The Importance of Nonresponse Follow-up in Probability Panels

2022 FCSM Research & Policy Conference

Session B-6: Leveraging Probability Panels for Federally Sponsored Statistical Data Collections

Ipek Bilgen, Sr. Research Methodologist, NORC

J. Michael Dennis, SVP, NORC

David Dutwin, SVP, NORC

AmeriSpeak

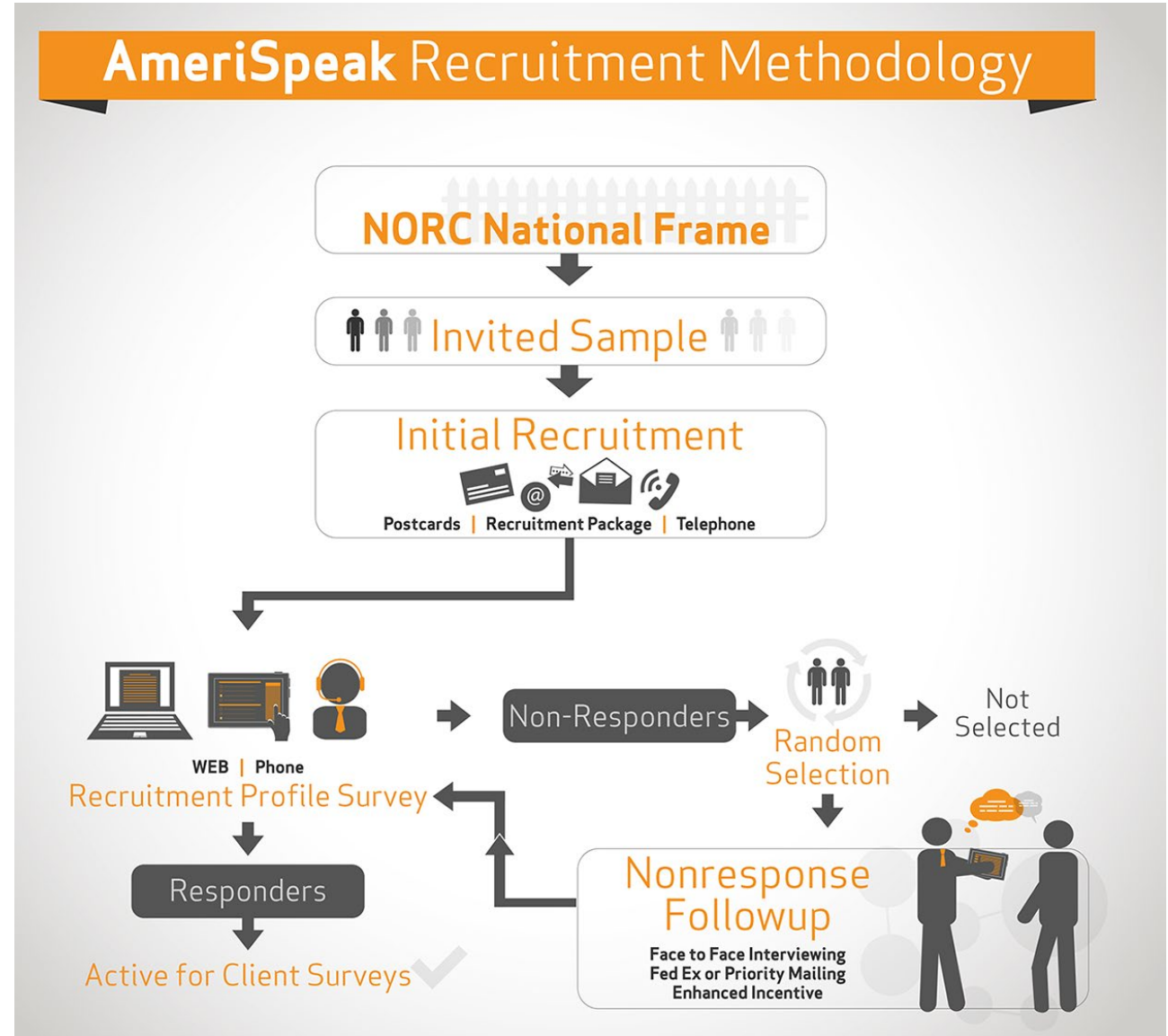# Federal surveys for decades have rightly held high standards for low nonresponse

- In today's age of low response rates, an effective strategy for maximizing a weighted response rate is a nonresponse follow-up (NRFU) protocol

