Application for Ethical Review (v0.4)

Project Info.

File No: Ref No : 31762
Project Title: PaperPal: An AI-Powered Platform for Collaborative Reading and Discussion
Principal Investigator: Ali Neshati (Faculty of Science (2700))
Start Date: 2025/08/15
End Date: 2025/11/01
Keywords:

Project Team Info.

Principal Investigator

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Other Project Team Members

Prefix	Last Name	First Name	Affiliation	Role In Project	Email

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Common Questions

1. 1. General Screening Questions

#	Question	Answer
1.1	Does your research proposal involve an investigation of a research question that involves human subjects?	Yes
1.2	Does your research proposal involve a study related to a previously approved REB application at Ontario Tech?	Yes
1.3	If YES, provide the REB file number.	18326
1.4	Does your research proposal involve secondary use of existing human participant data only with no interaction with the original study participants?	No
1.5	Does your research proposal involve a quality assurance, quality improvement studies, program evaluation activities, and performance reviews, or testing within normal educational requirements when used exclusively for assessment, management or improvement purposes?	No
1.6	Does your research proposal involve research that relies exclusively on publicly available information such as information that is legally accessible to the public and appropriately protected by law, or the information is publicly accessible and there is no reasonable expectation of privacy?	No

1.7	Does your research proposal involve research involving the observation of people in public places where: a) it does not involve any intervention staged by the researcher, or direct interaction with the individuals or groups; b) individuals or groups targeted for observation have no reasonable expectation of privacy; and c) any dissemination of research results does not allow identification of specific individuals.	No
1.8	Does your research proposal involve a post-doc, graduate or undergraduate student project?	Yes
1.9	Does your research proposal involve a pilot study that will inform a future research question?	Yes
1.10	Does your research proposal involve a research participant pool?	Yes
1.11	If YES, provide the pre-approval REB file number and append the applicable Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and/or protocol.	18326
1.12	Did you use the REB's Ethical Assessment Review Form, IRIS submission checklist and consent form template that are found on the REB's home page?	Yes
1.13	If NO, provide a rationale.	
1.14	Are you requesting ethics clearance for a research project that was not originally designed to collect data from human participants or their records (i.e., your research project originally did not involve collecting data from humans or their records but you now intend to do so)?	No
1.15	If YES, provide details about the original research project.	

2. 2. Reciprocal Review Screening Questions

#	Question	Answer
2.1	Does your research proposal involve collaboration with someone at Durham College (DC) and/or research activities at DC?	No

2.2	Does your research proposal involve collaboration with someone at Lakeridge Health (LH) Hospital and/or research activities at Lakeridge Health?	No
2.3	Does your research proposal involve collaboration with someone at Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences (OS) and/or research activities at OS?	No

3. 3. Clinical research methods screening questions

#	Question	Answer
3.1	Does your research proposal involve an investigation with participants that evaluates the effects of one or more health-related interventions on health outcomes?	No
3.2	Does your research proposal involve an intervention or experimental therapy, usually by comparing two or more approaches? Examples are but not limited to, process-of-care changes, preventive care, manual therapies, and psychotherapies?	No
3.3	Does your research proposal involve the use or administration of any health products, drugs, medical devices or biological matter (e.g., radio-pharmaceuticals, biological products, medical procedures, cells, genetic therapies)?	No
3.4	Does your research proposal involve performing a procedure on tissue below the dermis, below the surface of a mucous membrane, in or below the surface of the cornea, or in or below the surfaces of the teeth, including the scaling of teeth?	No
3.5	If YES, name of person completing procedure and relevant qualifications.	
3.6	Does your research proposal involve administering a substance by injection or inhalation?	No

3.7	Does your research proposal involve an application of an electrical, thermal or magnetic modality to a human participant (e.g., MRI, TMS, tDCS, electrical stimulation, heat, ultrasound, ice, etc.)?	No
3.8	Does your research proposal involve the use of equipment / procedures that requires sterilization?	No
3.9	Does your research proposal involve the collection and storage of human biological materials?	No
3.10	Does your research proposal involve the analysis, use and/or collection of genetic materials?	No
3.11	Does your research proposal involve the use of radioactive material or radiation treatment devices? For example, ingestion of a dye for imaging procedures, x-ray procedures?	No
3.12	Does your research proposal involve the use of lasers or devices that contain lasers?	No

4. 4. Partnerships and agreements screening questions

#	Question	Answer
4.1	Does your research proposal involve the exchange of information that may be considered as personal information or can be used to extract personal information (this includes de-identified or anonymized info)?	Yes
4.2	Does your research proposal involve the exchange of confidential/proprietary data?	No
4.3	Does your research proposal involve the exchange of proprietary or potentially commercial materials?	No
4.4	Does your research proposal involve the exchange of personnel to/from Ontario Tech?	No
4.5	Does your research proposal involve the exchange of transfer of funds to/from Ontario Tech?	No
4.6	If YES, to any of the questions above kindly name the institution.	

