Voices of Australia

Design, Results and Lessons Learned from an Attempt to Establish an Online Panel of First and Second Generation Australians

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Social Research Centre

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Introduction

Voices of Australia was an attempt to establish a hybrid probability-nonprobability panel of first- and second-generation minority migrants to Australia

Aim was to try to find an affordable middle way between

- High spec but very expensive approaches featuring F2F recruitment and extensive trust building in minority migrant communities and
- Fast and less expensive nonprobability approaches (e.g., existing panels, targeted social media recruitment)

Fielded an extensive pilot but did not move to scale

Presentation will describe approach and present lessons learned

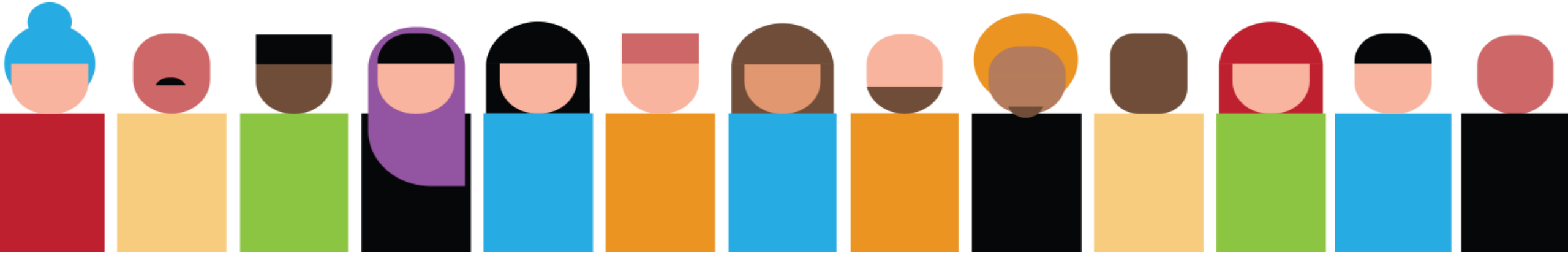
Rationale

Scanlon Foundation Research Institute undertakes research to help Australia advance as a welcoming, prosperous and cohesive nation, particularly where this relates to the transition of migrants into Australian society

Aimed to establish a panel of minority first- and second-generation Australians to support research to:

- Give ethnic minorities in Australia a voice within a research context
- Capture a nuanced picture of “diversity within diversity”
- Support research across the multicultural diversity that makes up Australia
- Challenge mainstream misconceptions and support policy development and service delivery
- Track and explain changes over time

Sample design



Probability component

Used address-based sampling (ABS) to permit effective stratification by incidence of target population

- Australian cell phone numbering not tied to geography

Strata built out of Statistical Area Level 1 (c. 200–800 persons)

- Lowest level geography for which statistics from 2016 Census of Population and Housing were available

Higher sampling rate for higher incidence strata

Incidence of eligible population	Total eligible pop.	Pct. of eligible pop.	Address selections
Excluded	102,429	3.1	0
5% < 15%	398,812	12.1	2,024
15% < 25%	431,268	13.1	1,529
25% < 35%	428,341	13.0	1,000
35% < 45%	396,014	12.0	1,000
45% < 55%	373,689	11.3	753
55% < 65%	344,966	10.5	576
65% < 75%	330,178	10.0	541
75%+	490,233	14.9	812
All strata	**3,193,501**	**96.9**	**8,235**

