**Consent Form Template and Guidelines for an Online Survey**

**This template includes guidelines identified by blue text.** **Please remove the guidelines as you complete each section.** Some sections may not apply to your research and should be modified or deleted to suit your project.

This template is intended to provide an overview of the information normally included in a consent form for an online survey. The goal is to communicate the essential elements of free and informed consent and to ensure that individuals can understand and agree to what will happen to them as a participant. You do not have to use this template or maintain its formatting. It is only a guidance document.

Please use non-technical language that participants can easily understand. Appropriate reading level and format needs to be considered for specific populations such as children, the elderly, populations with compromised literacy or unique cultural considerations.

The consent form should be written in the second person. Use “you” not “I”. However, first person or “I” should be used on the last page in “Signed Consent” and “Oral Consent”.

The consent form should be a minimum of 12-point font for clarity and ease of reading.

All information in the consent form must match/be congruent with your application form.



***Participant Consent Form***

**You are invited to participate in a research study entitled:** *Insert title of the research project*

**Student Researcher(s):** *Insert Name, Position (e.g., faculty, graduate or undergraduate student, post doc), Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

**Researcher(s):** *Insert Name, Position (e.g., faculty, graduate or undergraduate student, post doc), Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

**Principal Investigator/Supervisor:** *(If Applicable) Insert Name, Position, Department, Institution, Institutional phone number and institutional email address. Do not include personal contact information (e.g., personal cell number, Gmail address).*

**Purpose and Objective of the Research:**

* *Describe in simple lay terms the purpose and objective of the research.*

**Procedures:**

* *Describe the research activities and details of the data collection events.*
* *Provide an estimate of the time commitment of the participant.*

**Funded by:** *(If Applicable)*

* *Include the name of any industry sponsor or granting agency. This should include a statement of any actual or potential conflict of interest on the part of the researchers or sponsors.*

**Potential Risks:**

* *All foreseeable risks, side effects and discomforts must be stated. Risks might include social harms such as a breach of confidentiality, social stigmatization, threats to reputation, economic repercussions, physical harms, damage to relationships, and/or psychological harms, e.g., anxiety, regret, guilt, emotional, etc.*
* Risk(s) will be addressed by: *describe the strategies to minimize or manage the risks for participants.*
* *If potential risks or discomforts are anticipated or the research project is of a sensitive nature, include information on the arrangements/availability of counselling or other such services.*
* *Describe any debriefing procedures that will take place. In cases where the research entails greater than minimum risk to the participants, where deception is used, where the participant may reveal culturally sensitive or personally identifying information, or where there is a possibility that participants may become stressed or upset because of participation in the study, the consent form should describe the debriefing and feedback procedures.*
* *If appropriate, describe the circumstances under which you would terminate someone’s participation in the study.*
* *If there are no foreseeable risks, please use the following statement:* There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research.

**Potential Benefits:**

* *State the benefits of this research both to the participant and to others, stressing that these benefits are not guaranteed. In cases where the objectives of the research project are purely scientific, refer to any societal benefits.*

**Compensation***: (If Applicable)*

* *Describe any compensation that will be offered to participants. If a course credit is available to University students, explain the process. The payment should not be such that participants may base their decision to participate on the potential material rewards. Be sure to include a statement that compensation will not be dependent on completion of the project.*
* *If participation is anonymous, describe how participants may receive compensation while maintaining anonymity.*
* *Please include the following statement, if participants are not anonymous and compensation is being offered: "Any personal information collected as a record of honorarium payment will be stored separately from the data by the PI and may be kept for 7 years in case the University of Saskatchewan is subjected to a financial audit."*

**Confidentiality:**

* *Describe where the data collected will be disseminated, (e.g., thesis, articles, report to an agency or community).*
* *Describe how the data will be reported in publications. For example, if direct quotations will be reported, or if personally identifying information will be included in the report, this needs to be clearly stated; if the data will be reported anonymously in an aggregated or summarized form, this should also be stated.*
* *If participation and the data will be anonymous, include a simple statement advising the participant of this.* ***(Note: To assure a participant of anonymity means that the research participant’s identity will not be known to anyone, including the researcher).***
* *If participation and/or the data will not be anonymous, describe the precautions that will be taken to protect the confidentiality of the participant.* ***(Note: To assure a participant of confidentiality means that the researcher will ensure that they do not disclose identifiable information about the participant in the reporting or dissemination of the research findings).***

*Examples:*

1. “Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate form so that it will not be possible to identify individuals.”
2. “The data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences; however, your identity will be kept confidential. Although direct quotations may be reported from your responses, you will be given a pseudonym, and all identifying information (list relevant possibilities such as the name of the institution, the participant’s position, etc.) will be removed from the report.”
3. “Because the participants for this research project have been selected from a small group of people, all of whom are known to each other, it is possible that you may be identifiable to other people on the basis of what you have reported.”
* *Identify the website survey platform and provide a brief and relevant description of the data privacy policy including the location where the collected data is stored, and/or provide a link to the platform’s privacy policy, e.g.: “*This survey is hosted by Survey Monkey. Your data will be stored in facilities hosted in Canada. Please see the following for more information on the [Survey Monkey Privacy Policy](https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy/).”

**Storage of Data:**

* *Describe how and with whom physical and electronic data will be securely stored.*

*(Physical data must be stored behind two locks, e.g., locked cabinet in locked office. Electronic data may be stored on a password-protected computer during analyses, but moved to a USask system for long-term storage, e.g. OneDrive, Cabinet, or DataStore).*

* *Describe the storage period, e.g., the minimum required storage period is five years post-publication.*
* *If you intend to destroy the data following the required storage period, explain that once the data is no longer required and following the required storage period, the data will be destroyed beyond recovery.*
* *If applicable, explain that identifying information, (e.g., Consent Forms, Master Lists) will be stored separately from the data collected. If there is a master list, explain when it will be destroyed (e.g., when data collection is complete and it is no longer required).*

**Right to Withdraw:**

* Participation in this survey is voluntary.
* *If participation and the data will be anonymous:* You can decide not to participate at any time by closing your browser, or choose not to answer any questions you do not feel comfortable with. Survey responses will remain anonymous. Since the survey is anonymous, once it is submitted it cannot be removed.
* *If the data for individual participants can be identified:* *Describe how participants may withdraw from the project and describe what will happen to their data.*
* *If the data for individual participants can be identified:* *Explain when data withdrawal may no longer be possible, e.g.,* Yourright to withdraw data from the study will apply until \_\_\_\_ After this, it is possible that some form of data analysis will have already occurred and it may not be possible to withdraw your data.
* *(If Applicable):* Whether you choose to participate or not will have no effect on your position (e.g., employment, academic status, access to services) or how you will be treated.

**Follow up:**

* To obtain results from the study, please: *describe how participants may find out about the research results. A summary of the results should be offered with a mechanism to provide the summary, (e.g. a website location or email address to request a copy of the results, paper, etc.). The summary should be readily accessible and understandable. A summary of the results is preferable to a copy of the thesis.*
* *If participation is anonymous, describe how participants may find out about the research results while maintaining anonymity.*

**Questions or Concerns:**

* Contact the researcher(s) using the information at the top of page 1.
* This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office: ethics.office@usask.ca; 306-966-2975; out of town participants may call toll free 1-888-966-2975.

By completing and submitting this questionnaire, **your free and informed consent is implied** and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study.