**Faculty of Engineering –Research Projects**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

This sheet should give participants the information that they need to decide whether they wish to take part in the project. It should provide participants with contact details in case they would like to discuss the project further. It should provide clear information on the essential elements of the specific project: the topic of the project, the voluntary nature of involvement, what will happen during and after the research, what the project involves for the participant, how data will be stored, and any potential risks or inconvenience for the participant balanced against any possible benefits for the participant or the wider community, including the advancement of knowledge and understanding.

**PLEASE MODIFY THE TEMPLATE BELOW TO SUIT YOUR PROJECT.**

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**Participant Information Sheet**

**Project title:**

**Invitation paragraph**

The invitation paragraph should ask the potential participant to consider getting involved in the project, and then ask them to decide whether they wish to take part. For example:

*I/We would like to invite you to take part in my/our research project. Before you decide whether or not to participate, I/we would like you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Please ask me/us questions if anything is unclear.*

**What is the purpose of the project?**

Insert a paragraph here to explain what your project is about, and why you are undertaking this project – what you are examining and the fact that you are conducting the research, for example, as part of a dissertation for a BA degree.

**Why have I been invited to participate?**

You should explain briefly why and how the participant was chosen or recruited, and how many others will participate in the project.

**Do I have to take part?**

You should explain that taking part in the research is entirely voluntary. For example:

*It is up to you to decide whether you wish to participate in the project. I/We will describe the study and go through this information sheet with you before you participate, and answer any questions you might have. If you agree to take part, I/we will then ask you to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.*

Please note, that if data is to be anonymised, or if you will you use the data for an assignment that needs to be submitted on a certain date, you will need to explain in this paragraph that there is thus a cut-off date for withdrawal, you will need to specify exactly when this is. Bear in mind that it might cause problems for your research if a participant withdrew very close to the submission date for your assessed work – so set a cut-off date for withdrawal that will minimise such problems.

**What will happen to me if I take part and what will I have to do?**

Insert here a paragraph that makes it very clear what the participant will be asked to do. For example, will they be asked to take part in a focus group or be the subject of an interview? How long will this take (for example, an hour for a focus group meeting, around two hours for an interview)? Also include any other relevant information: for example, will a digital voice recorder be used to capture an interview, or will an event be filmed? Please bear in mind that if you publish material derived from the project that can be used to identify a participant, you will need to get specific written consent for this on the Consent Form that you ask participants to sign.

**What are the possible disadvantages and risks involved in taking part in the project?**

Insert a paragraph here identifying any risks, discomfort or inconvenience for the participant. If you can foresee no risks, then please state this explicitly.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Explain any possible benefits for the participant or for the wider community, including benefits in terms of the advancement of knowledge and understanding. Be clear and realistic – if there are no direct benefits for the participant, then please state this.

**Will my participation in this project be kept confidential?**

You should tell the participant the measures that you will take to keep their participation and any data that you gather through their participation confidential, during and after the study. Here, the participant should be told:

* how their data will be collected (research notes, sound recordings, video recordings, etc.);
* where data will be stored, and the measures in place to store data in a secure fashion. You should consult and comply with the University’s guidance on information security: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/infosec/uobdata/research/>.
* whether you will anonymise data, both in terms of how you will store data and how you will use data in any submitted work or publications. If it will be possible to identify individual participants from the data, you should explain who will have access to this data. For some projects, it might be neither necessary nor desirable to keep participants anonymous e.g. if you are interviewing public figures, you might explain to them that you plan to use their comments in association with their names in your work.
* how long data will be retained, and what will happen to it after you submit or publish your research, e.g. will you destroy the data at the end of your project, or do you plan to retain it securely for future use?

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**

Participants will often want to know about the results of a project they have been involved in. You should tell them what will happen to the results of the research, what they will be submitted for in terms of your degree, whether it is intended to publish the results, and whether results will be made available to participants e.g. by sending them a copy of your dissertation. You should make it clear that they will not be identified as a named individual in any report/publication unless they have given their consent.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

The answer should include the organisation/person, as appropriate – so you might give the name of your Department and degree programme.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

Give the name and Department of your supervisor, or the Faculty Research Ethics Committee if your project has been submitted for full ethical review via the online tool.

**Further information and contact details**

Participants may want further information in relation to the study and may have questions about what they are being asked to do, so the researcher’s contact details should be included here.

If participants have any concerns related to their participation in this study please direct them to the Faculty of Engineering Research Ethics Committee, via Liam McKervey, Research Governance and Ethics Officer (Tel: 0117 331 7472 email: [Liam.McKervey@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Liam.McKervey@bristol.ac.uk))