

# Exploring Scientists' Experience with the Public

## Informed Consent

### What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this survey is to understand the scope and impacts of harassment and intimidation of COVID-19 researchers. The survey is being conducted by the news department of the journal *Science*, with academic and ethical oversight [IRB protocol number]. It will inform a news article on the problem of harassment and intimidation facing COVID-19 researchers specifically, and scientists more broadly.

You received this survey invitation because you were identified as a scientist who published in a Web of Science indexed journal between 2020 and 2021. We used the email address stored in Web of Science to contact you.

### What is my role in this study?

You will be asked to describe your work, and any public attention you have received as a COVID-19 researcher. You will then be asked about any experiences you have had of harassment, threats, intimidation, or other unwanted behaviors. Finally, you will be asked some optional demographic questions. In total, participation should take 15–30 minutes.

### Are there any benefits, risks or costs associated with participation?

After completing the survey, you will be asked to choose one of three charities for a donation. *Science* will donate \$500 across these three charities, divided proportionally according to participants’ selections. There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this survey. Taking part may help to show how widespread this problem is, and how it is affecting researchers who experience it.

Taking part will not expose you to any costs or physical risk. It will ask you questions about experiences that may have been difficult and painful, and about your response to them. As this protocol does not pose more than minimal risk, in the unlikely event of a medical emergency, no medical treatment will be administered by the research team, nor will you be compensated for any treatment sought independently.

### How will the data I provide be used and stored?

The information in this study will be used only for research and journalistic purposes and in ways that will not reveal who you are. You will not be identified in any publication from this study. Partial responses will also be used.

Directly identifying information (for example, IP addresses or email addresses) will be removed from the dataset. We will aggregate and analyse the de-identified (anonymous) data, and a summary of these aggregated results will be published online and in print in *Science*. In these publicly available versions, there will be no opportunity to trace answers back to individual participants. Free-text responses may be quoted in Science’s report of the survey results, but will not be attributed to any individual.

Any other personal information that could identify you, like your location or field of research, will be removed or changed before files are shared with other researchers or results are made public. These fully de-identified (anonymous) will be shared on the Open Science Framework (<https://osf.io>) upon completion of the project, along with the survey questions and analysis code.

### Do I have to participate in this research?

Your decision to complete this survey is voluntary.

If you decide to fill in the survey and then change your mind, you can leave the survey at any time without penalty. Just close your browser tab or window.

You can choose to miss any questions you do not want to answer.

### Who do I contact to ask further questions?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact Cathleen O’Grady at [mail@cathleenogrady.com](mailto:mail@cathleenogrady.com). If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject or complaints regarding this research study, or you are unable to reach the research staff, you may contact a person independent of the research team at the Biomedical Research Alliance of New York Institutional Review Board at 516-318-6877. Questions, concerns or complaints about research can also be registered with the Biomedical Research Alliance of New York Institutional Review Board at [www.branyirb.com/concerns-about-research](http://www.branyirb.com/concerns-about-research).

By clicking “yes” below, you are indicating that you:

- Understand the nature and purpose of the procedures involved in this survey, as explained in the participant information statement preceding this form.
- Have had an opportunity to ask questions about this survey and have received satisfactory answers to any questions that you have asked.
- Have received enough information about the survey to be able to make an informed decision about your participation.
- Understand that you are free to withdraw from this survey at any time prior to completion, and that you do not need to provide a reason for withdrawing.
- Understand that this survey is designed to inform a news article and that the researchers will use the information you provide for journalistic purposes.
- Understand that the data you provide will be immediately made non-identifiable by stripping email information gathered by the survey software.
- Understand that a significantly de-identified set of data files from this survey will be uploaded to an academic data repository, where it can be freely accessed and re-analyzed.

1. Have you read and understood the above consent statements and do you agree to participate in the survey? \*

- ☒ Yes
- ☐ No