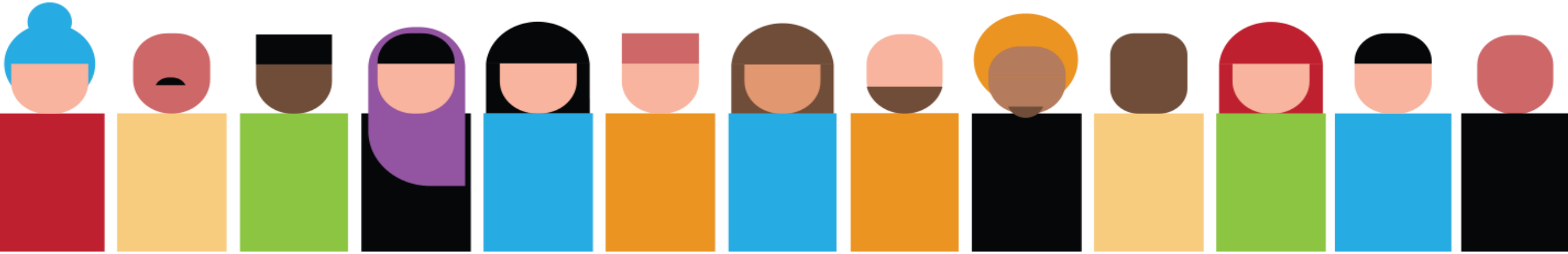
Nonprobability component

Intended to add targeted nonprobability samples over time (e.g., targeting particular ethnic communities) calibrated to the probability "spine" of the sample

Trialled recruitment from organizations with connections to the funder as a Hail Mary when low response to the ABS recruitment

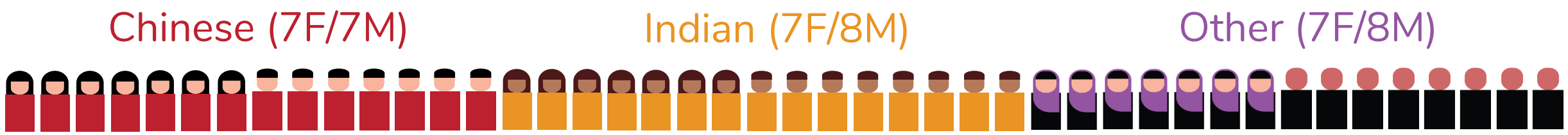
- Implemented by organizations as email blasts to their contacts with open link
- We were not able to obtain contact information and send individual email invitations and reminders with unique URLs

Contact material



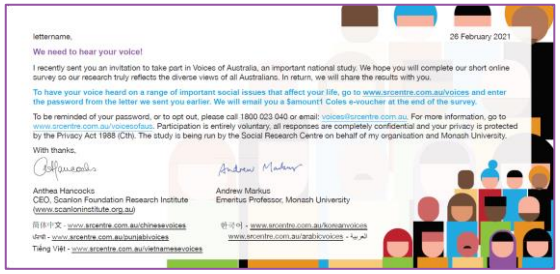
Design of contact material and branding

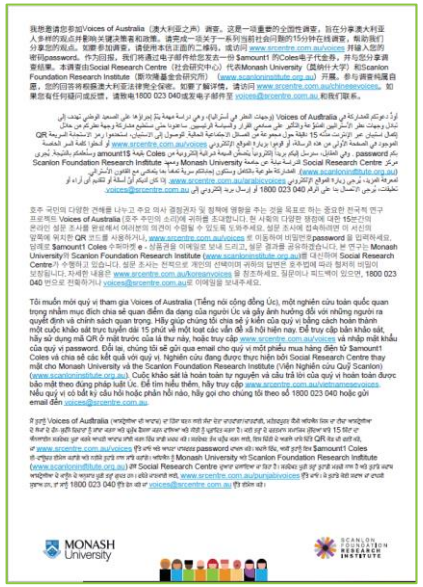
- Vendor developed a suite of study names and logos
- Draft content developed by the Social Research Centre
- Brand elements and key materials were tested in 12 mini groups, with 44 eligible Australians stratified by ethnicity and gender

