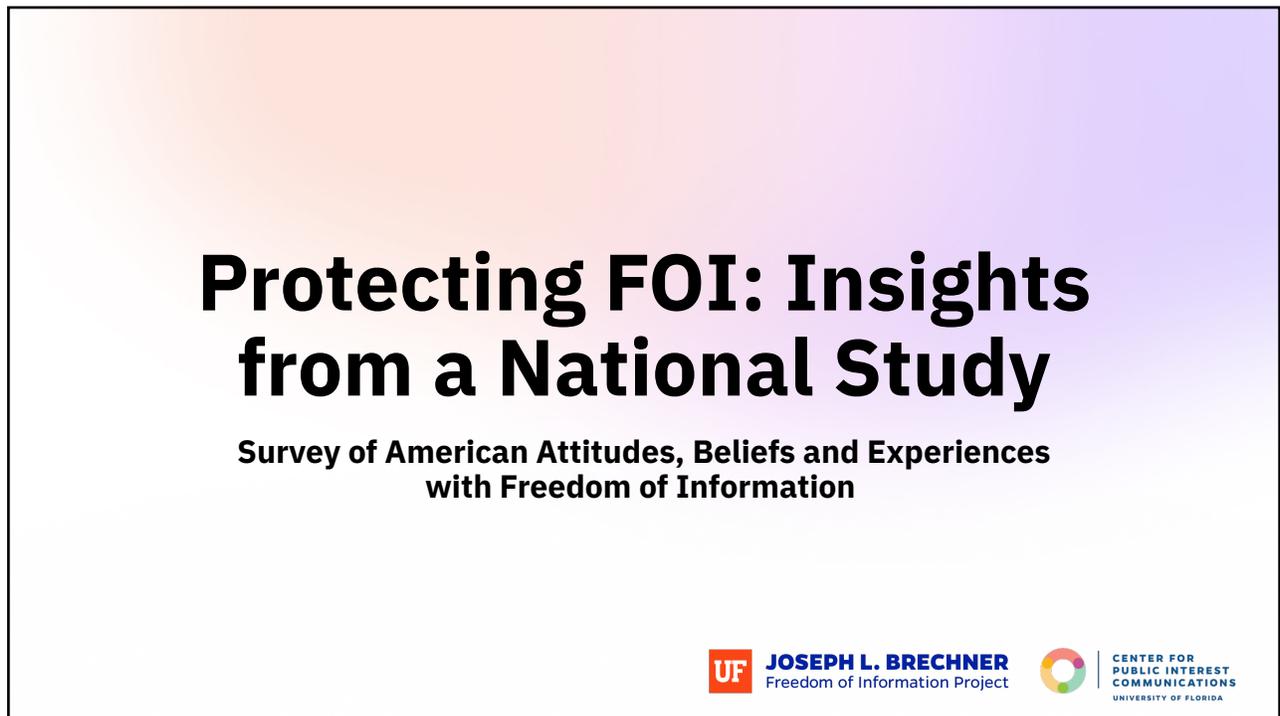
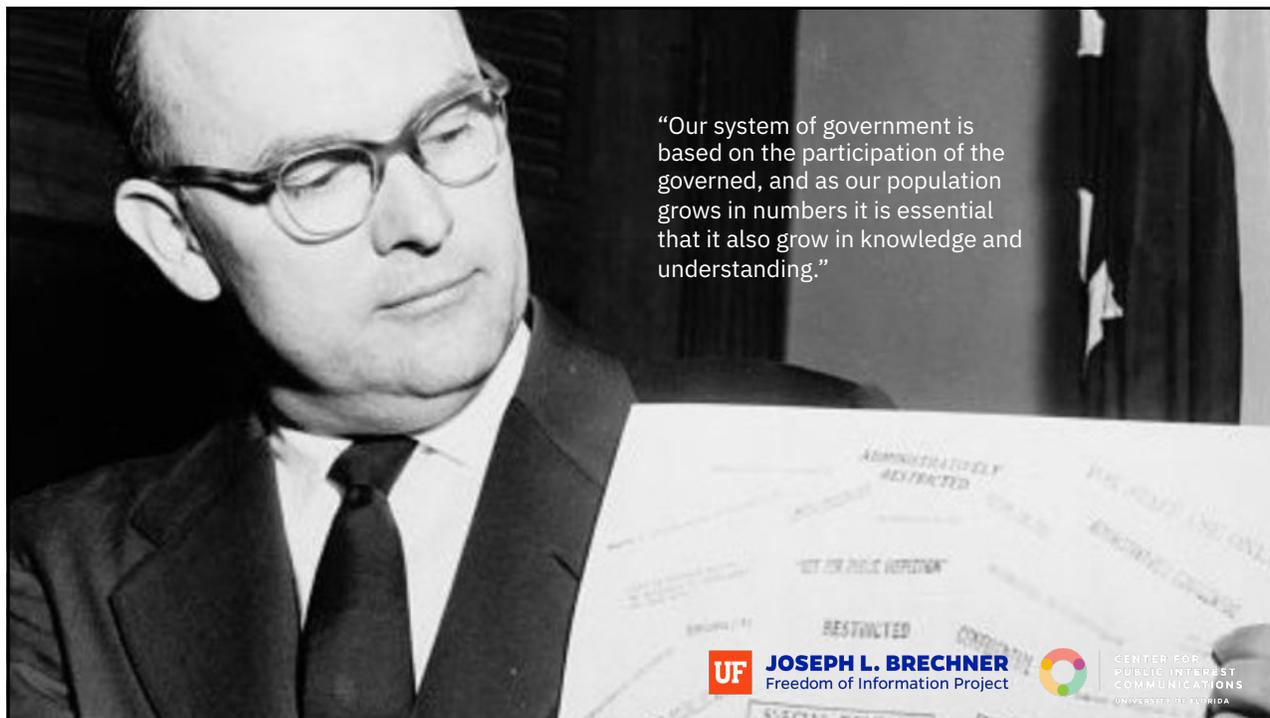




