

2023 Local Election Survey: Supporting and Advancing a Scientific and Community Resource to Understand the Evolving Role of Local Election Administrators

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Project Status Update

Background

The Elections & Voting Information Center (EVIC) team at Reed College is pleased to submit the following 2023 Local Election Official (LEO) Survey Update to the MIT Elections Data & Science Lab (MEDSL) and fellow grantee organizations.

Our 2023 LEO Survey project builds upon the extensive work EVIC has accomplished in this area over the past five years in collaboration with Democracy Fund, our funding partner with whom we have collaborated to field surveys of LEOs in 2018, 2019, 2020, and 2022. The full extent of this past work with Democracy Fund, including the recently issued 2022 LEO Survey results, can be accessed at a newly updated [LEO Survey Summary Page](#) on the EVIC website which contains the following tabbed sections of materials:

- [A Profile of the “Typical” LEO](#)
- [Workload and Staffing](#)
- [The New Environment of Threats, Harassment, and Abuse](#)
- [Survey Methodology](#)
- [Papers, Reports, and Other Resources](#)
- [Codebooks and Crosstabs](#)

The 2023 LEO Survey will be completed in the next six months with results and data dissemination in Summer, 2023. We will plan briefings and promotion to continue in Summer and Fall 2023.

September 2022 – Present

As we worked to conclude our work on the 2022 LEO Survey and promote its results during the last quarter of 2022 through working papers (“[Buffeted by Many Storms: Local Election Officials Survey Results, 2018-2022](#)”), social media engagement, blog posts ([The State of Election Administration in 2022](#) and [LEO Retirements and Departures: Data from the 2022 and 2020 Surveys](#)) a joint press call webinar with Democracy Fund and national media, a presentation to the Oregon Association of County Clerks (OACC) at their annual meeting, and participation in the Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) Poster Session, we also have accomplished the following tasks specifically to kick-off the 2023 survey effort:

- **Survey Partner Selection and Engagement** – We have begun engagement with [SSRS](#), our 2022 Survey administration partner, to work with us again in 2023. We are currently working through timelines and survey method options to fit our budget and schedule parameters.
- **LEO Survey “Data Rodeo” Planning and Implementation** – We are holding this event at the Conference Within a Conference (CwC) at the Southern Political Science Association (SPSA) conference to expose our election sciences-focused academic researcher colleagues to the data we have collected during our past four LEO Surveys and the resulting analyses so that we can
- **Advisory Group Selection and Engagement**
 - **Academic Advisory Members** – We have created a broad list of potential advisors and are currently narrowing the list to a group of 10 -15 who have the availability, interest, and background to assist in this area. We have our first meeting of this group scheduled for February 3rd and will be sending invitations out the second week of January. We are presently preparing an agenda and materials for this meeting, including a sample instrument and methodology.
 - **Election Official Advisory Members** – We have created a broad list of potential advisors and are currently narrowing the list to a group of 10 -15 who have the availability, interest, and background to assist in this area (i.e., state and local election officials in different regions of the country and with different types of local election administration). We have our first meeting of this group scheduled for February 10th and will be sending invitations out the second week of January. We are presently preparing an agenda and materials for this meeting, including a sample instrument and methodology.
 - **Stakeholder Advisory Group Selection Members** – We have created a broad list of potential advisors from “other” groups (i.e., CTCL, CISA, The Election Center, NASED) and are currently narrowing the list to a group of 6-10 who have the availability, interest, and background to assist in this area. We have our first meeting of this group scheduled for February 24th and will be sending invitations out the second week of January. We are presently preparing an agenda and materials for this meeting, including a sample instrument and methodology.
- **Survey Instrument Development and Initial Testing** – We have begun internal team discussions about our most recent survey instrument (2022) and how we may improve upon it for 2022 with the introduction of new questions and batteries and possible elimination of other sections. This includes the following:
 - Solicit and summarize testing input from academic and practitioner advisory board members and integrate as appropriate.
 - Field new survey questions with the aid of advisory group member feedback in an effort to test responses; prepare draft survey instrument with these new questions and test with advisory group members.

On the Immediate Horizon

In addition to the completion of the above activities, the following tasks will take place during the first quarter of 2023:

- Survey Data Collection Methods & Sampling Research
- Instrument Testing (Continued)