4.7	Is there an existing agreement with any institution/organization governing the activities, use of data or materials for this project?	No
4.8	If YES, who was the agreement signed with?	
4.9	Will you be collaborating with another institution/organization/individual where you would like any of the following? (a) The ability to publish your work; (b) The ability to own any IP that's developed; (c) The ability to restrict what can be done with the IP you develop.	No
4.10	Have you received an agreement of any kind that requires signature by you or the University?	No

5. 5. Principal Investigator

#	Question	Answer
5.1	Name of faculty/department of the PI?	Faculty of Science, Computer Science Department
5.2	As the PI, do you have the required professional expertise and qualifications for this research?	I have the required professional expertise and qualifications for this research (details are in my response to question 5.3 below).
5.3	Which member(s) of your team has the necessary qualifications to conduct this research (if not the PI)? Include information: i) Familiarity on the proposed research methods, ii The study population, iii) The research topic, and iv) The experience/training of all individual(s) who will have contact with the research participants or their data.	The Principal Investigator, Dr. Ali Neshati (Ontario Tech University), has the necessary qualifications and experience to lead this research. He has extensive expertise in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) and Machine Learning, is well-versed in user study methodology, and has supervised numerous graduate-level projects involving academic technology, user participation, and data collection.I (the student lead) have also completed the required TCPS2 certification and am familiar with the research methods, target population (students/researchers), and the academic topic being studied.
5.4	Are there any Student Investigators (undergraduate or graduate)?	Yes
5.5	If YES, provide their name(s).	Sakil Sarker

5.6	What additional steps are necessary to ensure that you or your research team will have the necessary qualifications?	No additional steps are necessary. All individuals involved have received appropriate training and ethics certification (TCPS2), and supervision is provided by an experienced faculty member.
5.7	Will any study procedure(s) require professional expertise or recognized qualifications (e.g., registration as a clinical psychologist, first aid certification)?	No
5.8	If YES, indicate who will have the professional expertise/recognized qualifications required?	

6. 6. Research Team

#	Question	Answer
6.1	If the PI did not complete the application form, provide the name of person completing application form.	Sakil Sarker
6.2	Did a Student Investigator (undergraduate or graduate) complete this form?	Yes
6.3	If YES, provide their name(s).	Sakil Sarker
6.4	Have all investigators (PI and Co-investigators) and any individual(s) involved in participant recruitment, consent and data collection completed the most recent TCPS2 training tutorial online?	Yes
6.5	Are all members of the research team listed in the 'Project Team Info' tab? This includes all co-investigators, collaborators, and research assistants/coordinators.	Yes

7. 7. Funding

#	Question	Answer
7.1	Is this project currently funded or will receive funding by a grant that is pending?	No
7.2	If YES, what is your ROMEO awards number?	
7.3	Will you be using any other source of funding for this project (start-up funds, professional development funds, personal funds, etc.)?	No
7.4	If YES, name the sources of internal or personal funding that will be used for this research.	

8. 8. Scholarly Review

#	Question	Answer
8.1	Has your research proposal undergone a scholarly review prior to this submission for ethical review? E.g. has been reviewed by a granting agency, thesis committee, or other review committee.	Yes
8.2	If YES, indicate who completed a peer review.	The research protocol was previously reviewed and approved as part of an earlier REB submission for interviews. It was also reviewed and approved by my thesis supervisor.

