Sortition Foundation
Selection & Stratification Services

Bespoke Recruitment for Citizens’ Assemblies
and other Deliberative Processes

DELIVERING LEGITIMACY

www.sortitionfoundation.org
info@sortitionfoundation.org
The Sortition Foundation is a not-for-profit company 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 representative, randomly sampled groups of participants.

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 informative and attractive invitations to households randomly selected from the most complete and up-to-date postal address database in your country - e.g. the Royal Mail database in the UK.

We offer both online and freephone registration options to make the process as accessible as possible. We then perform a second, stratified random selection from the respondents, matching your target demographics for your area, and deliver to you the details of your confirmed participants.

We aim to be the most cost-effective, legitimate, and easy-to-use stratified random selection service in the world.

Our selection algorithm has been proven to give the fairest chance of selection to everyone that signs up.

You ask us to perform your stratified random selection

We invite and randomly select a representative sample

You get the details of a representative confirmed sample of residents
WHAT WE OFFER - IN DETAIL

Below we outline the recruitment and selection process for a 50-person citizens’ assembly:

The process normally takes seven weeks, and we recommend a further three weeks for the facilitators to onboard the participants.

We design and deliver our highly attractive, informative invitations to 10,000 households randomly selected from the residential addresses in the postal database of your area. The invitation package will be on your letterhead, with your branding, in a specially designed envelope; this also helps advertise your citizens’ assembly widely, and is an opportunity to generate media interest in your event.

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

At the end of the registration period we perform the second-step, stratified random selection to ensure the participants match the latest census or government data, typically on at least four dimensions: age, location, gender and occupation, or another proxy for socio-economic status. We can add other dimensions if you wish, such as ethnicity, disability, or attitude toward the topic. For those that are not selected we can invite them to stay in touch with you; they can provide a pool of interested volunteers for later inclusion in surveys, public meetings and the like.

We confirm attendance by phone, replace anyone who drops out at this stage, and finally deliver the details of the 50 confirmed participants to you, with a table and charts comparing participant, respondent and target data.

1. The phone number is toll-free and also functions as a participant help and query line.

2. For all these reasons, more is always better. Response rates are typically 3-7% so 15,000 letters would provide added surety that the demographic match will be as close as possible.

3. The size of the assembly is flexible. In the UK we have worked with successful events of between 23 and 110 participants. Note that if for any reason a participant drops out before the event, they can be replaced from the pool of registrants.
THE RESULTS

We supply you with charts showing how our process has produced a representative group of participants that matches your targets and corrects the typical skewing and biases in the group of respondents. The first column below shows your target demographics, the second shows the demographics of the registrants, and the third column shows the demographics of the selected group of participants.
GETTING IN TOUCH

We promote and support the inclusion of representative, randomly selected groups of people in democratic decision-making and are always happy to hear about any planned deliberative events and processes. We will gladly offer any support and advice that we can, and have worked with parliaments and councils on institutionalising deliberative decision making in Australia, Scotland and the rest of the UK, and Ostbelgien (East Belgium).

Email: info@sortitionfoundation.org
Telephone - UK: +44 (0) 139 482 5995
Telephone - Australia: +61 1800 979 787
www.sortitionfoundation.org

OUR NETWORK

We are an active member of Democracy R&D, an international network of participatory and deliberative democracy practitioners and experts.