- Within the last decade, probability-based panels are growing in acceptance by the research community
  - Used in variety of fields – Social research, market research, medical research, election studies, etc.
  - Nonresponse during the recruitment stage is as a big danger to accurate estimates in probability-based web panels

- This study explores the benefits of NRFU during recruitment on AmeriSpeak Panel composition and data quality
  - What is the impact of NRFU on panel response rates (AAPOR RR3)?
  - Does NRFU improve demographic representation of the panel sample?
  - Does NRFU have an impact on the study estimates?
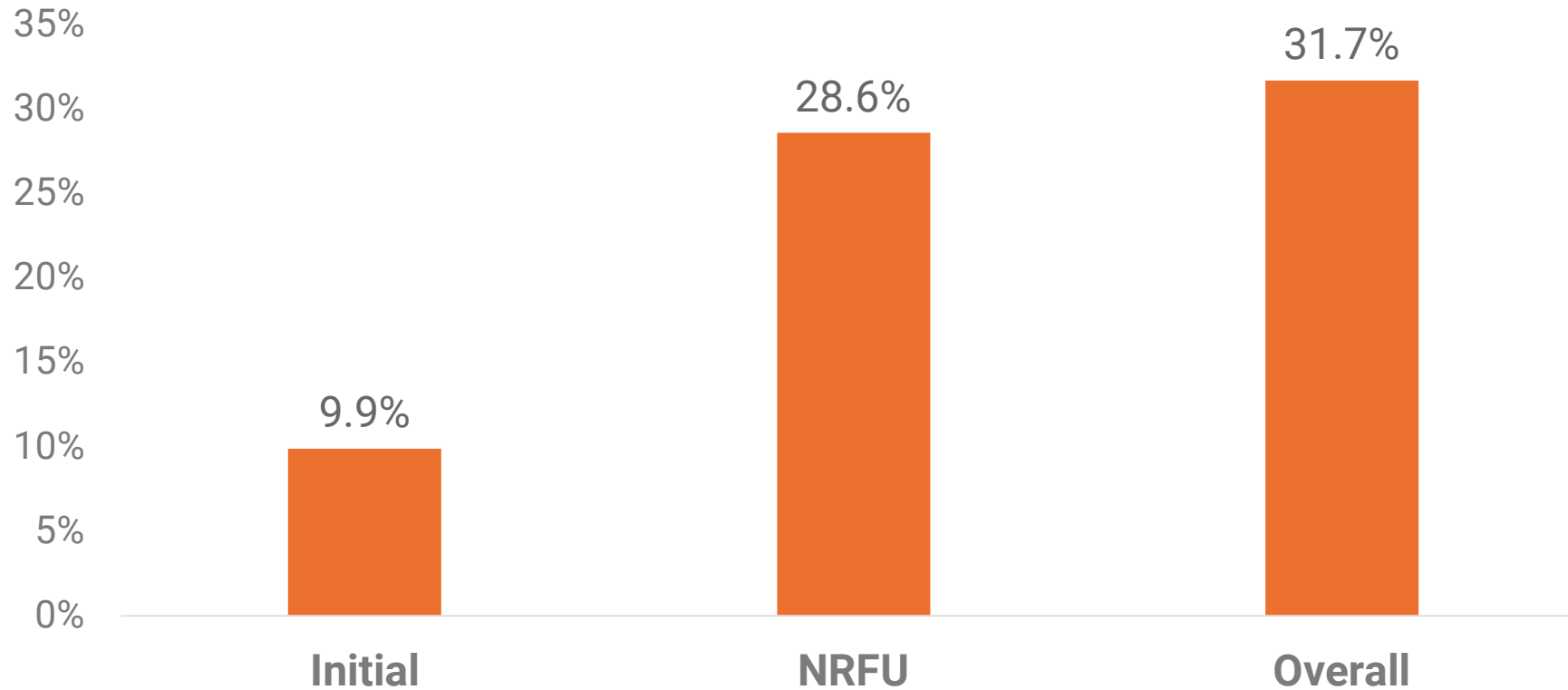
Initial Recruitment

- Pre-notification postcard

- +5 days, 9 x 12 recruitment packet w/ pre-incentive, study brochure, and privacy policy.