9. 9. Conflict of Interest

#	Question	Answer
9.1	Are there any conflicts of interest in the conduct of this study? For example, actual, apparent, perceived, or potential.	No
9.2	If YES, describe how you plan to minimize this conflict of interest.	
9.3	Are there any interpersonal relationships (family, close friendships, colleagues, students, etc.), financial partnerships, other economic interests (i.e. spin-off companies in which researchers have stakes or private contract research outside of the academic realm) or have multiple roles or any other incentives that may compromise the integrity or respect for the core principles of the TCPS2?	No
9.4	If YES, describe how you plan to minimize this conflict of interest.	
9.5	Will the researcher(s), members of the research team, and/or their partners or immediate family members receive any personal benefits (e.g. a financial benefit such as remuneration, intellectual property rights, rights of employment, consultancies, board membership, share ownership, stock options etc.) as a result of or being connected to this study?	No

9.6	If YES, fully describe the conflict of interest (COI). In addition, the COI must be disclosed in the consent form.	
9.7	Are there any restrictions regarding access to or disclosure of information (during or at the end of the study) that have been placed on the investigator(s)? These restrictions could come from a study sponsor, community partners, an organization being researched, or another group involved in the study.	No
9.8	If YES, describe the restriction.	

10. 10. Purpose & Background

#	Question	Answer
10.1	What type of research is your project?	Masters Research Project/Project
10.2	What is/are the specific research questions?	How can a collaborative AI-assisted platform enhance the way students and researchers engage with academic papers?

10.3	Describe concisely and in plain language the study background and purpose of the proposed research project to a layperson unfamiliar with your discipline's methodologies and jargon. Please avoid jargon and scientific terms. Situate the proposed research in the scholarly literature (including some references) and provide a rationale for the study to justify the study's purpose. Describe the project, the overarching research issues/problem, and, if applicable, hypothesis. Describe the anticipated contribution of the research. (max 500-600 words)?	This Master's research project aims to improve how students and researchers read and understand academic papers. Many find academic texts difficult to engage with, especially when reading alone or without timely support. This study explores the development of PaperPal, an AI-powered platform that allows users to read, annotate, and discuss research papers together in real time.The system combines generative AI and collaborative tools to support better comprehension. It provides features such as smart summarization, personalized explanations, and real-time peer interaction to reduce confusion and encourage deeper engagement with complex material.The purpose of this research is to understand how combining AI assistance with collaborative reading features affects users' understanding, focus, and learning experience. The findings will help inform the design of more supportive and accessible academic reading technologies in the future.

11. 11. Start and End Dates

#	Question	Answer
11.1	What is the date you plan to begin recruiting participants? (For secondary use of data, what is the date you plan to receive the dataset, or, if applicable, the date you plan to start obtaining consent from individuals to use their data for research?)	2025/08/15
11.2	What is the estimated last date for data collection with human participants?	2025/10/01

12. 12. Locations of Research & External Approvals

#	Question	Answer
12.1	Will this research occur in multiple locations?	No

12.2	If YES, select the location(s) where research will be conducted.	
12.3	If any of the above were selected, name the primary site where research activities will be led.	
12.4	Will the data (collection, observations, interviews, lab experiments, etc.) occur in physical locations or virtually?	Physical location (i.e. in person surveys or interview with direct participant contact)
12.5	If OTHER, provide details below.	
12.6	For all research conducted in a physical location, specify where the research will take place.	
12.7	For all research conducted online, specify where the online surveys are being hosted.	
12.8	Has any other non-Ontario Tech REB approved this research (another university, college, hospital, school board, etc.)? If you currently have approval from another REB, attach a copy of the approval to this application (use the attachments tab).	No
12.9	If YES, provide: i) a contact name, ii)telephone number of board administration, iii) address of the institution, and iv) decision date (or expected date of decision).	
12.10	Has a version of this study been disapproved or rejected by any Research Ethics Board/Committee?	No
12.11	If YES, provide rationale.	
12.12	Do you foresee any other permissions that may be required to conduct this research? These may include situations such as:	Not Applicable
12.13	If YES or PENDING, attach a copy of the permission letter to this application (use the attachments tab). In addition, provide details about the organization or community that you have permission or are requesting permission to conduct this research.	

