Prospective Research Participant Information Sheet

*[Department]*

Royal Holloway, University of London

*[Note for researcher (to be deleted prior to submission with the application): the following is intended as a framework for enabling your potential research participants to make an informed decision about whether they wish to take part in your project. However, information sheets should be constructed in ways that are appropriate to the participants that are being targeted and should be as clear and concise as possible].*

Project Title: *[….]*

Principle Investigator’s name and email address: *[Name and email address – this would be the PhD Supervisor]*

Primary Researcher: *[Name and email address – this would be the PhD Researcher]*

Project telephone number: *[Optional - for your privacy and safety, it is strongly recommended that you do not provide private phone numbers to participants]*

## Introductory paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide to consent to take part it is important for you to understand why the research is taking place and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Please consider carefully whether you wish to consent to take part.

## Why is this research being conducted?

*[State the background, purpose and aims of the research. Remember to be brief and don’t use overly complicated language that a lay person wouldn’t understand. Consider what a potential participant would want to know.]*

## Why have I been invited to take part?

*[Explain how they have been identified as a potential participant and mention any inclusion or exclusion criteria, including age range. You should explain how the participant was chosen and say how many other participants will be recruited.]*

## Do I have to take part?

*[It is important that participants understand that they do not have to take part, that it is important that they consent to take part, and that they may withdraw their consent without negative consequences. It is extremely important that pressure is not placed upon prospective participants to take part. For example, you could say:*

No. It is up to you to decide whether you wish to take part or not. You can withdraw from the study at any time, without any consequences and without needing to give a reason, and you can withdraw your data until *[date]* by contacting the [primary] researcher. After this date the research will be published / submitted as a thesis for assessment and withdrawing your data will no longer be possible. If you decide that you wish to withdraw your data from the project the *[primary]* researcher will *[explain how you will withdraw the data from your dataset]*.

**What will my participation involve?**

*[This section should explain what will be involved in your research from a participant’s point of view, and in the order they will experience it. This might include:*

* *where the research will take place, including any information as to what to expect on arrival if a physical visit is planned;*
* *how consent will be taken;*
* *how long the participant will be involved in the research;*
* *what the activity/ activities will involve – e.g., interviewees should normally be told what topics will be covered, particularly if any of these are likely to be sensitive. It might be helpful to explain the questioning style. If any unusual equipment is going to be used it may be helpful to include a picture.*
* *If applicable: With your consent, I/ we would like to audio record you/ video record you/ take photographs of you [delete as appropriate] because…[give reasons why this is necessary here, e.g. for audio recording: so I/ we can have an accurate record of our conversation; for video recording so that responses or performances can be recorded and analysed].*
* *how long the research will last (if this is different);*
* *how often they will need to participate and for how long each time;*
* *that participants can ask to pause or stop the research activities at any time;*
* *For longer sessions explain that they will be offered regular breaks. If there are multiple activities/ sessions, describe them in turn, using a new paragraph/ section for each.*
* *if any follow-up sessions will be necessary, stating duration and frequencies – if it’s complicated, it may be easier to include a timeline or a diagram to explain to participants;*

## What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part, and how might these be mitigated?

*[Detail any reasonably foreseeable discomforts, disadvantages and risks, and how these risks will be mitigated. Use this section to detail how participants could potentially be identified from the data and from the research outputs, and in particular if you collect special category data under* [*GDPR*](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/guide-to-the-general-data-protection-regulation-gdpr/lawful-basis-for-processing/special-category-data/)*. It is extremely rare, if not impossible, that research data can be completely anonymised. It is important to note suggest that this is possible, and to acknowledge to your participants that although you will be putting in place protocols to safeguard their data, there is always the potential that this may be circumvented].*

## Are there any benefits in taking part?

*[Any benefits to the participants that can reasonably be expected should be stated. However, where there is no intended benefit to the participant from taking part in the project this should be explained. It is important not to exaggerate the possible benefits to the particular participant during the course of the project, this could be seen as coercive.*

*For example you could say: ‘While there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, it is hoped that this research will lead to…’, or ‘there will be no direct or personal benefit to you from taking part in this research’.*

## Payments

*[This section clarifies whether you plan on reimbursing participants for their time by providing money for travel costs, meals, or childcare for instance, by offering a voucher, a gift, or entry into a prize draw, or not providing payments at all]*

*[Either]*

You will receive *[x amount/ voucher/ gift]* for *[participation/ reasonable travel costs/ meals/ childcare]*

*[Or]*

There will be no payment for taking part in this study.