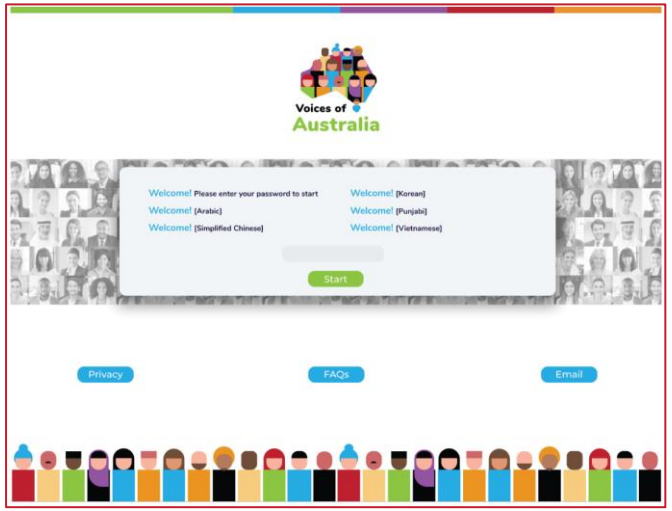


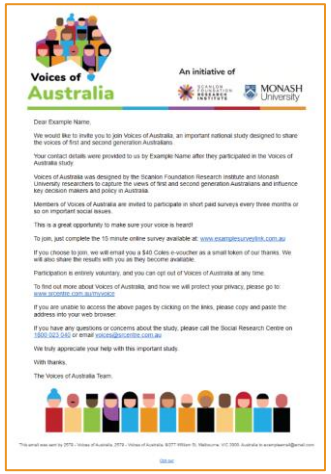
- Content was updated to reflect recommendations and branding applied to all materials

Voices of Australia

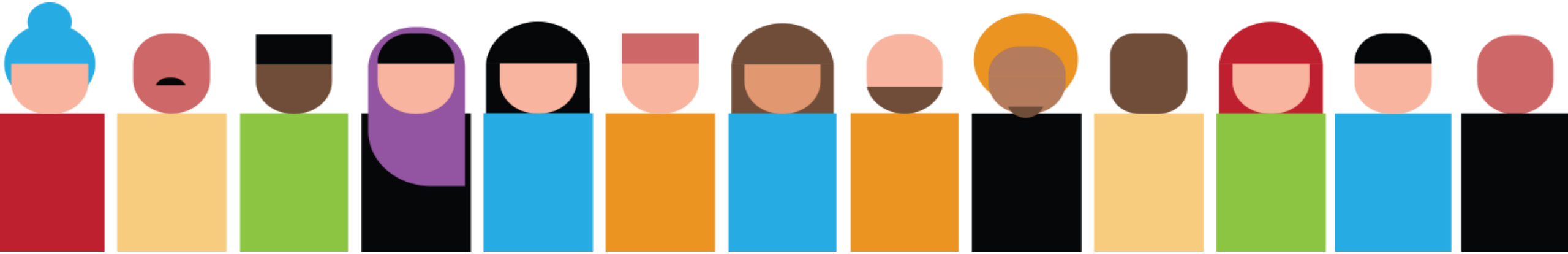








Methods



Languages

Chosen to maximise coverage of linguistic isolates (not speak English well or at all) with a focus on minorities or because a rapidly growing population