1



2



3

91%
Support freedom of information

91%
Have never filed a FOI request

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4

They don't speak your language—
and that's an opportunity

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5

When asked to describe what freedom of information means in their own words...

access **transparency**

right

government

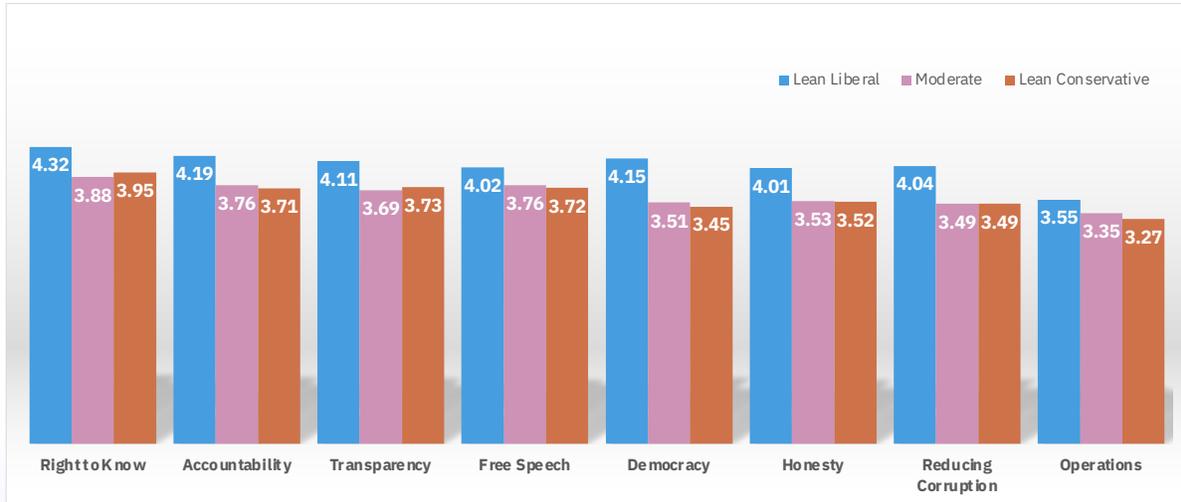
accountability

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6

How well phrases described function of FOI



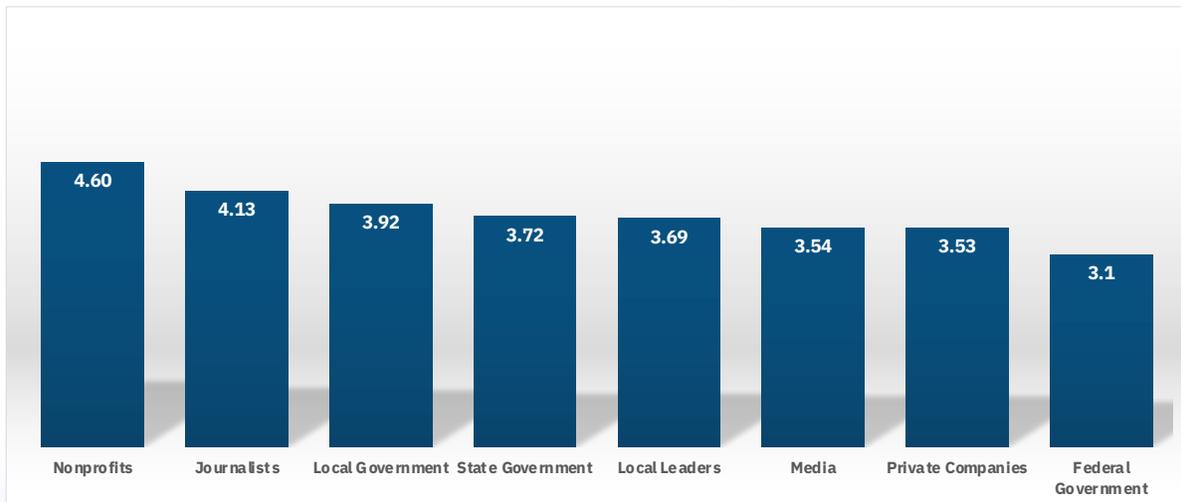
