

Examples of Purposeful Sampling*

Strategy	Description	Purpose	Example
Maximum Variation	Cases with a wide range of variation on dimensions of interest	To capture and describe central themes that cut across variation	-A focus group of artists served by an arts organization that includes a) artists who are quiet and work independently, mixed with b) artists who are verbal, outgoing and/or gravitate toward a group
Atypical	The most unusual and extreme cases	To learn about unusual conditions or extreme outcomes that are relevant to improving programs	-A quiet art student who drops out after one class -An art student who does not yet speak English well -An alumnus who attends college and exhibits at several national galleries
Typical Case	Cases that will illustrate or highlight what is typical or average	To describe a program or culture to those unfamiliar with it	-A case study of a typical audience member who has attended performances for several years -A case study of a typical student who attends an arts education organization for numerous years

*Adapted from Michael Quinn Patton, 2002

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