Improving Data Literacy Using Decennial Census Data

THE CHALLENGE – Develop digital products or physical/digital works of art that use 2020 Census data to build data literacy skills.

THE PROBLEM – U.S. Census Bureau data is a valuable resource for increasing data literacy skills. Many institutions, including libraries, schools, and community groups have the ability to play a crucial role in building such skills and increasing awareness and use of census data in their communities. To empower the public to make more informed decisions, as well as prepare for and advance their careers, it is pivotal to support such institutions and develop opportunities for individuals to build data literacy skills on their own.

BACKGROUND – Data literacy involves the ability to derive meaningful information from data and effectively communicate this information into actionable insights. This can include identifying the appropriate data for a search, navigating data repositories, or understanding measures of reliability of particular datasets. Unfortunately, in 2020 only 25% of U.S. employees felt fully prepared to use data effectively when entering their current role**. Even beyond the implications for the workforce, data literacy is pertinent to everyday life, including personal finances, awareness of how decisions are made for communities' infrastructure and schools, or understanding the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines. As the world becomes increasingly technology and data-driven, we must better prepare the next generation.

TARGET AUDIENCE – Under-funded communities; librarians; community organizers; youth and students.

** Accenture Human Impact of Data Literacy Report