

## Research Plan for projects involving Human Participants

*Please review the information and questions below; these will help you structure your project. You may save this document to your computer, complete the sections (use as much space as you need), and add this to your application. In most cases, you will also need an Informed Consent Form.*

### Research question and hypothesis:

**Participants:** Describe the characteristics of the people from whom you want to collect information.

- How many? (minimum of 10)
- Age(s)?
- Gender?
- Any other specific groups?

**Recruitment:** How will you identify these people and how will you invite them to participate? If you want to include young children, you may need to include teachers or parents as part of your plan.

**Methods:** Describe what will be expected of participants. Include as much detail as you can. If you will use surveys, tests, or questionnaires, attach copies of each.

**Confidentiality:** Will you need to collect any identifiable information (name, telephone/address, birthdate, email, etc)? If you do, then you must be very careful to protect this information. People who share their information with you are trusting you to be responsible and not share their details with anyone else. When you report your findings, you cannot use names or any personal information.

**Time:** How much time will each person spend as part of the study? Is participation one time or more often (repeated)?

**Risks:** Explain any possible risks or discomfort (physical, psychological, social) that a participant may experience. Also explain what you will do to minimize these risks and protect the participants.

**Benefits:** Are there any direct benefits to each person? (Note – usually not in a research study.) You may also state any general benefits to society related to the results you hope to get. (Note – this section is not about benefits to you as the student researcher! For instance, do not say, “because this will help me with my project.”)

**Data Analysis:** Describe what information (“data”) you will collect, how you will organize it, and how you will analyze the information so you can address your original research question and hypothesis. Try to plan ahead so you collect objective information and consider how you will handle the results to find your answers. Be specific and accurate; sometime it is best to do repeated tests and average the results.

**Informed Consent Form (ICF):** *This form is given to each participant so they can read about the study at the same time as you are explaining it.*

You will need to complete the following sections:

What is the purpose of your study?

What are they being asked to do and how long will it take for each person?

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

It is also important for you to tell each person that they can ask questions and participation is voluntary.

*THEN, if the person agrees to be in your study, he/she signs the form. Sometimes, a parent also has to sign. The IRB will tell you if this is necessary. Do NOT sign these forms in advance!*

See Sample Informed Consent Statement at <https://student.societyforscience.org/forms>