**Will you help us get the “can’t do digital” group online for the 2021 Census?**

Would you like to be involved in a once-in-a-decade opportunity to shape the future of our country? We’d like to invite you to consider working with us on the first mainly online census in 2021.

The census has taken place in England and Wales for over 200 years. It provides a unique snapshot in time of the whole population, giving vital insights into how we live, who we are and what we need.

Census statistics reflect changes in society and provide a level of detail we can’t get from any other source about the way we live and work. All businesses – including yours – need census information to inform development decisions. It’s also essential for local and national government to help them make critical funding decisions on areas like transport, education and health.

Making the census work is a massive undertaking – probably the most visible public campaign held in this country – and an exciting opportunity for everyone who takes part. In 2021, this is particularly so for companies promoting digital inclusion, because we want most households to do their census online.

For the majority of people, this won’t be a problem. It will be just another of many online transactions they do as part of everyday life. Others, though, won’t find it so simple. These are the people who, for various reasons, are being left behind by the digital revolution. They’re not opposed to being online: they just don’t have the skills, confidence, technology or opportunity to do so.

At the Office for National Statistics (ONS), our commitment to an “online first” 2021 Census means we’re planning to make online participation possible for those who don’t have digital skills.

This is where you come in. Can you help us to get as many of the “digitally disconnected” group as possible doing their census online?

Whether you’re a company or a charity, a nationwide operation with thousands of branches, or a local specialist with a handful of outlets, we want to meet you. Our task is to provide a network of face-to-face online support for the census across England and Wales. We recognise that to do this we may need to consider working with a wide variety of organisations committed to helping those struggling to go digital.

We’re holding a supplier event on the morning of 25 April 2018 in central London (St. James' Court, A Taj Hotel) so that we can tell you more about our needs for 2021 Census Assisted Digital and hear your comments and questions. We’ll also be offering another opportunity on 16 May for interested companies to meet and discuss further with ONS project leads and other organisations committed to digital inclusion. This second session will be highly interactive, with lots of opportunity for discussion and the potential to develop partnerships to ensure we can offer online support wherever we need to.

Our need for assistance for those who are willing but unable to do a digital census is simple. We need face-to-face help, suitable venues where this can take place, internet-enabled technology, and a flexible approach – the help will range from answering a simple query to hands-on guidance through the online census questions. We have no need for digital training.

We’re still finding out where we are most likely to need to offer digital assistance. Our aim is to be able to do this in every neighbourhood in England and Wales. With your help, we can.

We hope you are as excited about this opportunity as we are about sharing it with you. If you have any questions about the event, please contact Amy Thorne (amy.thorne@ons.gov.uk) and we will be happy to help you.