- Limit the number of possible answer choices for each question. If using a ‘Likert scale’, offer 5 choices maximum. Avoid long lists of questions with “multiple answers possible”.
- Limit the number of open questions, and leave them to the end of the survey form.
- Before you launch your survey, TEST AND REFINE the questionnaire, ideally with some volunteers from your target audience! If it takes more than 10-15 minutes to complete it (including consent pages), then you begin to risk to have lower response or completion rates. Generally, SHORTER and SIMPLER is best!
- Use your project network for disseminating the survey and engaging respondents. If a potential respondent gets a message from someone they know and trust, they will be much more likely to respond.
- Select a limited amount of time to have the survey open. Generally, 15-30 days is considered a good range. If it is critical to reach a higher number of responses, then consider evaluating the results by target groups part-way through this time period and fill any obvious gaps by reaching out directly to the necessary people by phone, personally, or other channels.

Good luck and happy surveying!

