The Bureau of Sociological Research (BOSR) had a banner year! With over $2.1 million in revenue, almost 150 projects, and a growing professional staff in 2022-2023, BOSR had one of our most successful years ever. We served clients from UNL, UNMC, UNO, the University system, the State of Nebraska, and other organizations on a wide range of projects and topics. BOSR provided research support services for web, mail, and telephone surveys, observational studies in the field, and qualitative interviews and focus groups. In 2022, BOSR also expanded our data analysis services, hiring new project analysts to support our clients’ statistical analysis and reporting needs. BOSR’s interviewing staff is also at full capacity, with about 75 interviewers calling on BOSR’s telephone projects. One of BOSR’s long-term interviewers supervisors, Lejla Kulovac, won a College of Arts and Sciences staff Applause award for her dedicated work and service to BOSR. It’s been a big year.

To collect the highest quality data for our clients, BOSR consistently reevaluates our standard methods to ensure representation of the population at large and cost-effective data collection strategies for clients. With that in mind, BOSR is increasingly conducting mixed-mode surveys that include web with other more traditional modes of data collection such as mail and telephone surveys. Although internet access at home is prevalent, it is not universal. Not everyone who has internet access at home feels that their information is safe or private when communicated over a web survey. So that everyone has a chance to have their voice heard whether they have the internet at home or not, BOSR surveys offer multiple modes of data collection for participation. More details about seven of our mixed-mode surveys are highlighted in this report.

BOSR continued our partnership with the Nebraska Translator and Interpreter Core (NETIC) to translate surveys into languages other than English so that a wider range of Nebraskans can participate and be included in surveys. Internal BOSR research finds that Spanish-language surveys are completed by those who do speak English at home. Thus, expanding languages for BOSR surveys beyond English is important for inclusion and equity and in providing clients with high-quality data that more accurately reflects the population of interest. We are pleased to have supported the work of 51 translation projects – for BOSR surveys and the community at large – over the last year.

Qualitative data collection provides insights into what participants think, feel, and do in detail that cannot be obtained through closed-ended survey questions. Although BOSR has long collected data through open-ended survey questions, we conducted a record number of in-depth interviews and focus groups to support our client needs this year. BOSR can conduct qualitative research and can provide support to qualitative researchers, including transcribing audio recordings, coding interviews and transcripts, or taking notes during interviews and focus groups. We did all of these types of projects over the last year.

Understanding what people and businesses think, feel, and do is the heart of our work. As we look toward our 60th year, we look forward to fulfilling BOSR’s mission of providing high-quality data for researchers, administrators, and policymakers at UNL and in the community.

Kristen Olson
Director, Bureau of Sociological Research

### At a Glance

BOSR engaged in work on a wide number of new and ongoing projects this year across the University of Nebraska System and the state.

#### 2022-2023 REVENUE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
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<th>Revenue</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>UNMC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>UNO</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td><strong>STATE OF NEBRASKA</strong></td>
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#### Worked on

<table>
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<th>Grants</th>
<th>Translations</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>148</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2023 BOSR Annual Report 3
Providing Valuable Insights for University Partners

BOSR helps units across the university answer important questions about what faculty, staff, students, alumni, and others are doing and thinking about the University of Nebraska. Information from these data collections help departments, centers, and units at UNL gather information to improve processes, understand the current state of business, and help departments gather data for Academic Program Reviews.

Higher Education Survey

**Background:** University Communication & Marketing wants to understand the perceived quality and value of education at UNL compared to other institutions.

**BOSR’s Role:** BOSR facilitated the fielding of a web survey of parents in Nebraska and key market areas twice a year. BOSR reports on the data trends from previous administrations to see how views of the University have changed.

**Data in Action:** The data from this survey will help inform efforts by University Communication & Marketing to improve the perception of UNL’s quality and value.

University of Nebraska Academic Calendar Survey

**Background:** The University of Nebraska academic calendar included a three-week pre-session in January for students to take courses.