- +11 days, reminder postcard

- +18 days, reminder postcard

- Call-ins allowed throughout

- +25 days, call-outs to matched telephones

NRFU Recruitment

- Federal Express study brochure and enhanced pre-incentive

- In-person recruitment

AmeriSpeak Recruitment Methodology

- NORC National Frame
- Invited Sample
- Initial Recruitment — Postcards | Recruitment Package | Telephone
- WEB | Phone — Recruitment Profile Survey
- Non-Responders → Random Selection → Not Selected
- Responders
- Nonresponse Followup — Face to Face Interviewing, Fed Ex or Priority Mailing, Enhanced Incentive
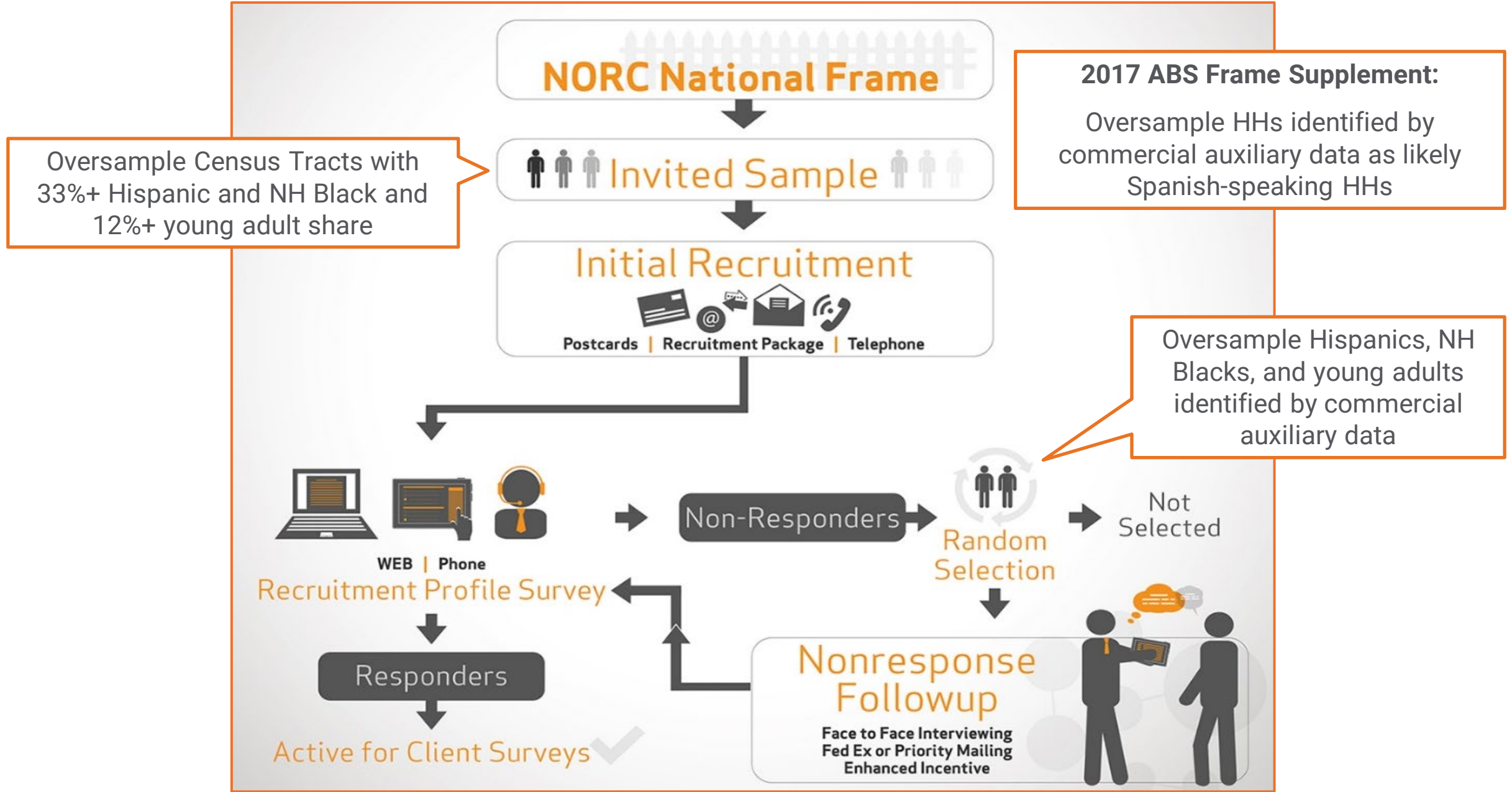- Active for Client Surveys ✓

Response Rate (AAPOR RR3, Weighted)

