Standard Demographic Battery for Cambridge Surveys

This document has survey questions that can be used in any survey to gather basic demographic information about respondents.

Contents

General Guidance

- Unless otherwise noted, these **questions should appear at the end of your survey**.
- You should **preface the demographic questions with this statement**: "The following questions are optional. Answering them will help the City to determine whether the survey respondents are a representative sample of the Cambridge population."
- You should **provide information (like a web page link) on how people can view the results of the survey** once it is complete.
- If you are using survey software such as SurveyMonkey that allows you to **anonymize the responses** (meaning you will not see the IP address of respondents), you should select that option, and include language like this at the beginning of the survey:
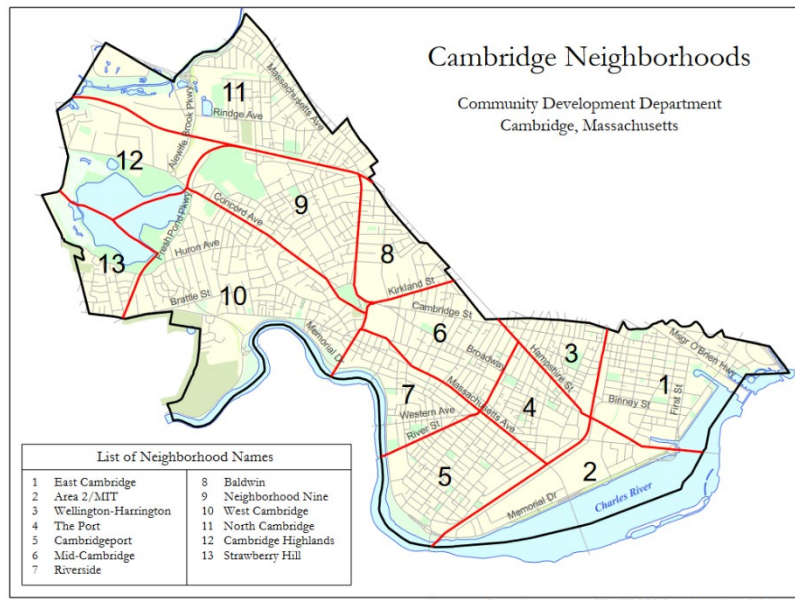
  "Your responses to this survey are anonymous. No personally identifiable information is captured unless you voluntarily include personal or contact information in your responses. Your IP address may be recorded by SurveyMonkey but is not stored with or linked to the survey results made available to the City of Cambridge."

Neighborhood

For online or in-person surveys, this question should include a labeled map of Cambridge neighborhoods like that included here. If your survey software allows, you can let respondents click on the map to select their neighborhood.

For telephone surveys or other situations where you cannot show the respondent the map, use the alternative version that groups neighborhoods into three areas.

This question can appear at the end of the survey for demographic purposes, or you can place it at the beginning if you are using it as a screener question.

Question (online/in person)
Which neighborhood do you live in?

Response Choices (online/in person, select one)
- ○ East Cambridge
- ○ Area 2/MIT
- ○ Wellington-Harrington
- ○ The Port
- ○ Cambridgeport
- ○ Mid-Cambridge
- ○ Riverside
- ○ Baldwin
- ○ Neighborhood Nine
- ○ West Cambridge
- ○ North Cambridge
- ○ Cambridge Highlands
- ○ Strawberry Hill

Question (telephone)
Which neighborhood of Cambridge best describes where you live?

Response Choices (telephone, select one)
Interviewer can read list of neighborhoods or allow the respondent to volunteer a neighborhood and allow the interviewer to assign it to the correct area.

- ○ **Western Cambridge**: North Cambridge, West Cambridge, Strawberry Hill, West Cambridge, Cambridge Highland, Village

- ○ **Eastern Cambridge:** The Port, Cambridgeport, Kendall Square, East Cambridge, Wellington-Harrington, Lechmere Square, Broadway
- ○ **Central Cambridge:** Porter Square, Agassiz, Riverside, Central Square, Mid-Cambridge, Harvard Square, Avon Hill/Harvard Square

Age

Question

What is your age?

Response Choices (select one)

- ○ Under 18
- ○ 18-24
- ○ 25-34
- ○ 35-44
- ○ 45-54
- ○ 55-64
- ○ 65-74
- ○ 75+

References

Gender

Question

What is your gender or gender identity?

(These options were developed by the City of Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission. They welcome your questions and comments and can be reached at lgbtqpluscommission@cambridgema.gov.)

Response Choices (choose all that apply; do not randomize order)

- ☐ Female/woman
- ☐ Male/man
- ☐ Non-binary/gender non-conforming (Gender is not exclusively female or male and/or does not fit into one gender category)
- ☐ Transgender (Sex assigned at birth is different than gender [Not cisgender])
- ☐ Cisgender (Sex assigned at birth is the same as gender [Not transgender])
- ☐ Self-describe [please enter]
- ☐ Choose not to answer

References

Cambridge LGTBQ+ Commission recommendation

Optionally, include this link for further information:
https://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/definitions/

Race/Origin

Question
What is your race/origin?