13. 13. Research Participants

#	Question	Answer
13.1	Will your study involve participants from Ontario Tech University?	Yes

13.2	Will your study involve participants from outside of Ontario Tech University?	No
13.3	If YES, specify the location(s).	
13.4	What is the approximate number of participants required for this study?	10-12
13.5	Provide a rationale for your choice in sample size and/or the sample size calculation (e.g., to explain how a low sample size will still provide meaningful results, or to justify the number of participants needed in research that includes significant risks).	The sample size is appropriate for qualitative research using semi-structured interviews. A range of 10–12 participants ensures sufficient diversity to gather meaningful insights while allowing for in-depth analysis without data saturation being compromised.
13.6	How many adult participants (18 years of age and older) will be recruited for this project?	10-12
13.7	How many minor participants (ages 13-17 years old) will be recruited for this project?	0
13.8	How many minor youth participants (ages 0-12 years old) will be recruited for this project?	0
13.9	Is this a vulnerable population?	No
13.10	If YES, explain the details and demographics that make your participants a vulnerable population.	
13.11	Are there vulnerable circumstances in this study that could impact the risks? Please note that vulnerable circumstances may be independent of the population and can be present in a non-vulnerable population.	No
13.12	If YES, explain the details/demographics that place your participants in a vulnerable circumstance	
13.13	What are the salient participant characteristics and/or relevant demographic details (e.g., age, gender, location, affiliation, etc.)? Describe any specific inclusion/exclusion criteria (e.g., BMI > 30, immigrated to Canada in the past year, etc.) When referencing REB pre-approved processes include the REB reference number, title and attach the document.	Participants will be adults (18+), including graduate students and academic researchers. All participants must have experience reading academic papers and be able to communicate in English. Inclusion criteria: age 18 or older, active involvement in academic research or graduate studies. Exclusion: individuals with no experience in reading academic literature.
13.14	Select the categories of participants:	Adults|Ontario Tech students
13.15	If OTHER, provide details below.	

13.16	Will the number of eligible participants exceed the target sample size of the study?	
13.17	If YES, describe how you will make the selection (e.g., first come/first served) and how participants will be informed of this.	

14. 14. Research Involving Indigenous Peoples in Canad ...

#	Question	Answer
14.1	Will your research involve collecting data from a Canadian Indigenous community(ies) and/or will the data pertain to Indigenous identity or knowledge?	No, move on to section 15.
14.2	Will the research be conducted on Indigenous lands in Canada?	
14.3	Will recruitment criteria include Canadian Indigenous identity as either a factor for the entire study or for a subgroup in the study?	
14.4	Will the research seek input from participants regarding Canadian Indigenous community cultural heritage, artifacts, traditional knowledge, or unique characteristics?	
14.5	Will research in which Canadian Indigenous identity or membership in an Indigenous community be used as a variable for the purpose of analysis of the research data?	
14.6	Will the interpretation of research results refer to Canadian Indigenous communities, people, language, history, or culture?	
14.7	If YES, describe the nature and extent of your engagement with the Indigenous community being researched.	
14.8	Describe how any traditional knowledge gathered will be attributed and used in the research setting.	
14.9	Has or will a research agreement be created between the researcher and the Indigenous community?	
14.10	Do you have any documents indicating how community engagement has been or will be established (e.g., letters of support), where appropriate?	

14.11	Are you seeking an exception to the requirement for community engagement?	
14.12	If YES, where community engagement is not being proposed, perhaps due to the nature of the research and the community context, researchers shall provide a rationale acceptable to the REB, TCPS 9.10). Provide the rationale for the exception to the community engagement requirement.	

15. 15. Recruitment

#	Question	Answer
15.1	Identify all methods from which you will use to recruit participants. Check all that apply.	Reminder email/script
15.2	If OTHER, provide details below.	
15.3	For each method list above, specify the locations (s) where recruitment will take place.	Reminders will be sent via email to participants who have already expressed interest in the study. This will be done through direct communication with participants from Ontario Tech University.
15.4	Will you be using a research participant pool? If yes, indicate which pool. When referencing REB pre-approved processes include the REB reference number, title and attach the document.	No
15.5	If YES, indicate which pool. When referencing REB pre-approved processes include the REB reference number, title and attach the document.	
15.6	Describe each step of how participants (include all sub-populations) will be recruited (e.g. mail, poster, etc.). Ensure to answer the following questions. (i) How contact information is obtained?; (ii) How participants are made aware of the study; (iii) How participants can express their interest; (iv) Location of recruitment. If you will be emailing or phoning, please include how you will access contact information such as email addresses and phone numbers.	Contact information is collected only from participants who voluntarily expressed interest.Participants are made aware of the study via prior communication and opt-in.Reminders will be sent to participants who have already agreed to be contacted.Recruitment is limited to Ontario Tech University students.
15.7	Who will initiate first contact with the research participant?	Student lead (Sakil Sarker)