NRFU boosts
response rate
by 3 times

A little more than half of AmeriSpeak panelists
have been recruited during the NRFU recruitment stage

Oversample Census Tracts with 33%+ Hispanic and NH Black and 12%+ young adult share

2017 ABS Frame Supplement:

Oversample HHs identified by commercial auxiliary data as likely Spanish-speaking HHs

Oversample Hispanics, NH Blacks, and young adults identified by commercial auxiliary data

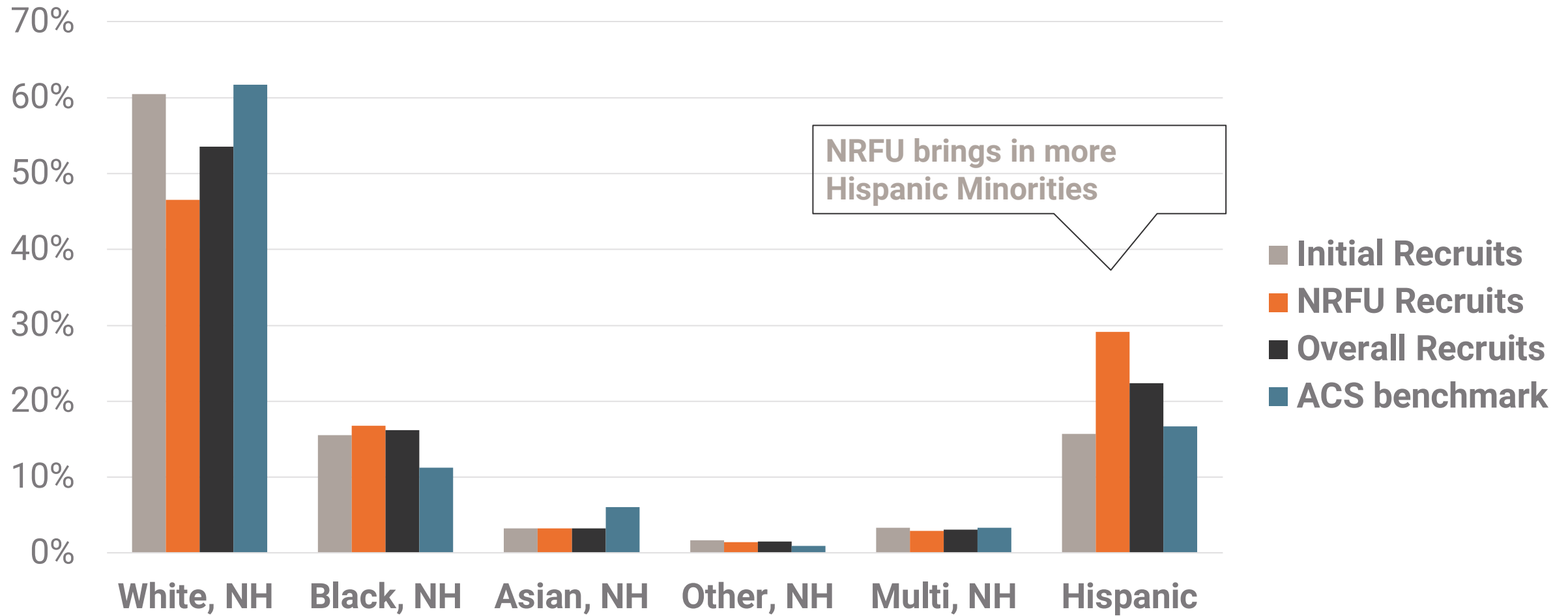# Panel Composition Analysis

AmeriSpeak

Unweighted Panel Distribution by Panelist Type and Education
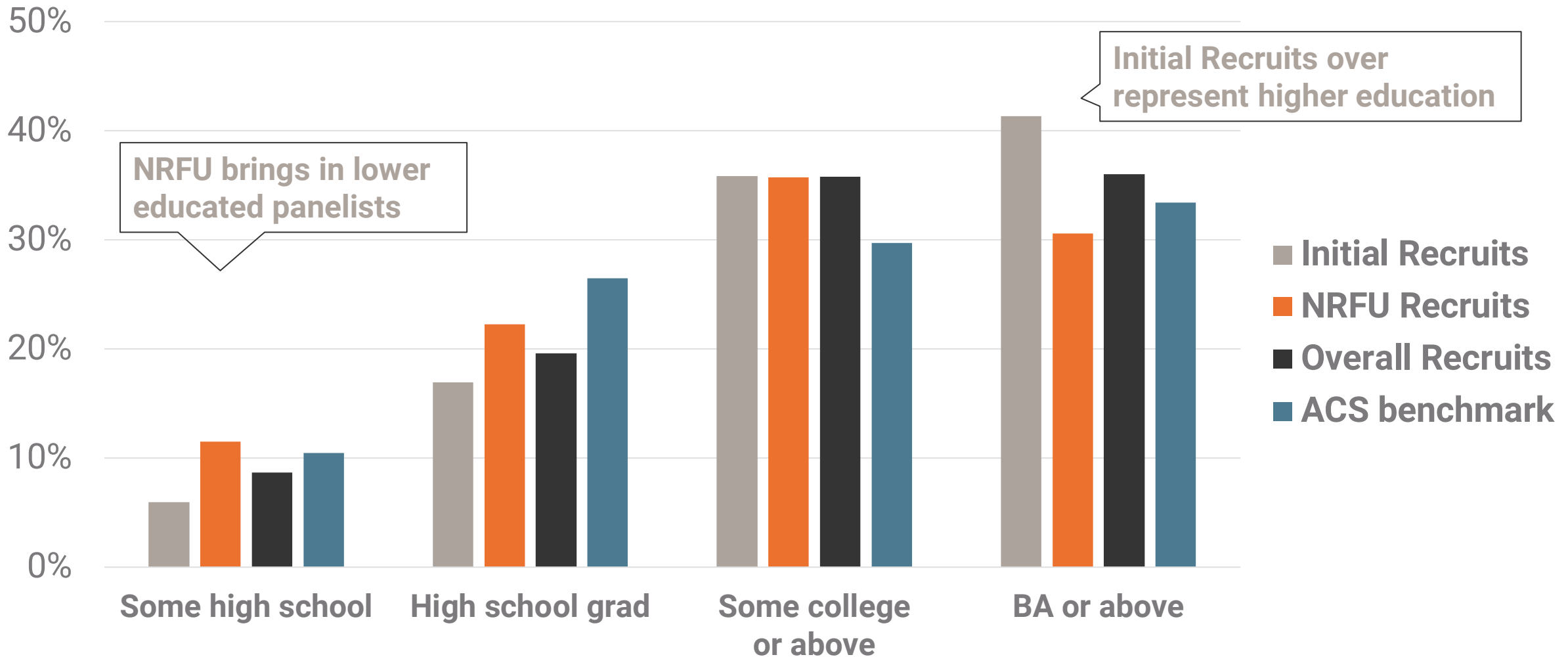
Unweighted Panel Distribution by Panelist Type and Age
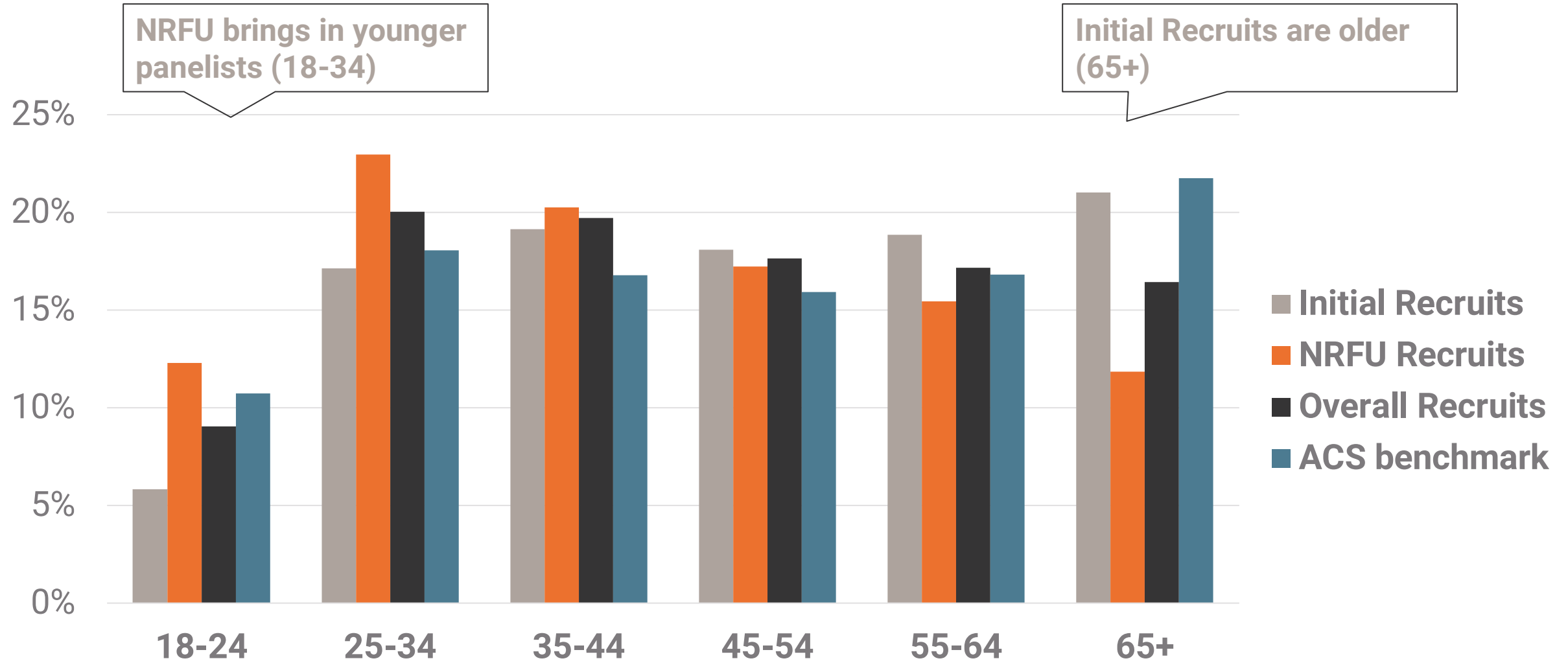
Unweighted Panel Distribution by Panelist Type and Race/Ethnicity