Response Choices (select one or more, alphabetic order)
- ☐ Asian/East Indian
- ☐ Black/African American
- ☐ Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Native American/Alaskan
- ☐ White/Caucasian
- ☐ Self-describe [please enter]

References
Based on language from Census Bureau 2015 National Content Test

https://www.census.gov/about/our-research/race-ethnicity.html

https://www2.census.gov/cac/nac/meetings/2016-10/2016-nac-jones.pdf

https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/09/30/census-2020-race-ethnicity-categories/

Income
(optional)

Question
What is your household or family income?

Response Choices (select one)
- ○ Less than $25,000
- ○ $25,000-$49,999
- ○ $50,000-$74,999
- ○ $75,000-$99,999
- ○ $100,000-$124,999
- ○ $125,000 or more
- ○ Prefer not to answer

References

Education

Question
What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Response Choices (select one)
- ○ Less than high school/GED
- ○ High school/GED
- ○ Some college, no degree

○ Associate degree or technical certificate
○ Bachelor's degree
○ Graduate, professional, or advanced studies; no degree
○ Graduate, professional, or advanced degree

References
ACS 2019, with some categories collapsed

Language Spoken at Home

Question
What is the primary language you speak at home?

Response Choices (select one or more; present in alphabetical order)
☐ Amharic
☐ Arabic
☐ Bangla
☐ Chinese
☐ English
☐ Haitian Kreyol
☐ Portuguese
☐ Spanish
☐ Portuguese
☐ Other [please enter]

References

https://www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/factsandmaps/demographicfaq

Major languages and language groups other than English reported by the 2014 - 2018 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample include Spanish (7.1%), Chinese (5.1%), Indic Languages (3.6%), French, including Haitian Kreyol, (3.2%), African Languages (2.2%), Korean (1.3%), Portuguese (1.2%), and German (1.2%).

The Cambridge Public School Department reports that for the 2019 - 2020 school year over 100 students speak the following foreign languages at home: Spanish (5.7%), Amharic (2.6%), Bengali (2.3%), Haitian Kreyol (2.2%), Arabic (1.9%), and Chinese (1.9%).

Tenure

Question
Do you rent or own your home?

Response Choices (select one)
○ Rent
○ Own

References

Affordable/Subsidized Housing

This question should only be used for surveys that specifically require information on this topic. The language is provided to improve consistency and clarity of responses across surveys.

Question
Do you live in…

Response Choices (select one)
- ○ Public Housing managed by the Cambridge Housing Authority;
- ○ Inclusionary Rental Housing, which are affordable housing units located in otherwise market rate apartment buildings;
- ○ Affordable rental housing owned or managed by an affordable housing provider such as Just-A-Start Corporation, Homeowner's Rehab, Inc., Schochet Associates, Preservation of Affordable Housing, WinnCompanies, or Maloney Properties;
- ○ Your family uses a rental voucher to help pay for a market-rate apartment in a building not included above (e.g. "Section 8" or other housing voucher)

References
Chris Cotter, CDD Housing Director (ccotter@cambridgema.gov)

Household Composition

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Question
How many people are living or staying at this address?

Response Choices
[enter numeric value]

References
ACS 2019

NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Question
How many children under 18 are living or staying at this address?

Response Choices
[enter numeric value]

References

ELDERLY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Question
How many people 65 or older are living or staying at this address?

Response Choices
[enter numeric value]

Disability

Question
Do you experience any of the following difficulties?

Response Choices (select all that apply, randomize order)
- ☐ Difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses
- ☐ Difficulty hearing, even if wearing hearing aids
- ☐ Difficulty walking or climbing steps
- ☐ Difficulty remembering or concentrating
- ☐ Difficulty with self-care, such as washing all over, or dressing
- ☐ Difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood
- ☐ None of these

References
ACS Questionnaire

Rachel Tanenhaus, Executive Director of Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, ADA Coordinator (rtanenhaus@cambridgema.gov)

Washington Group on Disability Statistics
https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/washington_group/wg_questions.htm

Employment

EMPLOYMENT STATUS
(optional)

Question
What best describes your current employment status?

Responses (select one)
- ○ Employed full-time
- ○ Employed part-time
- ○ Student
- ○ Retired
- ○ Homemaker
- ○ Not employed
- ○ Other [please enter]

EMPLOYMENT LOCATION
(optional; only ask to respondents who answer "Employed full-time" or "Employed part-time" to the Employment Status question)

Question

What best describes your work location?

Responses (select one)

- ○ On-site (<10% of hours remote/working from home)
- ○ Hybrid (10-80% of hours remote/working from home)
- ○ Remote (>80% of hours remote/working from home)

References for Employment Questions

Ernie Paicopolos/Polity Research