**BOSR’s Role:** 3,528 students across UNL, UNO, and UNK participated in a BOSR-administered web survey regarding their attitudes about the pre-session and decisions to or not to enroll.

**Data in Action:** The data from this survey will help the University determine elements of the academic calendar.

Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering Alumni Survey

**Background:** The Department of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering conducts an Alumni Survey every 5-6 years to receive reflections from the Department’s alumni about their preparation and relevancy of the material related to their professional activities.

**BOSR’s Role:** BOSR mailed a web-push survey to alumni regarding how well they were prepared and how relevant their preparation by the department was in further education and/or careers.

**Data in Action:** The data from this survey informed the department, providing insights into future department planning and in part will be used in the 2021-2024 program assessment of its student outcomes.

Student Health Insurance Survey

**Background:** The University of Nebraska System sought feedback from participating students regarding the student health insurance plan.

**BOSR’s Role:** 654 students participated in a BOSR-administered web survey regarding their attitudes about the current health insurance plan and their needs in a future plan.

**Data in Action:** The data from this survey will complement the financial analysis and guide decision making regarding the current University health insurance plan for students.
Embracing Mixed-Mode Surveys

How BOSR - and the survey field in general - conducts their surveys changes as technology and methods of communication change. Over the years, BOSR has changed its business practices to be consistent with general mode trends in survey research. BOSR often suggests that researchers who want to understand a well-defined population should combine or “mix” survey modes. Mixed-mode surveys allow researchers to collect information quickly and cost effectively. For instance, adding a web survey link to a mailed paper survey allows responses to come in quickly via web and fewer surveys to be mailed in subsequent mailings. This mixed-mode approach potentially lowers costs of data entry and mail processing, and saves on return postage costs. Many of our repeat surveys have added a mail or web component, and telephone calls are typically saved for final follow-ups.

In FY 2022-2023, BOSR conducted seven large-scale mixed-mode surveys with both mail and web components. Offering both modes saves costs and fights declining response rates while also allowing those who don’t have easy internet access at home to participate. Below are the projects that repeat annually:

- The Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey - BOSR's flagship omnibus survey - moved to a mixed-mode web and mail design in 2020.
- The Labor Availability Survey is conducted on behalf of the Nebraska Departments of Labor and Economic Development. In 2021, this survey moved to a mixed-mode design.

Notable web participation rates in 2022-2023

Responses by web indicate saved time and money for researchers!

- The Nebraska Post-School Outcomes survey is conducted for the Nebraska Department of Education. In 2007, BOSR started collecting data for this survey using only telephone. As response rates declined, a mail survey was added in 2017, and a web survey was added in 2020.
- The Behavioral Health Consumer Survey is conducted for Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. BOSR started collecting this data in 2015 as a mail survey with nonresponse follow-up telephone calls. In 2022, we piloted methods of offering a web survey link to all sample members, and are offering this again in 2023 after its success.

Mixing modes can be challenging. BOSR has conducted internal R&D and developed extensive processes and procedures to make mixed-mode surveys successful!
Listening to the People – Qualitative Research at BOSR

FY 2023-2024 was a big year for qualitative methods, and BOSR conducted 26 different focus groups and qualitative interviews this year. Qualitative research explores and provides deeper insights into topics, and can be used with or without quantitative data components. Among the projects that used qualitative methods are:

**Peter Kiewit Foundation Engineering Academy**
Focus groups of students in the Peter Kiewit Foundation Engineering Academy provided information about their experiences in the Academy and strengths and weaknesses of the program and activities.

**National Agricultural Producers Data Cooperative**
Interviews and focus groups of specialty crop producers yielded insights into information sources and decision-making processes for farm businesses.

**Nebraska Medicaid Agency**
Interviews and focus groups of Nebraska Medicaid Agency for farm businesses yielded understandings with stakeholders in the fields of production and marketing and decision-making processes for farm businesses.