15.8	Are there any already-existing relationships between the researcher and potential participants that may possibly contribute to feelings of obligation or undue influence to take part? (E.g. instructor-student, service-provider-client, manager-employee, etc.)	No
15.9	If YES, describe these already-existing relationships and outline strategies you will put in place to avoid potential participants feeling unduly obligated to take part, (e.g. having someone other than the researcher inform the potential participants about the study).	
15.10	Will you require permission to conduct any of the above recruitment strategies? (e.g., permission from an employer to recruit employees on site).	No
15.11	If YES, attach any relevant documentation to demonstrate that permission has been granted.	
15.12	Does your participant recruitment involve social media?	No
15.13	If YES, describe the social media tools you will be using and/or attach copies of the tools, if available.	
15.14	Are you using a third party to recruit participants?	
15.15	If YES, indicate who is doing the recruitment and how it will be accomplished.	

16. 16. Consent Process

#	Question	Answer
16.1	Will you obtain individual participant consent/assent prior to commencement of the research project?	Yes
16.2	If NO, provide justification and provide details for a proposed alternative consent process.	

16.3	If obtaining individual participant consent prior to commencement of the research project is NOT appropriate for this research, please explain and provide details for a proposed alternative consent process. In your response, provide a response on how all the conditions apply:(i) the research involves no more than minimal risk to the participants; (ii) the alteration to consent requirements is unlikely to adversely affect the welfare of participants; it is impossible or impracticable to carry out the research and to address the research question properly, given the research design, if the prior consent of participants is required; (iii) in the case of a proposed alteration, the precise nature and extent of any proposed alteration is defined; and (iv) the plan to provide a debriefing (if any) which may also offer participants the possibility of refusing consent and/or withdrawing data and/or human biological materials.	Not applicable.
16.4	Does your study include participants who cannot consent on their own behalf?	No
16.5	If YES, describe your consent, assent process, and indicate which study team member will be obtaining consent.	
16.6	If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternative source of consent, including any permission form to be provided to the person(s) providing the alternative consent.	
16.7	Describe sequentially the process (i.e. how, when, where, etc.) that will be used to obtain informed consent. Explain what method you will use (written, verbal, online, etc.) and why you chose this method. Attach a copy of the consent letter (for verbal processes, attach the consent script) to this application using the attachments tab.	Participants will be emailed a digital copy of the REB-approved consent form in advance of the study session. They will be asked to read it carefully. At the start of their scheduled session, the researcher (Student Lead) will review the purpose of the study, answer any questions, and confirm their understanding. Participants will then be asked to sign the consent form.

16.8	Describe how consent will be documented. If a written consent form will not be used to document consent, explain why.	Consent will be documented using a signed hard copy consent form. Each participant will sign the form before participation. Signed forms will be stored securely in a locked cabinet accessible only to the research team in the UXID lab.

17. 17. Withdrawal Process

#	Question	Answer
17.1	Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project before/during/after data collection.	Participants will be clearly informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time—before, during, or after data collection—without any penalty or consequence. This information will be explicitly stated in the consent form and reiterated verbally during the consent process. Participants will be told they may withdraw by notifying the researcher via email or in person. They may also refuse to answer any question during interviews without explanation.
17.2	If the participants will not have the right to withdraw during the research procedures and/or withdraw their data from the research afterwards, explain why withdrawal is not possible.	
17.3	What are the consequences for a participant who withdraws, including any effect on participant compensation and management of the research data that has been collected up to the point of withdrawal?	
17.4	What is the withdrawal deadline? If a participant withdraws, what will you do with any collected data?	

18. 18. Reimbursement and Incentives

#	Question	Answer
18.1	Will participants be reimbursed for expenses related to participating in the research (e.g., transportation, parking, childcare, taking unpaid leave from work)?	No
18.2	If YES, provide all reimbursement details for each category of participants.	

18.3	Will participants receive any incentives (e.g. gift card, monetary gift, refreshments, course credit, etc.) for their participation?	Yes
18.4	If YES, provide details about the incentive including the monetary value.	Participants will receive a $20 gift card in appreciation of their time and effort in completing the study. This incentive acknowledges their contribution to the research and is not contingent on completing the entire study.
18.5	If participants choose to withdraw, describe how you will deal with reimbursements/incentives?	