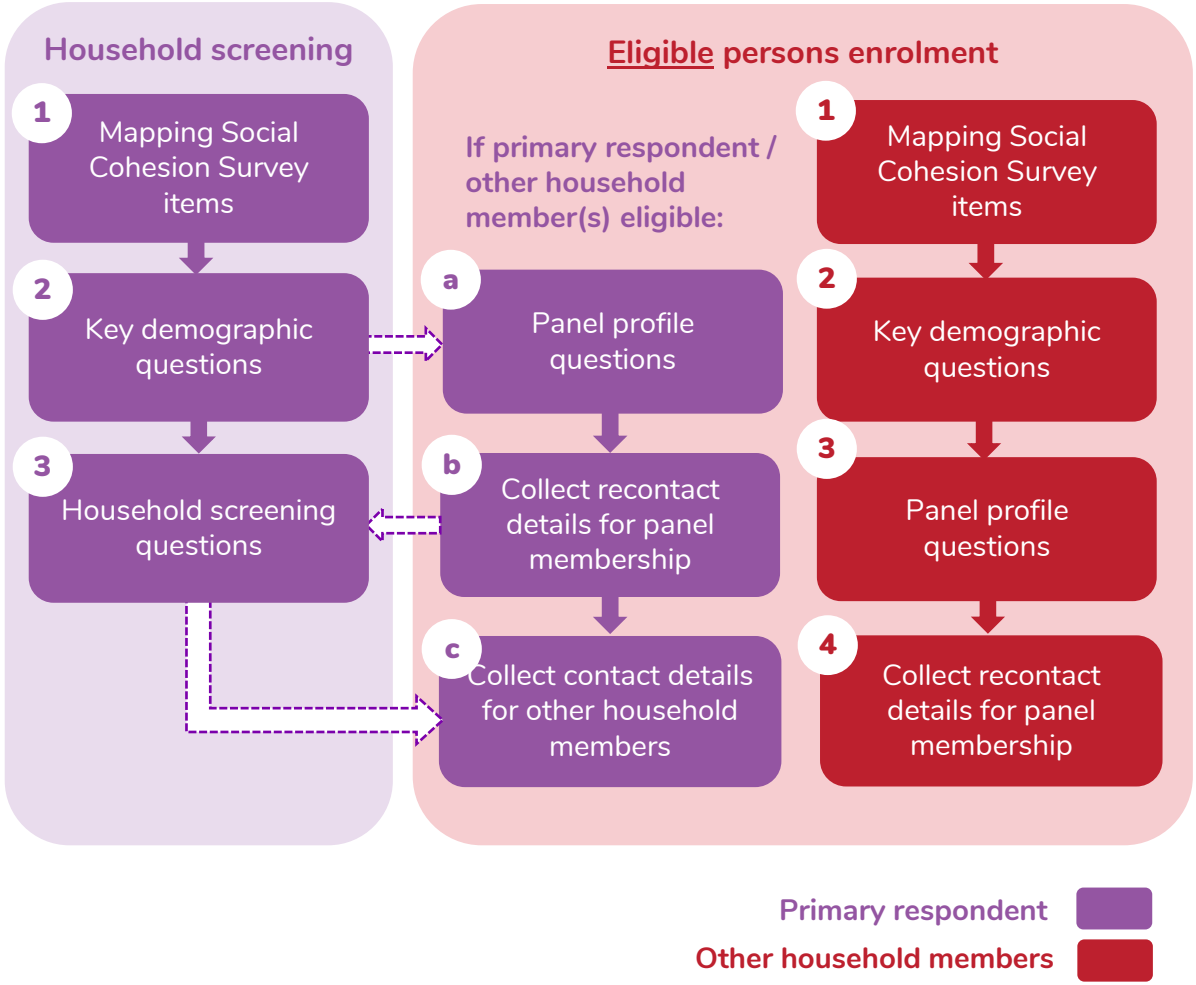
Simplified Chinese	29.9% of linguistic isolates
Vietnamese	11.9%
Arabic	6.2%
Korean	4.5%
Punjabi	1.3% + growing population

Contact schedule for ABS sample

Invitation (n=8,235)	Invitation letter and brochure	Mailed Feb 19, 2021
Reminder 1 (n=8,235)	Reminder postcard	Mailed Feb 26, 2021
Reminder 2 (n=3,276)	Reminder telephone calls (to matched numbers)	Mar 9 to Mar 19, 2021
Reminder 3 (n=7,334)	Reminder letter	Mailed Mar 22, 2021

Screening and profiling for ABS sample

- Concern about topic-related nonresponse
- Implemented two phase screener with the nature of the request blinded until after screening
- Topic “reveal” occurred within the web survey itself rather than in separate mailings
- Attempted to recruit all eligible household members
- Resulted in very complex questionnaire flow