Study Estimate Analysis

AmeriSpeak

ACADEMIC

* University of Michigan "NASA Scientific Literacy Study"

* Johns Hopkins University "Public Support for Gun Violence Prevention Policies Among Gun Owners and Non-Gun Owners"

GOVERNMENT

* General Social Survey AmeriSpeak Study

Legal Services Corporation "'Justice Gap' Survey"

AmeriSpeak

CONSUMER RESEARCH

AARP Retirement Study

All analyses are conducted with weighted data reflecting the probabilities of selection and post-stratification weighting
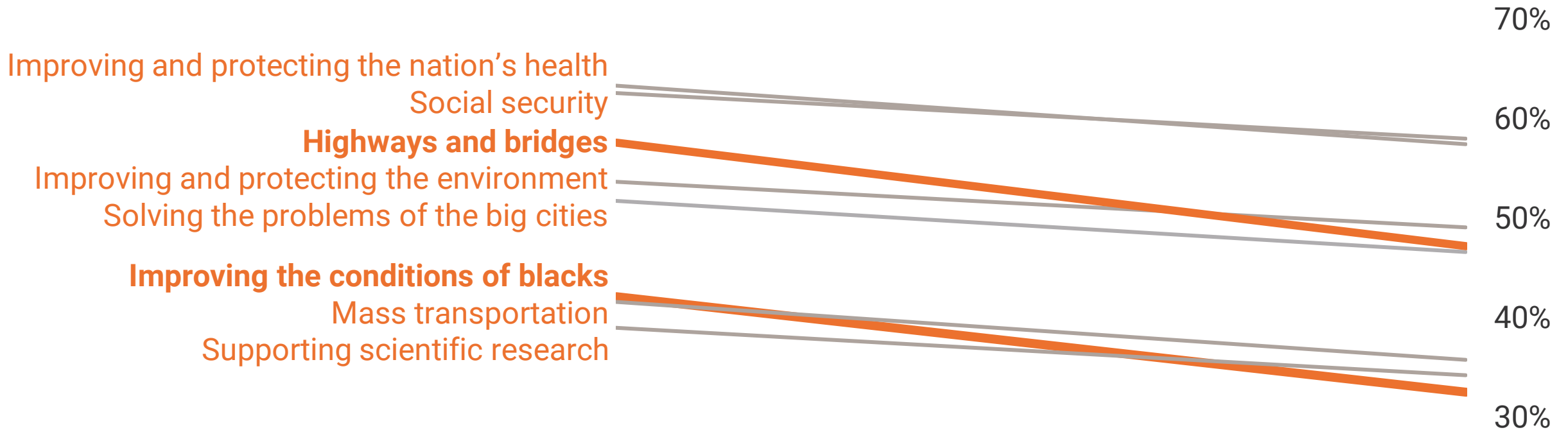
NRFU Produces Different Estimates for Measurement of Attitudes and Opinions