19. 19. Data Collection Method

#	Question	Answer
19.1	Check all the procedures and/or methods that are involved in this study.	Surveys/Questionnaire - in person|Interview(s) - in person|Quantitative|Qualitative
19.2	If OTHER, provide details below.	

19.3	Describe sequentially, and in detail all data collection procedures for all stages of the research in which the research participants will be involved (e.g., paper and pencil tasks, interviews, focus groups, lab experiments, participant observation, surveys, physical assessments etc. —this is not an exhaustive list). Include information about who will conduct the research (include tasks done by assistants, translators, transcriptionists etc.), how long it will take, where data collection will take place, and the ways in which data will be collected (e.g., computer responses, handwritten notes, audio/video/photo recordings etc.). Attach a copy of all data collection materials being used (questionnaires, interview guides, etc.) to this application (use the attachments tab). When referencing REB pre-approved processes include the REB reference number, title and attach the document.	Participants will take part in a single, in-person user study session lasting approximately 20 minutes, conducted at Ontario Tech University, UXID Lab.Phase 1 – System Interaction (~10 minutes):Participants will explore the AI-supported collaborative academic reading platform developed as part of the research. They will be asked to perform tasks such as uploading a PDF, interacting with annotation tools, and optionally using built-in AI features like summarization or clarification prompts.Phase 2 – Post-Interaction Interview (~10 minutes):Following the interaction, participants will engage in a semi-structured interview to share their thoughts on the experience. Questions will focus on usability, perceived benefits of collaboration, and feedback on AI assistance.Conducted by:The student researcher (myself) will moderate all sessions, collect data, and take observation notes. No assistants or translators are involved.Location:UXID Lab, Ontario Tech UniversityData Collection Tools:Google DocInterview guide (semi-structured)All data will be stored securely in encrypted Ontario Tech–approved storage systems.
19.4	Describe your data analysis methods, (e.g. statistical analysis, textual analysis, NVIVO, etc.)?	

20. 20. Internet Based Research

#	Question	Answer
20.1	Are you conducting internet-based research?	No, move on to section 21.
20.2	If YES, please describe the type of internet research (e.g. collecting information from private chat rooms, conducting an on-line survey – FluidSurvey, SurveyMonkey or Limesurvey).	

20.3	For online survey research, have you provided a consent preamble for participants that will be attached to the survey?	
20.4	If NO, provide a rationale.	
20.5	Have you indicated in the consent preamble, how participants can discontinue participation if they wish? I.e. “simply close your browser and no data will be collected”.Yes	
20.6	If NO, provide a rationale.	
20.7	If participants discontinue participation part way through the survey or online activity, will the data completed up to that point be collected and analyzed?	

21. 21. Risks and Benefits Inherent in the Research

#	Question	Answer
21.1	Check any possible risks to the participants. Provide details in question below.	Other risks (details are in my response to question 21.2 below)
21.2	If ANY of the options were selected above, describe any risks that may occur and how they will be managed. If applicable, explain why less risky alternative approaches could not be used	There are no known risks involved in this study. Participants will simply take part in a user study where they interact with a system and share their thoughts. If at any point they feel uncomfortable, they can stop without any problem. Their comfort and choice to participate are fully respected.
21.3	Discuss any risks to the research team.	
21.4	Do you have a list of community counselling or other support services to give participants if they were to become distressed during participation in your research?	
21.5	If YES, name all the counselling and support services.	
21.6	If NO, provide a rationale why no counselling and/or support will be provided.	

21.7	Discuss any direct benefits to the participants from their involvement in the project. Comment on the potential benefits to the community, society and/or environment that would justify involvement of participants in this study.	
21.8	Explain why these benefits outweigh any risks.	

22. 22. Deception and Partial Disclosure

#	Question	Answer
22.1	Is any deception (the act of deliberately misleading participants) or concealment (the act of keeping information from participants without deceiving them) necessitated by the study's design? When referencing REB pre-approved processes include the REB reference number, title and attach the document.	No
22.2	If YES, describe: (i) the nature of the deception and how the deception was carried out; (ii) why it must be used; (iii) why no other alternative methodology can be used to answer the research question, and (iv) the procedures that will be used to protect the participants.	
22.3	Debriefing - Outline the process you will use to debrief participants. Explain and justify whether or not participants will be given the option of withdrawing their data after debriefing. Attach the second consent form required for full disclosure on deception (use the attachments tab).	