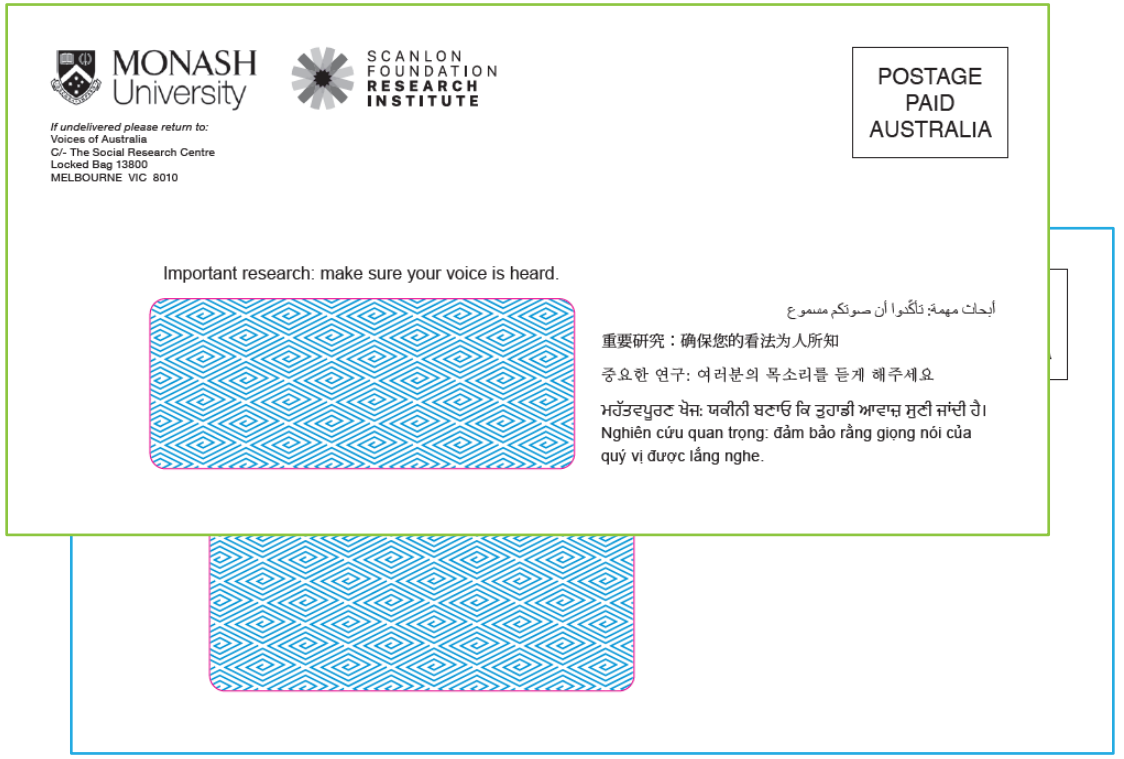
Experiments

Value of promised incentive (supermarket e-gift card)

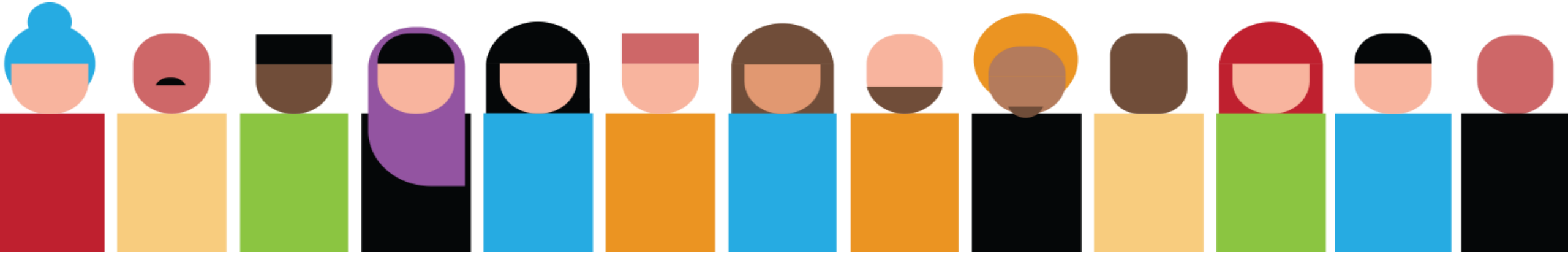
	Screening	
Promised to all responding HHs	5 AUD	10 AUD

	Enrolment	
Promised to all eligible HHs	20 AUD	40 AUD

Envelope wording: “Important research: make sure your voice is heard”



Results



What happened?

