

Instructions for Completing the Application for Survey Research Proposal Review

Start by reading and completing the three cover pages to the Application for Survey Research Proposal.

When answering Categories A through F, please make sure that you leave the question headings intact followed by your answers. This will help IRB members know which question you are answering and speeds up the review process.

Category A: Brief Description of Proposed Research:

Question 1: State the purpose of your survey research.

The statement of purpose is a concise statement of the reason(s) for conducting this particular research study. It may be possible to write only one sentence and explain the purpose of the study. In other cases, more sentences may be necessary for the reviewers to understand the reasons for your study.

Category B: Description of Participants

Question 2: Describe the characteristics of the participants.

Describe the participants as completely as possible. From what pool of individuals will your participants be recruited? For example, are your participants from a particular school, organization, or the general population?

Question 3: State the approximate number of participants.

Give the maximum number of participants. If you initially are screening participants for exclusionary criteria, then include those participants in your maximum number of persons involved even if they will be excluded from the study at a later time. (Note: If you exceed your maximum number of participants, it is necessary to file an amendment to your protocol.)

Question 4: Describe how you will recruit participants for the study. Include the recruitment script and all other relevant materials, e.g., advertisements, fliers, translations, etc. Researchers using the Psychology Pool need to provide the description of the study given for electronic participant sign-up and the departmental authorization to use the Psychology Pool.

State exactly what you will do to recruit participants. You must include the recruitment script, which is a statement that you either say or have the potential participants read to inform them about your study so they can consider participating. If you use several means, explain each of them. Additionally, information concerning how access to participants will be achieved must be addressed. (If you are setting up a website to collect data, how will you draw respondents to your website? If your research concerns patients with a given diagnosis, how will you access that information? If you are conducting ethnographic research, explain recruitment procedures related to community groups and their spokespersons.) Recruitment of participants may not begin before IRB

approval has been granted. Additionally, the IRB is charged with ensuring that there is no coercion, undue influence or unjustifiable pressures to participants to participate. If you are recruiting among your students or patients, consider alternatives to avoid conflicts of function and interest. It may be that students in another class or patients at a facility at which you are not employed would be more appropriate participants.

Category C: Procedures

Question 5:

(a) Describe the methods of survey administration in detail (Attach a complete copy of survey along with any instructions the participants will be told or will read).

Clearly describe how you plan to collect your survey data (online, face-to-face, mail, etc.).

(b) If you are conducting multiple measurements (e.g., 2 or more surveys), how will you link the data belonging to particular participants?

Please explain how you will link the data from 2 or more surveys.

(c) How will you record and use the data? If assigning subject numbers how will they be assigned and tracked? Will your data be recorded with individual identifiers?

Please explain how you will record the data from your surveys and where you will be storing and saving your data.

If you assign subject numbers, describe how will you assign and track the subject numbers.

Please explain how you will keep completed surveys and for how long. If you are storing data electronically (e.g., SPSS data file, SAS data file, Ethnograph data file, NVivo data file, etc.), explain how you will store them during the study and what will be done with them after the study is complete.

For quantitative researchers, describe how you will analyze your data. What is the design of your study? What process will you follow to code responses to questions? What statistics are you envisioning using? What data will be linked?

For qualitative researchers, describe how you plan on interpreting the responses you receive to your research questions.

(d) Document authorization of use or permission to modify a copyrighted instrument, or document access in the public domain of non-copyrighted instruments.

Please understand that many measures used in survey research are copyrighted even for research purposes. If you are using an instrument you did not develop, document authorization for use or permission to modify copyrighted instruments, or document access in the public domain. Sojourner Truth Library has several resources available to investigators for documentation purposes in the Reference Section. These include: *Tests in Print*, *The Mental Measurements Yearbook*, *the Directory of Unpublished experimental Mental Measurers*, and *the Directory of Communication Related Mental Measurers*. For information related to this

question, you may review information on APA Online at <http://www.apa.org/science/faq-findtests.html>.

Category D: Risks to Participants

In order to approve an application, the IRB must assure that: "Risks to participants are minimized: (i) by using procedures which are consistent with sound research design and which do not unnecessarily expose participants to risk, and (ii) whenever appropriate, by using procedures already being performed on the participants for diagnostic or treatment purposes" [45CFR46.111 (a) (1)]. Most studies on our campus qualify for approval under a determination by the IRB of minimal risk. "Minimal risk means that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater in and of themselves than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests" [45CFR46.102 (i)].

Certain research is considered "sensitive" and requires additional protections for participants. This research involves "the collection of information falling into any of the following categories: (a) Information relating to sexual attitudes, preferences, or practices; (b) Information relating to the use of alcohol, drugs, or other addictive products; (c) Information relating to illegal conduct; (d) Information that if released could reasonably be damaging to an individual's financial standing, employability, or reputation within the community; (e) Information that would normally be recorded in a patient's medical record, and the disclosure of which could reasonably lead to social stigmatization or discrimination; (f) Information pertaining to an individual's psychological well-being or mental health" [Public Health Service Act, Sec. 301 (d)]. If your study falls into one of these sensitive categories, please explain how you will maintain anonymity.

Question 6: Describe potential risks and assess the likelihood, severity, duration and effects of each. (Consider risks of physical injury, psychological trauma or stress, social/economic harm, legal risks and loss of confidentiality. Could any of the questions be more offensive than those encountered in a participant's everyday life? Note "no known risks" if none are anticipated.)

Give the IRB members a description of potential risks arising from your research. Participants may face risks to reputation or insurability because of the design of the study. Discuss the risks which can be reasonably foreseen in terms of how likely they are to occur, how serious they might be, for how long the participant would still be subject to the risks and what the effects of each of these might be. It is not necessary to list remote possibilities of risks. This information becomes especially important if you are working with participants who are also students or patients of yours.

Category E: Privacy and Confidentiality Procedures

Privacy can be defined in terms of having control over the extent, timing, and circumstances of sharing oneself (physically, behaviorally, or intellectually) with others.

Confidentiality pertains to the treatment of information that an individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust and with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without permission.

Anonymity is achieved when there is no linkage between the individual participant and data collected from that individual.

Personal Identifiers are data which directly or by deduction lead to the identification of a specific person(s) involved in the study (e.g., names, phone numbers, record numbers, internet protocol [IP] addresses, biometric identifiers, etc.). Please understand that a collection of demographic data could be used to deduce the identity of specific participants.

Question 7: Describe the method(s) used to protect the identity of individual participants, if applicable.

What procedures will you follow to protect the identities of participants? Will your procedures be anonymous or merely confidential? Ordinarily, no names should appear on data. If there is an overriding reason for their inclusion, then be sure to state that. Will you record identifiers? If so, what protections will you employ? Consider whether it is essential in your research to record identifiers. The best way to protect the identity of participants is not to record it. If you feel that the recording of personal identifiers is essential to your study, consider coding options and include details on how the master list linking names and codes will be handled. Do not record social security numbers.

Keep in mind that if your survey contains individual identifiers it can be approved as Exempt only if the response to the survey questions present no risk to a person's reputation, financial standing, or employability and do not place the participant at risk of criminal or civil liability.