23. 23. Providing Participants with Study Results

#	Question	Answer

23.1	Describe what feedback and/or information will be provided to the participants after their participation. Indicate when (i.e., month/year) the results will be available for participants. Explain to the participants how they can access the information/feedback (provide your email address, URL, etc.) and/or learn about study results.	After participation, each participant will receive a thank-you message summarizing the purpose of the study and expressing appreciation for their time and contribution. If they are interested in the study results, they may contact the student researcher via email at sakil.sarker@ontariotechu.net. A summary of the findings will be made available upon request around December 2025. No individual data will be shared.

24. 24. Incidental Findings and Third Party Disclosure

#	Question	Answer
24.1	Is there a potential of material incidental findings resulting from your research?	
24.2	If YES, describe the incidental findings and how this will be managed.	
24.3	Is there a significant possibility the researcher will obtain information from participants that will require the researcher to break confidentiality and report details to a third party? This could be a legal or ethical requirement (e.g., suspected child abuse, imminent self-harm or harm to others).	
24.4	If YES, describe how this will be managed.	

25. 25. Management of Study Records/Participant Data P ...

#	Question	Answer
25.1	Do you have a data management plan (DMP)?	Yes
25.2	If YES, attach your DMP and skip the remainder questions in sections 25, 26, 27. If you do not have a DMP, answer all questions in sections 25, 26 and 27.	Attached!

25.3	Are you collecting personal information and/data that directly identifies participants (e.g., name on consent form, email address, video recording etc.,) or information that could indirectly identify participants (e.g., date of birth, postal code, direct quotes) during any stages of the project life cycle (e.g. recruitment, screening and consent phases of the study and/or to provide participants with incentives, reimbursements or study results)?	
25.4	If YES, select all identifiable data that will be collected for this study. (Select all that apply)	
25.5	Explain why each type of identifiable data is necessary to conduct the research.	
25.6	Describe who will have access to this information or knowledge of who participated (e.g., focus group participants will see other participants and may be told names).	
25.7	Will there be a unique code linking the participant name/contact information to the data?	
25.8	If YES, describe the linking code, how it will be kept secure, and who will have access.	
25.9	Describe the procedures that will be used to keep the information private and secure during data collection and analysis (including where the information will be kept).	
25.10	Will your data be anonymous or anonymized?	

26. 26. Transfer of Information/Resources

#	Question	Answer
26.1	Have you attached a DMP? If YES, attach your DMP and skip the remainder questions in sections 25, 26 and 27. If you do not have a DMP, answer all questions in sections 25, 26 and 27.	Yes

26.2	Will you be transferring or electronically transmitting any study records, data, personal information, personal health information, materials or human resources outside Ontario Tech and/or its affiliate institutions? (e.g., audio recordings, questionnaires, interview transcripts, signed consent forms, etc.)	
26.3	If YES, describe the information/resources that will be transferred.	
26.4	List the individuals/groups/organizations outside of the study team who will have access to identifiable study records, and the type of identifiable information that will be shared.	
26.5	Explain why the individuals/groups/organizations outside the of the study team need access to identifiable data.	
26.6	Describe the identifiable information that will be transferred/transported to individuals/groups/organizations outside the of the study team.	
26.7	Describe the procedures that will be used to keep the information private and secure during transfer/transport.	

27. 27. Data Storage and Final Disposition of Study Re ...

#	Question	Answer
27.1	Have you attached a DMP? If YES, attach your DMP and skip the remainder questions in sections 25,26 and 27. If you do not have a DMP, answer all questions in sections 25, 26 and 27.	Yes
27.2	State how long you plan to retain study-related documents that identify participants (e.g. consent forms, contact information). Provide the rationale for the retention length of identifiable study-related documents.	

27.3	State how long you plan to retain your research data (e.g. interview transcripts, survey answers, EEG readings, etc.). Provide the rationale for the retention length of research data.	
27.4	Describe how the storage procedures will keep the data and other study records (e.g. consent forms) private and secure (including where the data will be kept).	
27.5	If any personal identifiers will be retained once data collection is complete, provide a comprehensive rationale explaining why it is necessary to retain this information, including the retention of master lists that link participant identifiers with unique study codes and de-identified data.	
27.6	How will study participants' data be reported in the dissemination of results (e.g., aggregated data, identifiable descriptors, deidentified descriptors, etc.)	