Screened

Eligible

Enrolled

Main respondent

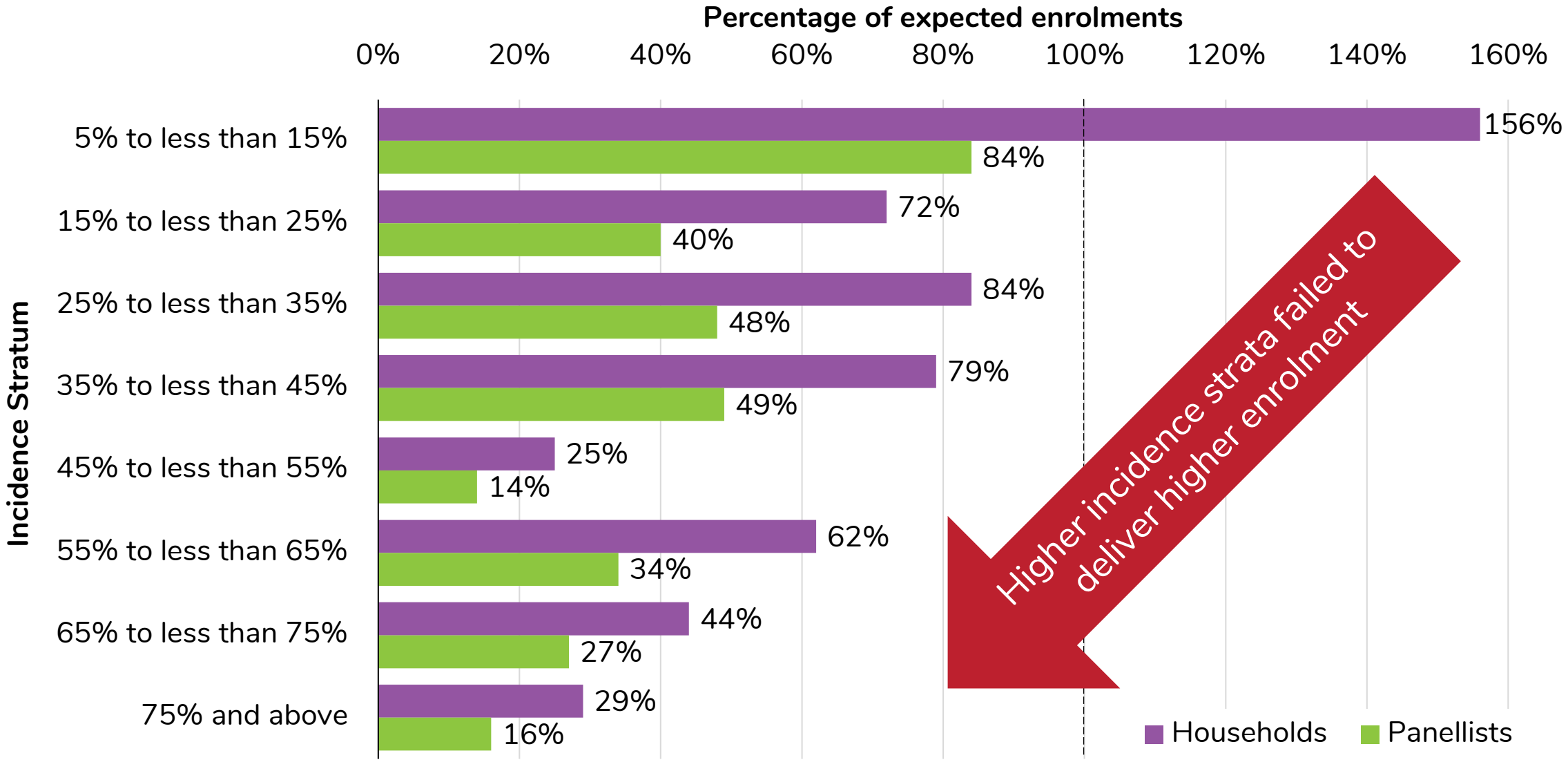
~~700~~ 622 ~~251~~ 218 ~~251~~ 133

Other HH members

~~251~~ 45 ~~251~~ 35

~~502~~ 168

Stratification by incidence



Screener incentive and envelope experiments

Envelope: standard	Envelope: in-language messaging	5 AUD	10 AUD
8.1% screened	7.0% screened	6.5% screened	8.5% screened
3.4% screened eligible	3.1% screened eligible	2.5% screened eligible	4.0% screened eligible

Enrolment incentive

Main respondent		Other household member	
20 AUD	40 AUD	20 AUD	40 AUD
57.3% enrol	65.3% enrol	16.8% enrol	17.4% enrol

Not a significant predictor of enrolment

Not a significant predictor of enrolment

Given small sample size and higher nominal enrolment rates, higher incentive preferred

Nonprobability sample

Invitation sent out via network of organisations the funder works with as email blasts to an open link—no information on number of people who received invitation

144 eligible and enrolled from open link (i.e. nonprobability) sample

Average absolute error

Demographic	ABS	Open link	Combined
Generation	2.6	0.5	1.2
Age	4.9	4.1	3.1
Gender	1.7	8.2	4.7
Education	15.1	17.7	16.3
State	2.8	5.8	3.6
Citizenship	8.9	23.1	15.5
Country of birth (first generation only)	4.2	4.9	3.2
Religion	5.0	4.2	3.2
Language spoken at home	3.9	3.7	2.3
English proficiency	4.0	7.6	5.2
First mentioned ancestry	4.3	3.9	2.8