	Items different at p = 0.05
Gun Control	10/39 = 25.6%
GSS	5/29 = 17.2%
NASA	4/17 = 23.5%
Overall	**19/85 = 22.4%**

Statistical significance is determined by a χ2 Test (NRFU vs. Initial)

Initial: Mail/Phone

NRFU: Fed-Ex/Face to Face

Improving and protecting the nation's health

Social security

Highways and bridges

Improving and protecting the environment

Solving the problems of the big cities

Improving the conditions of blacks

Mass transportation

Supporting scientific research

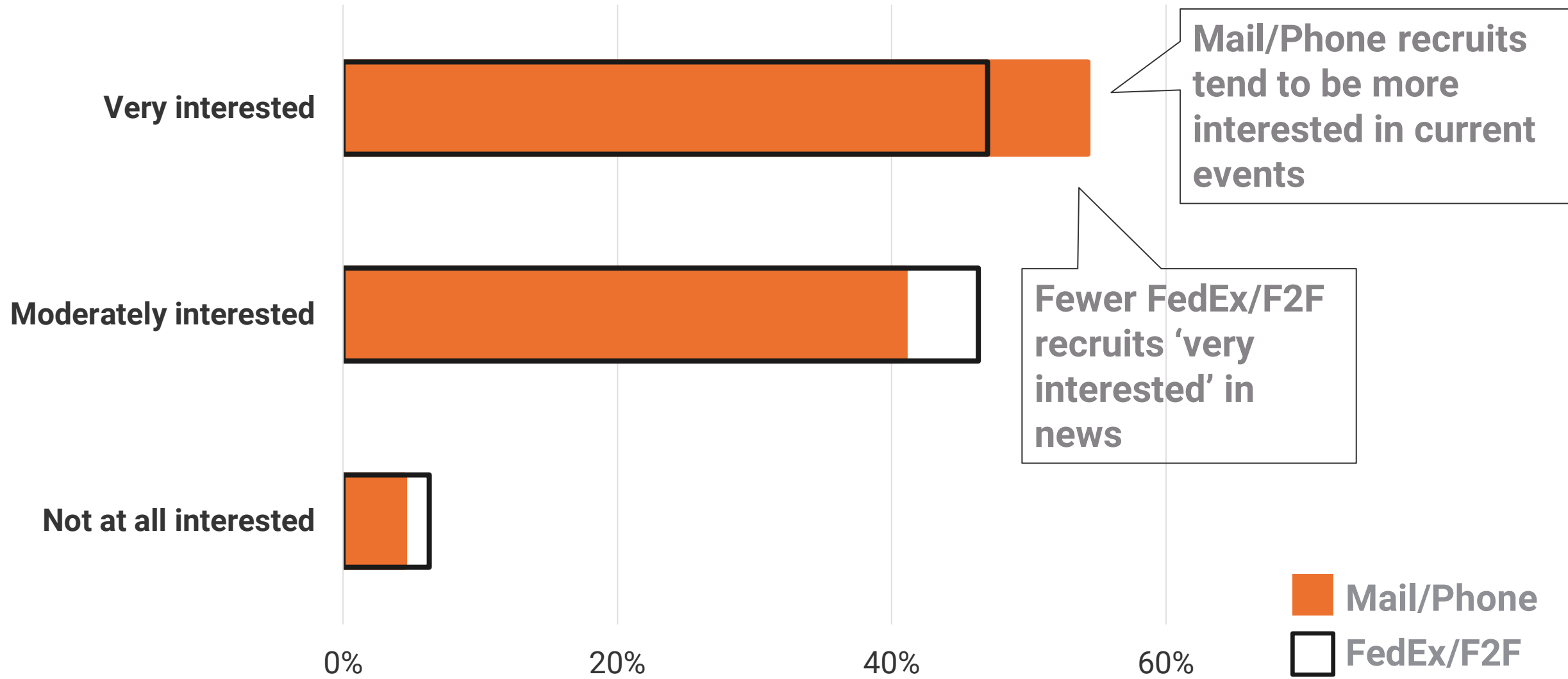70%

60%

50%

40%

30%

20%

10%

0%

NRFU Recruits Trend Towards Conservative Positions on Government Spending

Initial% - NRFU% > 4pp

Source: AmeriSpeak Panel - General Social Survey (Weighted)

