

SCP Large-Scale Open-Submission Field Experiments: Webinar Q&A

General

- Will there be a recording of the webinar?
 - *Answer: Yes. It is uploaded to the SCP website.*
- I heard there is a submission survey?
 - *Answer: Yes. Please see the call-for-idea (<https://myscp.org/events/boutique/climate-2023/>) for the submission survey link (also included here: https://stanfordgsb.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0eTCYmqr9n2uUGq)*
- Can submissions be in teams?
 - *Answer: Yes. In the submission survey, you'll be asked to enter collaborators' names and affiliations.*
- Can visuals be a moving image or a short video clip?
 - *Answer: Visuals shouldn't be larger than 50 MB or smaller than 100KB, and should be in JPG or GIF formats (which can contain animation) for the first field experiment with BFFP. Visuals should be around 750 x 1334 px in JPG or PNG format for the second field experiment with Dharma Life.*
- How many ideas will be selected to run?
 - *Answer: About 10+ ideas per field experiment. Please see the call-for-idea for the selection process and criteria.*
- Timeline for submissions' outcome?
 - *Answer: Submissions are due on January 31st; winning submissions will be announced Mid-February.*
- How will the idea be evaluated?
 - *Answer: The selection committee will be looking at expected success, novelty (relative to existing literature) and uniqueness. Please see the call-for-idea for the selection process and criteria.*
- Do we need to explain the rationale underlying our submissions?
 - *Answer: Yes, in the submission survey (300 words). If you have some pilot or pretest data or literature you can pull from, all of these will count as rationale.*
- Pre-registration?
 - *Answer: We will pre-register the sample size, number of treatment groups, and outcome variables. We will also preregister the analysis plan of comparing each treatment group against the control. We will not have predetermined predictions for how the treatment groups vary from each other (those will be exploratory analyses), nor how demographic variables may play a role.*
- Is there a plan for publication from these field studies?
 - *Answer: Yes. The committee will select ideas, and those selected will be invited to the SCP Pre-Conference on Sustainability to work together to refine the ideas. These ideas will be implemented, followed by data analysis. Then we'll start*

drafting two papers. All the researchers whose ideas are tested will have access to the data and analysis, and will be authors on the paper(s).

BFFP Field Experiment

Control Condition

- Are two submissions allowed?
 - *Answer: We encourage researchers to pretest and submit their strongest idea.*
- What is the control?
 - *Answer: There will be a neutral control condition with action hyperlinks but without any intervention messages. See the call-for-idea for the text of the neutral control condition – they are in short italic paragraphs leading up to the two action hyperlinks (petition and home audit). The selected intervention message will be added as the leading paragraph in the email.*
- Control's subject line?
 - *Answer: It will be a neutral subject line "Break Free From Plastic Newsletter".*

Dependent Measures

- What are the outcome variables?
 - *Answer: 3 outcome variables (please see call-for-idea for more details):*
 - Petition: we'll track whether your message effectively motivates people to click the link and sign the petition.*
 - Home audit: we will measure click rate to read more about home audit, and sign-up for home audit.*
 - Follow-up survey: we will ask questions about attitude and behavioral intentions regarding reducing plastic pollution.*
- Would it be possible to augment the DVs in the study, with the PI's resources?
 - *Answer: We are focusing on 3 outcome variables and are not planning to add more. But feel free to let us know if there are highly relevant DVs to consider (for the follow-up survey) in the comment box at the end of the submission survey.*
- What are the key goals and potential downstream consequences of the home audit?
 - *Answer: It is a way to shift to systemic thinking. Corporations have been blaming the consumers, but it is hard to make individual changes for many things we buy. The home audit helps people to start thinking how they can contact their brands to reduce plastic.*

Background: Newsletter and Audience

- Do all member types (core, associate, and individual members) receive the same newsletter?
 - *Answer: Yes, and they all receive the same newsletter.*
- Can you send an updated link to the petition?
 - *Answer: <https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/the-world-demands-an-ambitious-global-treaty-to-end-the-age-of-plastic/>*

- Is there a risk that people who signed up for the newsletter are already motivated regarding plastic waste reduction?
 - *Answer: Yes, the BFFP newsletter subscribers are already somewhat interested in the topic, but they are currently passively receiving information. We hope to convert that interest into action. In addition, we will include an additional audience (10,000 panelists somewhat concerned about climate change and believe in climate change); we hope to make them aware of the issue of plastic pollution and prompt their actions as well.*
- The use of plastic is particularly high in India and China: should research focus on interventions in these countries?
 - *Answer: The BFFP membership is global. Also, there is a disproportionate impact from the US/Europe on plastic pollution.*
- What are the demographics of the newsletter recipients?
 - *Answer: The country breakdown is in a hyperlink in the call-for-idea. And here is more information about newsletter subscribers:
<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ebbNzNvcsPMWVLRZlvFz87IGAXoicQ8K7fNM2OsAeWo/edit#slide=id.p1>*