Average absolute error = $\sum_{k=1}^{K}|\hat{x}_k - x_k|/K$ for $k = 1,2, \ldots K$ categories of x, where $\hat{x}$ is Voices enrolment and x is Census estimate

Use of translations

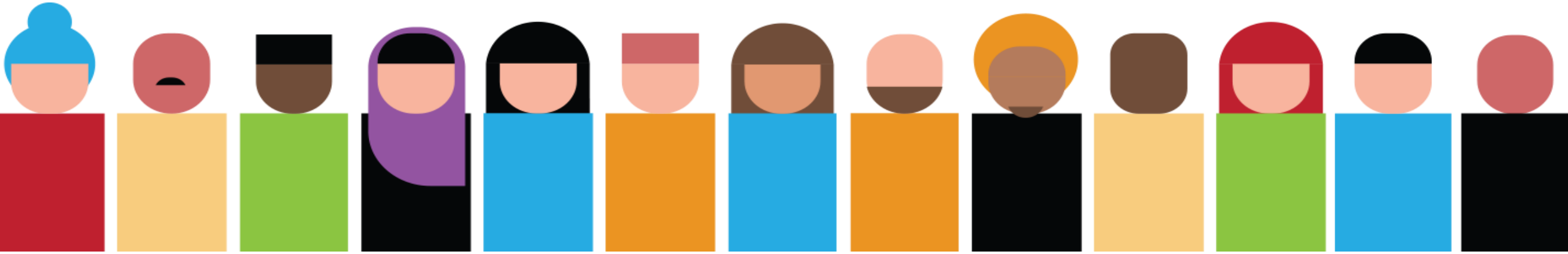
Screened

Language	n	%
English	599	96.3
Simplified Chinese	16	2.6
Arabic	1	0.2
Korean	4	0.6
Vietnamese	2	0.3
Punjabi	1	0.2
Total	622	100.0

Enrolled

Language	n	%
English	151	89.9
Simplified Chinese	14	8.3
Arabic	0	0.0
Korean	2	1.2
Vietnamese	1	0.6
Punjabi	0	0.0
Total	168	100.0

Lessons learned



Lessons learned

Fail small, fast and cheaply—pilot was too big to fail

ABS unaffordable in Australia for surveying minority migrants

Few open-link enrolees recruited through migrant organisations

Messaging failed to resonate with target audience despite testing with response in roughly inverse proportion to stratum incidence

Initially blinded recruitment effort and attempt to recruit multiple household members led to **extremely complicated questionnaire**

High cost of translation and programming in multiple languages disproportionate to number of enrolments

Hybrid probability and nonprobability approaches may have merit given evidence of offsetting biases

Thank you

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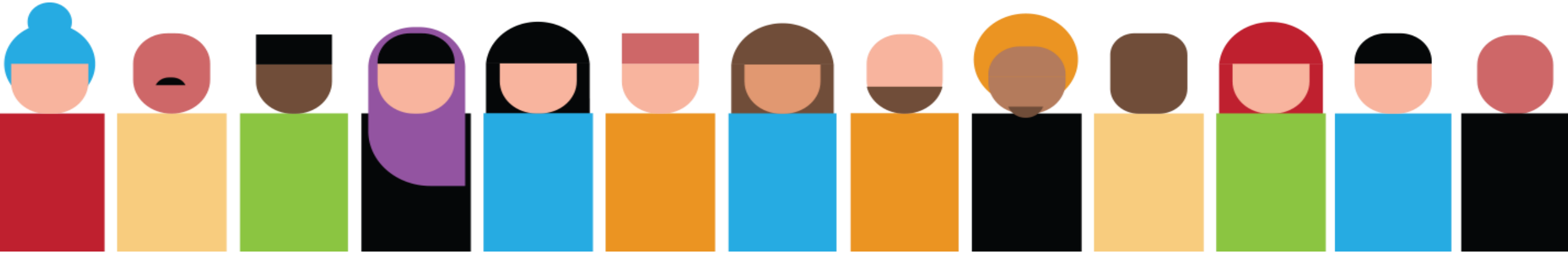

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