Very interested

Moderately interested

Not at all interested

Mail/Phone recruits tend to be more interested in current events

Fewer FedEx/F2F recruits 'very interested' in news

■ **Mail/Phone**

□ **FedEx/F2F**

0% 20% 40% 60%

Source: University of Michigan "NASA Scientific Literacy Study" (Weighted)

** p = 0.003

Mail/Phone recruits tend to be more pro-science, compared to FedEx/F2F recruits
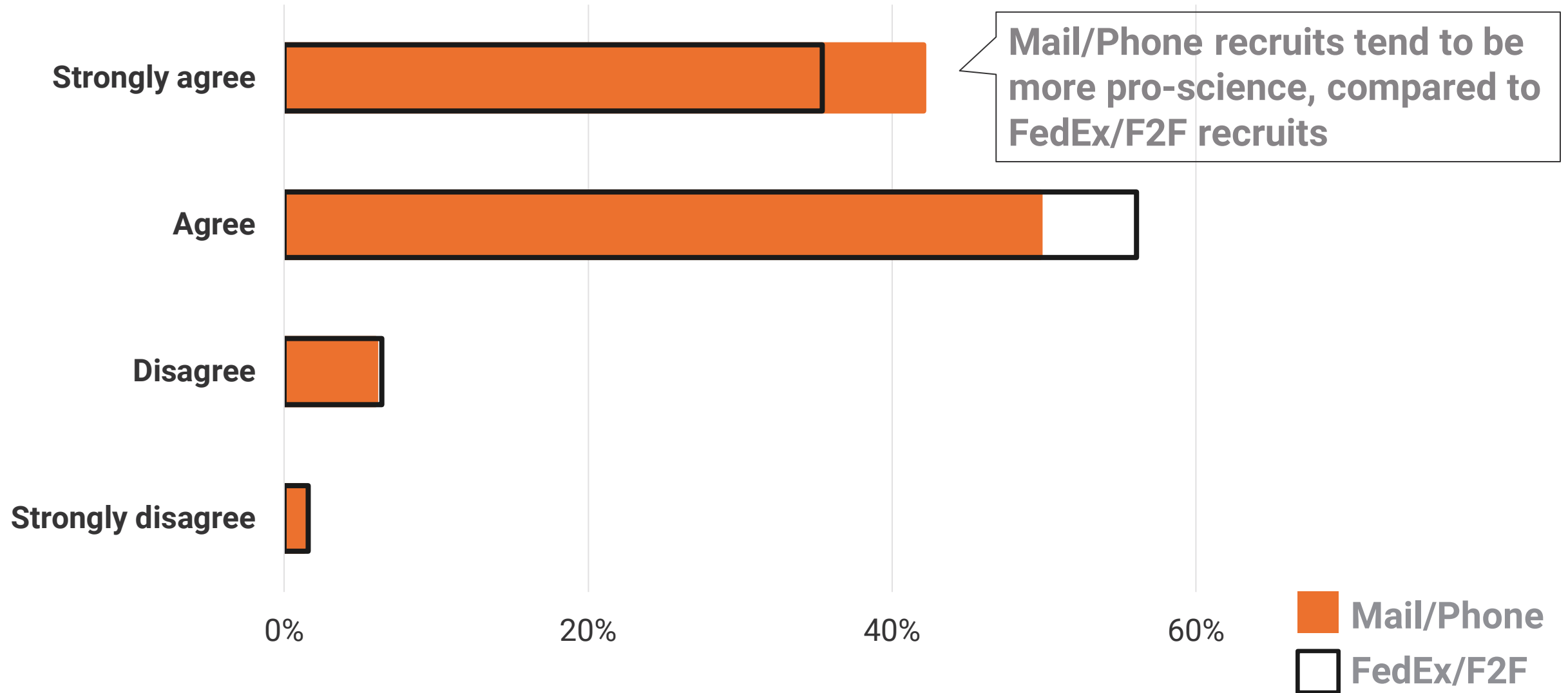
Source: University of Michigan "NASA Scientific Literacy Study" (Weighted)   ** p = 0.011*

Panelists recruited via NRFU tend to have different policy positions on issues – even after weighting

- NRFU respondents are less likely believe the country "spends too little" on:

  – Improving and protecting the nation's health

  – Solving the problems of the big cities

  – Highways and bridges

  – Improving conditions of African-Americans, and other priorities

- NRFU panelists are less likely to be:

  – Very interested in the current news

  – Pro-science

Questions?