We provided a list of words often used to describe FOI and asked the participants to rate how well these words describe the function of FOI

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7

Do we trust FOI Providers? It depends...



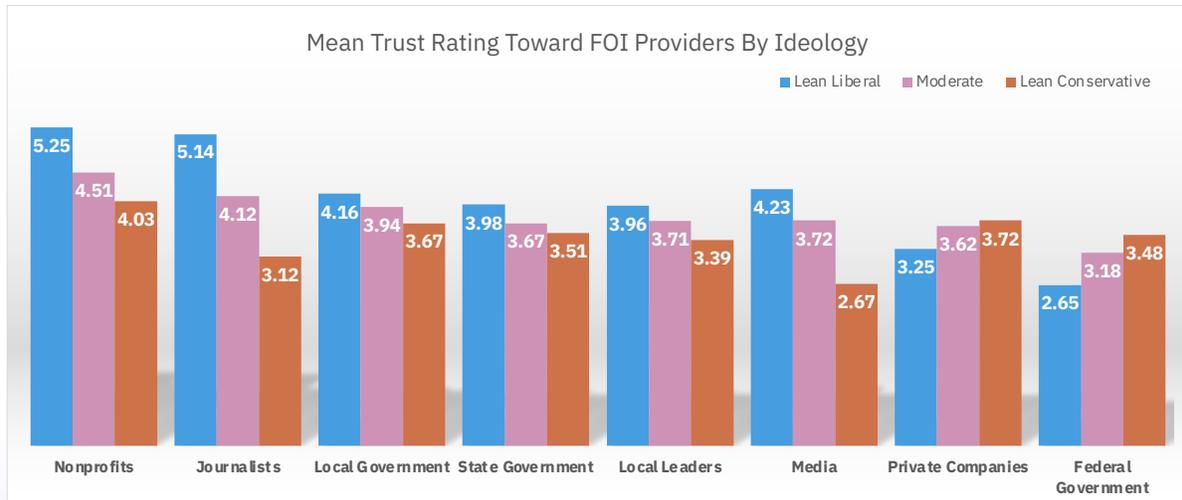
Requesters identified by Wagner & Collier, 2024; trust dimensions (7-point scale) adapted from trust in institution scales

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8

Do we trust FOI providers? Political differences



Requesters identified by Wagner & Collier, 2024; trust dimensions (7-point scale) adapted from trust in institution scales



