



June 26, 2025

Stephen Ehikian, Acting Administrator
General Services Agency (GSA)

RE: Adding ISO 20252 to list of approved/accepted certifications

The General Services Agency (GSA) needs a measure of research transparency and quality for partners in the marketplace that can provide reassurance to the federal government in its procurement of market research, insights and analytics services. A key such measure is ISO 20252 (Market, Opinion and Social Research).¹

On behalf of the Certification Institute for Research Quality (CIRQ) -- a nonprofit established to provide assessment and certification services to market research firms -- and the Insights Association -- the leading nonprofit association for the market research, analytics and insights industry, with more than 9400 members, we urge GSA to add ISO 20252 to the agency's list of approved and accepted certifications for contractors and providers.

ISO 20252 addresses market research stakeholder needs and includes data practices, ethical requirements, and clauses on data management security. Processes outlined in ISO 20252 are designed to produce transparent, consistent, well-documented, and error-free methods of conducting and managing research projects. ISO eliminates any doubt in regard to an organization's adherence to internationally recognized standards -- criteria that can be met in any myriad of ways, as it's tailored to each applicant.

The requirements of the global market research ISO standard are not easily met, and they may not make sense for all companies and organizations, but they can help GSA and other federal government agencies make decisions when considering research providers they can trust.

While ISO 9001 is accepted by the GSA and remains the global standard for quality management systems, its requirements are too generalized for market research and insights providers as they establish an ISO-compliant research process management system. The requirements of ISO 20252 have been developed by a committee of global experts, academics, and certification bodies to serve as industry-specific best practices.

¹ <https://www.insightsassociation.org/Resources/ISO-Certification>

Adding ISO 20252 to GSA's list of approved and accepted certifications will recognize that companies/organizations certified to ISO 20252 may make trusted partners in research studies. The Insights Association recently advised the Office of Management & Budget (OMB) in a similar vein.²

We look forward to answering any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

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Certification Institute for Research Quality (CIRQ)

Howard Fienberg
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² IA comments to OMB. May 12, 2025.

<https://www.insightsassociation.org/Portals/INSIGHTS/xBlog/uploads/2025/5/12/IA-comments-OMB-FedResearchRegs-5-12-25.pdf>