HUMBER
Research Ethics Board

Information Letter Guidelines

Information letters should be written on official letterhead in a direct style, using terms and language that potential participants can easily understand. An information letter should include the material outlined in the guidelines below. If you have any questions about this document, contact reb@humber.ca.

Title of Research Project

- Include the title of the research project, as approved by the Research Ethics Board
- If the project involves using different consent forms for different populations, identify the population group as the subtitle

Researcher(s)

- Provide the name of the Principal Investigator and any co-investigators, supervisors, and student investigators (where applicable)
- Provide institution and department affiliation and contact phone number(s) and email address(es), to enable participants to contact researchers if necessary

Purpose

- Indicate the purpose or rationale for conducting the study (i.e. *"The purpose of this research is to…"*)
- Provide some background information about the study

Description

- Use straightforward language to describe all procedures
- Describe the data collection process
- Identify whether or not interviews or focus groups will be recorded (digital and/or video), and what will happen to the recordings once the research project is complete (i.e. How long will they be kept for? How will they be destroyed?)
- Indicate the time commitment required for participation, including the time associated with any follow-up studies
- Indicate the anticipated start date and end date of the project

Potential Risks

- Provide a clear description of any known risks (physical risks, discomforts or inconvenience as well as any psychological or social discomforts) that may be associated with participation in the research, or a statement indicating that there are no known risks to participation in the project

Potential Benefits

- Describe all known and/or anticipated benefits to participants arising from participation in the project
- Describe all known and/or anticipated benefits to communities, bodies of knowledge, or society in general as a result of this project
- Be clear that participants may not directly benefit from their participation (if applicable)
- Provide details concerning incentives for participants, including financial or other remuneration

Confidentiality

- Describe procedures to ensure confidentiality of data and participants and identify any limitations to confidentiality
- Describe who has access to the data, where the data will be kept, and what will happen to the data when the project is finished
- Note the difference between anonymity and confidentiality; anonymity is possible only if there is absolutely no way to identify a participant
- Indicate how long raw data will be kept and how it will be stored securely (both electronic and hard copy)

Withdrawal Procedures

- For projects involving questionnaires or interviews, include a statement indicating whether participants may decline to answer any questions and identify whether there are any repercussions for doing so
- Indicate whether participants may withdraw their agreement to participate at any time during the study and have their data withdrawn without reprisal, or whether there is a certain point after which participants can no longer withdraw

Sponsorship

- Identify any sponsoring agencies or organizations.

Conflict of Interest

- Identify whether there is any known or potential conflict of interest between investigators and potential participants

Follow Up

- Explain any plan to contact participants for follow-up sessions or related research
- Indicate the plan for knowledge dissemination (if applicable), including whether or not the findings may be published
- State whether or not research findings will be available to the participants, and where/how they will be made available

REB Approval

- Indicate whether the project has been approved by the Humber Research Ethics Board
- Include contact information for participants who may have any questions regarding ethics approval, or their rights as a research participant (Dr. Lydia Boyko, REB Chair, 416-675-6622 ext. 79322, lydia.boyko@humber.ca)