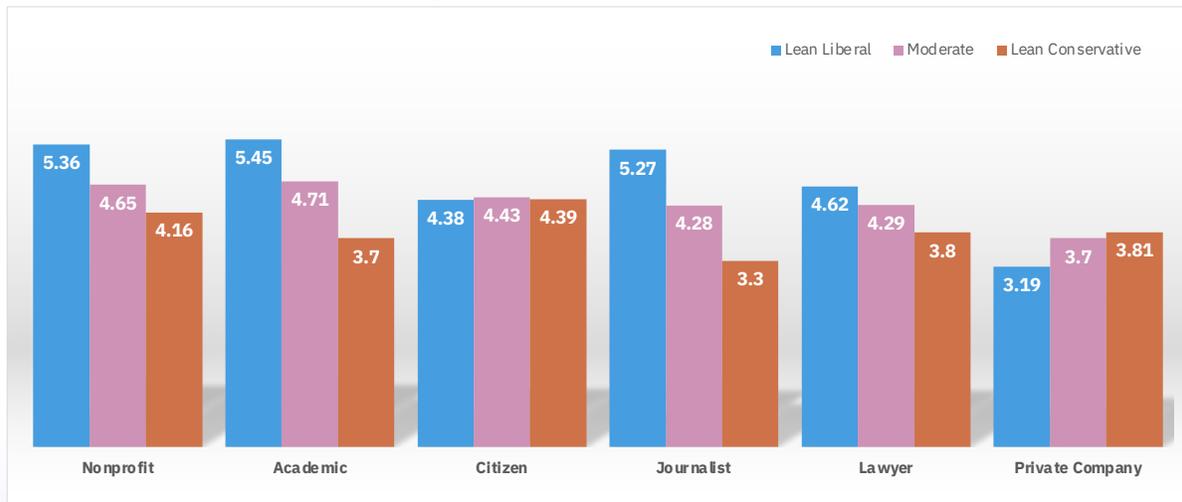
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Do we trust FOI requesters? Political differences



Requesters identified by Wagner & Collier, 2024; trust dimensions (7-point scale) adapted from trust in institution scales



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Personal stakes tend to move people more than abstract ideas

Under which of the following situations is it acceptable to restrict access to open records?

INITIAL:

To protect the privacy of government employees

5.35

Mean 'agree' score

REFRAME:

What if that information would help verify whether public officials live in the jurisdictions they represent?

4.64

Mean 'agree' score



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Personal stakes tend to move people more than abstract ideas

Under which of the following situations is it acceptable to restrict access to open records?

INITIAL:

To protect government employees from harassment

4.87

Mean 'agree' score

REFRAME:

What if such restrictions prevented you from being able to find and contact public officials for matters of interest to you?

4.01

Mean 'agree' score



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In all nine scenarios, from privacy to harassment to security risks, people were less supportive of restrictions when they were presented with a frame for how access to information could protect them and their interests.



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How Americans describe FOI

- The most prevalent theme positions FOI as promoting government **transparency and accountability**.
- Many participants viewed FOI as a **fundamental right** equivalent to constitutional protections like speech and religion.
- Some participants understood FOI as **access to "truth" and protection against censorship**.
- Participants described FOI as **protection against authoritarianism**, focusing on fears of dictatorship and corrupt governments.
- FOI provides ease of **access for all people** regardless of status, education, or income

Five dominant themes emerged from qualitative analysis; developed using human and NotebookLM analysis



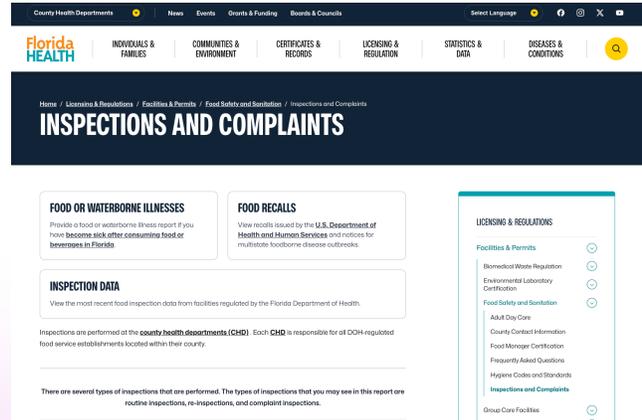
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An Invisible Pipeline



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Three things you can do next...

- Lead with 'rights' – it travels across the political spectrum
- When your story comes from a public record, say so and be explicit about how that gives you access to information, because the people who need to defend that pipeline can't protect what they can't see.
- Anchor freedom of information in tangible scenarios, not democratic principles



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You'll see more from us ...

(not a threat)



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Two things you can do today...

Talk to Jack



Senior Research Jack Barry, Ph.D., is here at the conference and conducting structured interviews to inform our messaging project. Be nice to him.

Geek out with us...



realgoodcenter.jou.ufl.edu/foisurvey26/

Use this QR code to request the pre-publication research findings report. We'll give you a download link and send a copy to your e-mail. You can opt to keep up with this project as well.

You can also share your contact info to chat with Jack (this week or later)



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