Intervention

- Can the intervention use multiple constructs (e.g., framing, ownership)?
 - *Answer: We are looking for the strongest ideas; so yes, it can include multiple constructs.*
- Is the idea to provide a theoretically rich message, or a message that is effective?
 - *Answer: A message that is effective. Please see call-for-idea for selection criteria.*

Other/General

- How concerned is BFFP with phthalates in food?
 - *Answer: It is definitely an area of concern as one of the issues we are focusing on is toxicity of plastic.*
- Where can participants go to get more information about ways to reduce plastic use?
 - *Answer: breakfreefromplastic.org*
- Can we send draft experiments to get feedback?
 - *Answer: We can answer questions that may influence your message's effectiveness, but won't be able to review the actual design/message.*
- Can we come up with a way to encourage faculty to assign the at home audit for courses where doing that is relevant?
 - *Answer: That will be great! There are examples and resources on the BFFP website and ways to do that.*

Dharma Life Field Experiment

Audience

- Will the message be used by entrepreneurs to send to their local community?

- *Answer: The message you craft (if selected) will be sent to the entrepreneur who (if they sign on to the initiative) will send the message via WhatsApp to the local community. The entrepreneurs will also use the script you craft in the meeting with the local community. Specifically, all entrepreneurs will be invited to a meeting with Dharma Life on the new tree planting campaign. Your WhatsApp message will be sent to entrepreneurs at this meeting after the campaign is introduced (randomized across entrepreneurs; each entrepreneur is responsible for 3 to 4 villages in the vicinity including her own). Entrepreneurs who choose to participate in this campaign will forward this WhatsApp message to individuals in the villages that they are responsible for. They will also set up meetings with the villagers during which they will use the script to which they are randomly assigned.*
- What is the background of these entrepreneurs who are associated with this particular project?
 - *Answer: They are women from the local community who are already working with Dharma Life on other campaigns. Their level of education varies; however, they are all literate and are capable of using a smartphone.*
- How will the intervention messages be translated (will they be translated) to the local language?
 - *Answer: We are sticking to Hindi speaking North India. We will translate and localize messages from English to the local language. We will also backtranslate so researchers can verify.*
- Why would a villager not want to plant a tree? Where do the trees come from?
 - *Answer: One of the key challenges has been the local context and community impact. There is inertia, low perceived importance and awareness. Also, the type of trees and local environment is taken into account and pre-planned before launching the field experiment.*
- Are there any Hindu religious holidays or customs that we should consider?
 - *Answer: Yes there are, but the timing of the experiment won't overlap with major religious holidays. We'll test all interventions in the same time period so that results can be compared.*
- Can we add a spiritual/religious element?
 - *Answer: There are multiple religions, so religion has been avoided in the past in order to be inclusive.*

Organization

- How is this group's work different from Pollinate Group? <https://pollinategroup.org/>
 - *Answer: That group may do similar work on some social causes, but it seems to be smaller, and we do not have a partnership with this group.*

Dependent Measures

- Are the measures self-reported? How do you know that an entrepreneur reached a certain # of people?

- *Answer: We cross check self-reports in various ways (Call, GPS tags, ML algorithm to track attendance). We verify in at least one way.*
- The trees will be planted on whose land?
 - *Answer: There tends to be public village land, and as long as there is cooperation from the village head there is space (but could also be a covariate - access to own land). We will coordinate with the village head and ask about land at the village level. In addition, there is long term income generation through some trees (fruit etc.) so there's interest. There will be consistency across the sample.*
- For how long will the experiment last?
 - *Answer: 6 months as the cutoff date. We'll track the progress across that time.*
- Will these messages be sent multiple times within a timeframe?
 - *Answer: This is a possibility and is open to discussion. We will refine this at the pre-conference. We will keep the message repetition constant across conditions.*
- Is there a tree per person? or per group?
 - *Answer: The unit of analysis is entrepreneurs. The outcome variable is how many trees are planted as a result of the entrepreneur's outreach.*

Control Condition

- What is the control condition in the Dharma Life experiment?
 - *Answer: The specifics of the control condition will be informed by the interventions proposed for the field experiment. A potential design of the experiment could involve not having a strict control condition, and having the proposed interventions compete against each other.*

Other/General

- Who will take care of expenses and the quality of inputs (e.g., the saplings, fertilizer, knowledge, etc.)?
 - *Answer: We will, and will coordinate with partners on the ground.*