# Open Science Information Sheet and Consent Form Template

Purpose: Many researchers in psychology have recently increased their commitment to open science, a key part of which is making data and analysis code open, so that other researchers can examine our work and use our data without needing to email us directly. Unfortunately, the default language provided by many departmental ethics committees can provide a stumbling block to such data sharing.

For instance, many of these boilerplate forms promise participants that their data will not be shared outside the research team, or only shared with competent researchers. This language is problematic for those of us who want to make our data open, because it seems to preclude posting even de-identified data on the open science framework or other data repositories. Having recently had to modify the language provided by my own department, and not finding any good templates for such language available, I’m posting this document in the hopes that it will aid others in making similar adjustments.

Answer text for ethics application questions

**Regarding the future use of data** (My ethics committee asks for specific justification to ask for consent to use data beyond the specific research purposes of the current study. This seems short-sighted in that we can’t predict what forms of future analysis currently collected data may be used for. I use the language below to justify asking for consent for all future data use):

“We do/do not have specific plans to use this data for other purposes. Beyond this, it is our belief that unless data are so sensitive they cannot be shared, researchers should always ask for unspecified consent. Most psychology journals now require that data be posted publicly or shared upon request, and this is likely to continue to become more common. Further, open science requires that data be available for meta-analysis and use in future research questions that may not be conceived yet. Data will of course be completely de-identified before being shared with other researchers. Further, participants’ descriptions of their specific experiences (which may potentially identify them in some way) will be removed from the dataset before it is shared beyond the research team. Any further sharing of the dataset (e.g. on the Open Science Framework) will contain only quantitative, anonymous data. Participants will be made aware of all of this in the Plain Language Statement.”

**Regarding security and storage of data**:

“Qualtrics and Mturk will be used as short-term storage during the data collection phase. A computer will be used for long-term storage after the data collection phase. The de-identified data may also be placed in a public repository such as the Open Science Framework to ensure that storage is future-proof. It will be the responsible researcher’s duty to manage storage. The identifiable (in that it contains Mturk IDs and qualitative descriptions of significant experiences) data will remain on a password-protected computer managed by the responsible researcher.”

Confidentiality paragraph for information sheet presented to participants

**How will my confidentiality be protected?**

Any responses you provide will be completely anonymous—you will be given a random participant code that cannot be linked to your personal identity in any way. If you give us your permission by completing and submitting the survey, we plan to discuss/publish the results in an academic forum. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified. Only members of the research team will have access to the original dataset, which will be stored on a password-locked computer. Before your data is shared outside the research team, any potentially identifying information (such as the significant experience you describe) will be removed. Once identifying information has been removed, the data you provide may be used by the research team, or shared with other researchers, for both related and unrelated research purposes in the future. Your (anonymous) data may also be made available in online data repositories such as the Open Science Framework, which allow other researchers and interested parties to access the data for further analysis.

Consent form template for participants

**Consent form for persons participating in a research project**

**PROJECT TITLE**:**[Insert here]**

Name of investigator(s): [Insert here]; email: [insert here].

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement.
2. I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary.

3. I understand that after I click the button below this consent form will be retained by the researcher.

1. I acknowledge that:

(a) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data I have provided;

(b) the project is for the purpose of research;

(c) I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements;

(d) Any information I provide will be completely anonymous;

(e) Only members of the research team will have access to my raw data, which will be stored on a password-locked computer. Once all identifiable information has been removed, my anonymous responses may be shared with other researchers or made available in online data repositories.

I consent to participating in this research, and to the responses I provide being used as indicated above:

**□ yes □ no**