**Double Up Food Bucks**
Interviews of grocery store owners elucidated their experience with and thoughts on the Double Up Food Bucks program and determined the impact of the program to best serve customers and grocers.

**Native Student College Vision Quest**
Supplemented a web survey with interviews and focus groups of students in the Native Student College Vision Quest to evaluate the program and understand its impact for future years.

**Mid-America Transportation Center Scholars Program**
Supplemented web surveys with focus groups of students and to evaluate the program and identify areas for improvement in future years.

**Overcoming Barriers to Telehealth Among Low-Income Urban Women**
Interviews of healthcare providers revealed perspectives on providing pregnancy-related care through telehealth to improve the health of mothers and improve care through telehealth.

**Bucks program and determined the impact of the program to best serve customers and grocers.**

BOSR transcribed 43 audio files for a total of 46 hours this year. BOSR uses locally-stored technology to automate the transcription process, saving clients time and funds overall. After the automated transcription, BOSR transcriptionists carefully review each file to check for accuracy and ensure high quality transcriptions. BOSR transcriptionists also clean transcripts to add or delete filler words (uh, um) as needed by the client, deidentify files to be consistent with human subjects requirements, and add time stamps as needed. BOSR regularly provides analytic reports of focus groups and interviews for clients who need these services as well.

**How BOSR Can Help**
BOSR at UNL is here to help all researchers, evaluators, and departments with a wide variety of research services. BOSR’s services include, but are not limited to:

- Collecting survey data
- Assisting with study recruitment
- Planning and conducting focus groups or in-depth interviews
- Transcription of audio recordings,
- Data entry
- Analyzing data and writing reports from collected data.

We also help with data collection for program evaluations that are often required with external funding. In addition to full-scale data collection, BOSR can help early in the research process by providing methodological consultation, program evaluation planning, budgeting, and cost-effective ways to collect pilot data. These early research efforts can improve the quality and competitiveness of proposals for external funding.

BOSR has extensive methodological expertise and infrastructure. Our highly trained staff has years of experience with the practical aspects of collecting and processing data and related administrative work of data collection. BOSR’s infrastructure (e.g., telephone call center, web survey software, sample tracking processes) can take care of many of the day-to-day aspects of research that can quickly become burdensome so that researchers can focus on higher-level tasks. BOSR’s expertise lies in scientifically-based surveys of a wide variety of populations for a wide range of topics. To facilitate research by researchers with a wide range of budgets, researchers can take advantage of our prescreened panel of Nebraskans (Nebraska Voices) or add questions to the Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey (NASIS), our annual omnibus survey of adults living in Nebraska households.

BOSR supports UNL research broadly across campus. Although we are administratively housed in the Sociology department, BOSR works with faculty and students from all across campus and throughout the state.

BOSR provides free budget estimates to researchers about estimated costs for conducting a project. These budget estimates often are for internally- and externally-funded grant proposals. Last year, BOSR created 110 estimates for individual projects, with project estimate revisions and new projects coming throughout the entire year.

**Did You Know?**
BOSR also offers focus group and qualitative interview training to researchers!
The NebrASKa Voices Panel helps partner researchers study specific, rare or small populations around Nebraska, as well as recruit for on-campus research. The panel consists of a random sample of Nebraskans managed by BOSR. Panel members are recruited to participate in future research studies and discuss their opinions or experiences as a Nebraska resident.

Panels are selected through a robust, probability-based method. Twice a year, BOSR sends out the Nebraska Annual Social Indicators Survey (NASIS) to a representative sample of Nebraska households. To ensure a random sample, the adult in the household who is age 19 or older who will have the next birthday is asked to share their opinions via the survey and is then invited to join the NebrASKa Voices Panel. 1,018 Nebraskans are enrolled to date.

Researchers should contact BOSR directly at 402-472-3672 or bosr@unl.edu to discuss using this pool of potential subjects.