

## **SOCIOMETRICS PROJECT No. 67**

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### **DATASET DEVELOPMENT SOFTWARE & FAMILY RESEARCH ITEM BANK PHASE I**

Developing and documenting social science research instruments is time-consuming. Increasingly, researchers are asked to share data sets, which requires a high standard of documentation that takes more resources. This work could be made easier with software that automates formatting and generating all research materials (including the instruments, codebooks, and set-up files), creating data maps, error checking, and preparing files for analysis.

This Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I project, which built on the work of Project No. 45, developed such an integrated software program. The user provides common information once, and uses that information to develop research instruments and codebooks documenting the instruments and data files, develop and clean the data files, and produce fully documented data sets. The software automated tasks best done by computer, improved instrumentation and documentation by providing a complete, high-quality structure and format, and reduced the post data-collection effort of documenting a public use data set.

To assist family researchers, Sociometrics also built an item bank of high quality, commonly used questions, scales, and interviewing tools. This bank is a resource users may draw on to develop their research instruments. In Phase I we built on preliminary work to complete a prototype of the proposed software and a prototype of the item bank.

The software has the potential to be useful to nearly every social science researcher who is collecting primary data. It also has the potential to be suitable for classroom use, in courses on social science methods or courses that require data collection and analysis by students. Beyond the academic disciplines, there is potential use in evaluation research, market research, and program management (where management includes the collection and analysis of client data in intake and process forms).

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6100 Executive Blvd., Room 8A-01  
Bethesda, MD 20892-7510  
(301) 496-1174

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Staff: J. L. Peterson, D. Kim