28. 28. Summary of Research Tools/Materials

#	Question	Answer
28.1	Check all appropriate recruitment materials that will be used for your research. Attach a copy of each item to this application (use the attachments tab).	Electronic correspondence guide
28.2	Check all appropriate consent materials that will be used for your research. Attach a copy of each item to this application (use the attachments tab).	Consent form
28.3	Check all appropriate data gathering instruments that will be used for your research. Attach a copy of each item to this application (use the attachments tab).	Questionnaires
28.4	Check all appropriate communications to participants that will be used for your research. Attach a copy of each item to this application (use the attachments tab).	Thank You Letter
28.5	Check all appropriate letters of Approval/Permission that will be used for your research. Attach a copy of each item to this application (use the attachments tab).	None

28.6	If you selected 'Other' in any of the questions above, provide details below.	

29. 29. Principal Investigator Assurance(s)

#	Question	Answer
29.1	I assume full responsibility for the scientific and ethical conduct of the study as described in this application and submitted proposal. In addition, I agree to conduct this study in compliance with the most recent Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects, policies, relevant laws, regulations or guidelines.	I understand and agree.
29.2	As the PI, I confirm that I have read and am familiar with the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions, Ontario Tech's Research Involving Humans Policy, and I agree to comply with this and other university policies, guidelines and the Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) and the guidelines of my profession or discipline regarding the ethical conduct of research involving humans.	I understand and agree.
29.3	I will obtain research ethics clearance prior to study commencement.	I understand and agree.
29.4	I will adhere to the research proposal described in the REB application as last reviewed and approved by the REB.	I understand and agree.
29.5	I will be responsible for obtaining any further approvals/permission that might be required to complete my project.	I understand and agree.

29.6	I will comply with the continuing research ethics reviews requirements in Articles 6.14, 6.15, and 6.16 of the TCPS2 which are listed below: (i) Renewal Request Form: All approved projects are subject to an annual renewal process. Projects must be renewed or closed by the expiry date indicated in the REB approval letter; (ii) Change Request Form: If the research plan, methods, and/or recruitment methods should change, a change request application will be submitted to the REB for review and approval prior to implementing the changes; (iii) Adverse or Unexpected Events Form: Events will be reported to the REB in accordance to the REB's reporting requirements in SOP 207 (Ongoing Review of Approved Research); (iv) Research Project Completion Form: Will be submitted when the research study is concluded.	I understand and agree.
29.7	I have completed the TCPS 2 tutorial Course on Research Ethics (CORE) and have attached a copy of my completion certificate to this application. Note: all investigators listed on this application must submit their certificates.	I understand and agree.
29.8	I understand that my proposal will be subject to random review for compliance by the Office of Research Services and/or regulatory authorities in the event of an audit.	I understand and agree.
29.9	I understand that should I desire to use the data for another purpose, this is considered secondary use of data and a separate REB application is required.	I understand and agree.
29.10	I attest that all information submitted to the REB is complete and truthful. I understand the consequences, for myself and for the institution, of failure to comply with the above regulations.	I understand and agree.

Attachments

Doc / Agreement	Version Date	File Name	Description

Consent Letter	2025/07/22	Appendix 9_ f2f-inperson-consent-form-addendum.docx	Appendix 9_ f2f-inperson-consent-form-addendum
Consent Letter	2025/07/22	Appendix 1_ Consent Form.docx	Appendix 1_ Consent Form
Data Management Plan	2025/07/22	DMP.pdf	DMP
Recruitment Materials	2025/07/22	Appendix 10_ Scheduling and WaitList Emails.docx	Appendix 10_ Scheduling and WaitList Emails
Recruitment Materials	2025/07/22	Appendix 3_ Recruitment Email.docx	Appendix 3_ Recruitment Email
Supporting Documentation	2025/07/22	Appendix11-studyscript.docx	Appendix11-studyscript
Supporting Documentation	2025/07/22	Appendix 8_ Thank-You Script.docx	Appendix 8_ Thank-You Script
Supporting Documentation	2025/07/22	Appendix 7_ Post-Study (overall) Questionnaire.docx	Appendix 7_ Post-Study (overall) Questionnaire
Supporting Documentation	2025/07/22	Appendix 5_ PreBlock Questionnarie.docx	Appendix 5_ PreBlock Questionnarie
Supporting Documentation	2025/07/22	Appendix 2_Study Design.pptx	Appendix 2_Study Design
TCPS2 Certificate		TCPS2.png	TCPS 2 Certificate