**What information about me will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?**

*[Clearly and concisely list all types of data that will be collected from participants (as described on your ethics application form), where it will be stored, and how long for. Specify any GDPR special category data that is to be collected.*

*[If applicable]* Identifiable data (including consent forms) will be stored within *[give details – encrypted device / hard drive?; dropbox for business?]* and until [give anticipated date - *project end date? Will identifiable data be retained beyond publication / submission of thesis?]*. Other research data will be stored for *[x]* years after publication or public release of the work of the research. *[Also mention if personal details need to be shared (and with whom) if participants are to receive payments / vouchers]*

The researcher *[and/ or research team, supervisor, collaborator/ translator/ transcriber/ other authorised personnel…]* will have access to the research data.

*[If applicable, inform participants that]* Research data may be transferred to, and stored at, a destination outside the UK and the European Economic Area. *[And]* Identifiable data will be removed whenever possible and any data transfer will be undertaken with a similar level of data protection as required under UK law.

*[If applicable]* I / We would like your permission to use this data in future studies, and to share this with other researchers (e.g. in online databases). *[Explain the degree to which participants will be identifiable from this data. It is important that you use language that participants can easily understand when explaining how identifiable they will be from the data. It can be difficult / impossible to fully anonymise data, particularly qualitative data, and participants may not understand terms like pseudonymisation].*

**How will the results of my participation be used?** **Will the research be published? Could I be identified from any publications or other research outputs?**

*[If you are a PhD researcher and you currently only envisage submitting your research as a thesis, the following text is recommended]* This research will be used to produce a PhD thesis which will be *[either]* deposited in Pure, Royal Holloway’s research information system, and with the British Library to be made available via the EThOS electronic thesis service *[or]* embargoed for *[…]* years prior to being deposited in Pure, Royal Holloway’s research information system, and with the British Library to be made available via the EThOS electronic thesis service.

*[For other research projects, the most effective text might be:]* The findings from the research will/may be written up in *[for example: academic publications, conference presentations, a report commissioned by an external organisation, websites, videos etc.]*

*[Explain whether it will be possible for participants to be identifiable from the outputs and clarify whether they have a choice about this].*

*[If applicable]* I / We would like your permission to use direct quotations [*and for your name to be attributed to these/ but without identifying you*] in any research outputs.

## *[If applicable]* Who is funding the research?

*[Provide details of who has funded the research]*

**Who do I contact if I have a concern about the research or I wish to complain?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please contact *[either]* the primary researcher, *[name], via [email address]*, the principal investigator *[name] via [email address]*, or Royal Holloway’s Research Ethics Committee via ethics@rhul.ac.uk. If you wish to make a formal complaint, please email integrity@rhul.ac.uk.

**Ethical Approval**

This study has received ethics approval from Royal Holloway, University of London’s Research Ethics Committee, with the approval ID of *[….]*.

*[And also provide details of any other reviews, e.g. from a local ethics committee if the research is taking place overseas.]*

***[If applicable]* Safeguarding and when confidentiality may need to be breached**

*With some projects confidentiality might need to be breached due to safeguarding or legal reasons. If applicable, detail these how here, how confidentiality will be breached, and who will lead on this [for e.g. principal investigator]*

**Data protection**

This research commits to abide by the Data Protection Act (2018).

**General Data Protection Regulation Statement *[N.b. This is a mandatory statement and must be included in full]***

Important General Data Protection Regulation information (GDPR). Royal Holloway, University of London is the sponsor for this study and is based in the UK. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. Any data you provide during the completion of the study will be stored securely on hosted on servers within the European Economic Area’. Royal Holloway is designated as a public authority and in accordance with the Royal Holloway and Bedford New College Act 1985 and the Statutes which govern the College, we conduct research for the public benefit and in the public interest. Royal Holloway has put in place appropriate technical and organisational security measures to prevent your personal data from being accidentally lost, used or accessed in any unauthorised way or altered or disclosed. Royal Holloway has also put in place procedures to deal with any suspected personal data security breach and will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected breach where legally required to do so. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible (i.e., the email address you provide us). The lead researcher will keep your contact details confidential and will use this information only as required (i.e., to provide a summary of the study results if requested and/or for the prize draw). The lead researcher will keep information about you and data gathered from the study, the duration of which will depend on the study. Certain individuals from RHUL may look at your research records to check the accuracy of the research study. If the study is published in a relevant peer-reviewed journal, the anonymised data may be made available to third parties. The people who analyse the information will not be able to identify you. You can find out more about your rights under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 by visiting <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/about-us/more/governance-and-strategy/data-protection/> and if you wish to exercise your rights, please contact dataprotection@royalholloway.ac.uk

NB: You may retain this information sheet for reference and contact us with any queries.