

Sortition Foundation

Selection & Stratification: Bespoke Selection and Postal Services for Deliberative Processes

Delivering legitimacy



SORTITION FOUNDATION

www.sortitionfoundation.org

*Opinion polling companies can be **inaccurate and expensive**. Their self-selected participants are often opinionated and **not representative** of the population, and using them means not every resident has an equal chance of being selected, **which is not fair***

The Sortition Foundation is a not-for-profit social enterprise dedicated to promoting **fair, transparent, inclusive and effective deliberative assemblies**. We want citizens' assemblies and policy juries to have the **highest level of legitimacy** with the most accurate representative, random sample of people.

Ideally, every resident in your area should have **an equal probability of receiving an invitation** to your assembly. To get as close as possible to this ideal we deliver invitations to households randomly selected from the Royal Mail Postcode Address File (PAF) - the most complete and up-to-date address database in the UK.

Accompanying the delivery of our **informative and attractive invitations** is a range of easy reply mechanisms. From the respondents we then perform a second, stratified random selection, matching the latest UK census data. **Within four-six weeks** we then deliver to you the details of your confirmed, representative random sample. We are the most cost effective, legitimate, and easy-to-use stratified random selection service in the UK.



What we offer - in detail

The Sortition Foundation provides **fair, transparent, and inclusive** selection and stratification services. Here's how we do it.

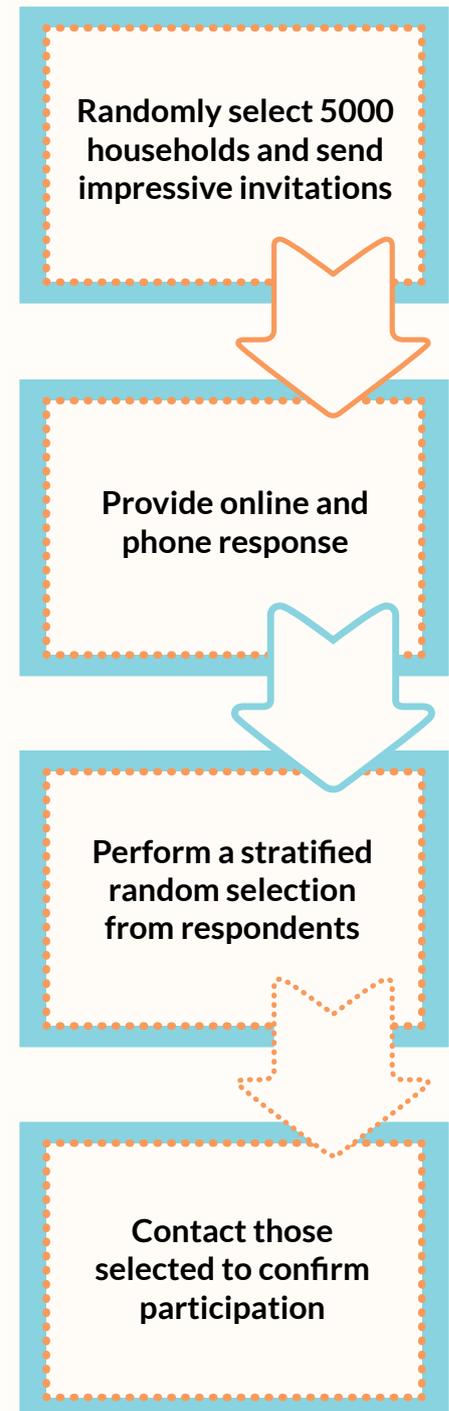
We **randomly select** at least 5000 households from the geographically relevant residential addresses in the Royal Mail Postal Address File (PAF).

We design and deliver our highly attractive and informative invitations (on your letterhead, with an FAQ and individual registration codes) to each household. This not only helps **advertise your Citizens' Assembly widely**, but puts **detailed information** about the assembly in participants' hands, and can provide **a pool of interested volunteers** for later inclusion in surveys, public meetings etc.¹

Potential participants are given two easy ways to register their interest: online or over the phone.² At this point we gather socio-economic and demographic data.

The second-step, stratified random selection is performed to match the latest UK census data, typically on four dimensions: age, location, gender and education level. We then send out confirmation letters and confirm attendance by phone, and finally deliver the details of the representative sample of 50 people to you, with a table and graph comparing participant and census data.³

Our passion is to support fair, inclusive and legitimate citizens' assemblies. As a not-for-profit social enterprise we charge minimal fees: we work on a cost recovery basis (we invoice you for cost-price postage, printing and PAF database access of ~£1/invitation) plus a minimal fee to cover our staffing and administration costs.³



¹ For all these reasons more is always better. Response rates are typically 4-7% so 10,000 letters would provide added surety that the demographic match will be as close as possible.

² The phone number can be toll-free and can also function as a 24/7 participant "help and query line".

³ The size of the assembly is flexible. MASS LBP often work with assemblies of 36 people. Others in the Democracy R&D network prefer at least 43-member assemblies. Note that if, for any reason, a participant drops out we can, with adequate warning, perform a random replacement selection.

THE SORTITION FOUNDATION IS:



Dr Brett Hennig
has a PhD in mathematics and several years experience as a software developer manipulating census data.



Ayesha Garrett
is our design and user-experience expert.



Keith Garrett
is our IT specialist and administrator.



Peter Cross
is our small business project management expert.

Our network and advisors

We are an active member of Democracy R&D, an international network of participatory and deliberative democracy practitioners and experts. This methodology is based on our understanding of the designs and philosophy of newDemocracy Foundation (Australia) and MASS LBP (Canada) projects. MASS LBP, which have delivered over 30 civic lotteries, reaching more than 200,000 Canadian households, are actively advising us in this work.



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