**Participant Information Sheet**

**Researcher:**

Introduce yourself. Explain who you are, and where you are from.

As the primary investigator**, i**nsert your name, whether you are a staff member, postgraduate student or undergraduate student. Add the School and College at the Australian National University you are studying in.

**Project Title:** Insert the title of the project

**General Outline of the Project:**

* **Description and Methodology:** Provide a brief overview of the project goals and proposed methodology (a few sentences).
* **Participants:** If it is relevant for informed consent,indicate how and from whom the data will be collected and how many participants will be involved.
* **Use of Data and Feedback:** Explain how the data will be used and presented (e.g. thesis, publications, possible future research, etc.) including, if appropriate, how the results will be shared with participants. **Project Funding:** If relevant, indicate that the project has received specific funding and name the funding body.

**Participant Involvement:**

Think about this section from the point of view of the participant. What would you wish to know before deciding whether or not to participate in a research project?

* **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal:** Inform the intended participants that the project is **voluntary** and that they may, without any penalty, decline to take part or withdraw from the research at any time without providing an explanation, or refuse to answer a question. Advise them that if they do withdraw, what will happen to their data. Will it be destroyed for example or do you still intend to use the data.
* **What will participants have to do?** Describe what the participants will be asked to do: For example, complete a questionnaire, undertake an interview, participate in a focus group, and/or permit access to personal records. For interviews, focus groups and similar methodologies specify how the contribution of the participants will be captured. If information is to be recorded by the researcher or videoed and then transcribed for analysis, indicate whether transcripts of the individual recording will be provided to each participant for perusal before the analysis is finalised. Advise that you will only video/audio if the participants consent to it.
* **Location and Duration:** Indicate where the research will take place, the number of occasions on which the participants will be required, and the length of time on each occasion. If the research requires multiple interactions, an estimate of the total time commitment is also useful.
* **Incentives:** If relevant, indicate that an incentive for participation is to be offered (for example a payment or gift or course credit), state its nature and how it will be provided.
* **Risks:** Describe any **risks, discomforts**, **hazards or side effects** that might arise because of the subject of the research or the research method. If risks or hazards may arise, describe the procedures that will be in place to support the participants, and the method by which the participants would access such support. (For example - contact details of a Counselling service).
* **Implications of Participation:** Depending on the research subject and the intended participants, it may be necessary to indicate exactly how the project relates to care being given by medical practitioners or courses of study or employment requirements or other activities. Potential participants need enough information to be confident that declining participation in the research will not have adverse personal effects.

**Exclusion criteria**:

* **Participant Limitation:** If relevant, detail the reasons for which potential participants would be excluded from the project. Omit this section if there are no exclusion criteria.

**Confidentiality:**

* **Confidentiality:** Indicate whether anyone but the nominated researchers will have access to the material provided by the participants and how the confidentiality of the participants is to be preserved. Describe the process briefly but in sufficient detail for the participants to understand how their data will be kept confidential during **both** the collection phase and in the publication of results. With regard to publication of results, indicate how participant information will be attributed – e.g. full name, pseudonym or complete confidentiality.

**Notes on confidentiality:**

* + Confidentiality and anonymity are not the same. If you know who your participants are – they are not anonymous, but you can still seek to provide confidentiality.
  + Please note that you cannot guarantee confidentiality. Phrases like “Confidentiality will be protected as far as the law allows” can be helpful here. Not all projects require confidentiality. For example, professionals interviewed about their professional expertise may be quite happy to have their name associated with the material.

**Data Storage:**

* **Where:** Indicate where the data will be stored and how the security of personal information will be maintained during collection, analysis and preparation of results and how long the data will be kept after publication. See -‘[Responsible Practice of Research policy’](http://policies.anu.edu.au/policies/responsible_practice_of_research/policy).
* **How long:** Normally data is stored for a period of at least five years from publication but if you are an Undergraduate/Honours student, you need only to keep your data for a year following the submission of your thesis. Longer periods and different locations may apply if the research is conducted in conjunction with other agencies or is medical research.
* **Destruction of Data:** Provide an explanation of what will happen to the data at the end of the storage period. Explain if the data will be destroyed, archived or used for future research projects.

**Queries and Concerns:**

* **Contact Details for More Information:** Include information on the method by which participants can raise queries on the project. For further requests for information or queries regarding the study participants should be directed to the Primary Investigator. Provide name contact details (telephone, fax, email). If the Primary Investigator is a student, provide the supervisor’s contact details also. Note that an ANU e-mail address is required, **not** a gmail/yahoo/hotmail address, and not another corporate or ISP-provided address. Also ensure that this ANU e-mail address will be checked (or forwarded to an address you do check).
* **Overseas Contacts (if relevant):** If doing overseas research, provide a Local Contact person’s details so that when the researcher leaves the area, the participants have someone knowledgeable to ask further questions about the research project.
* **Contact Details if in Distress:** If any of the questions that you are asking could be seen as stressful, you may like to include contact details to a counselling service. For example, if you are doing your research at the ANU, you could include contact details for the ANU Counselling service, or within Australia, for Lifeline.

**Ethics Committee Clearance:**

* **Include this boilerplate statement:**

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University  
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427  
Email: [Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au](mailto:Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au)

(Please ensure that you use the position descriptor ‘Ethics Manager’ in the above address and not an individual’s actual name.)