Application for the Use of Human Participants in Research by Students

(Last updated 15 Sep 2020)

Any student or group of students planning to conduct research of any kind, with or without involvement of human participants must complete this application and submit it for approval to the Ethics Committee of the Division of Linguistics and Multilingual Studies.

NOTE: All materials associated with the proposed study (see checklist on Page 3) must be reviewed and approved by your supervisor prior to submitting this application.

Under no circumstances may data collection begin before your application has been reviewed and approved by the LMS Ethics Committee. Failure to follow this important step may result in a grade penalty or disciplinary action.

Submission Instructions

Once you have obtained the approval of your supervisor, send a completed and scanned pdf copy of this application form along with all accompanying documents in a single email to the Ethics Committee email address: lms.ethics@ntu.edu.sg. Enter "FYP Ethics Application AY20: <your name>" or "URECA Ethics Application AY20: <your name>" in the subject line of your email, and cc your supervisor. Your name should be in full in the order as it appears on your matriculation card.

Once approved

You will either receive an email approving your submission or be asked to amend it. Once approved, the final step is for you to fill out the ‘LMS-IRB Ethics Approval Signature Form’, obtain the signature of both your supervisor and the Ethics committee representative (Dr Alexander Coupe, office at HSS-03-56). Finally, scan the signed LMS-IRB Ethics Approval Signature Form and send it for archival to lms.ethics@ntu.edu.sg.

During your study, make sure that you leave a copy of the Informed Consent with your participants, either in hard or soft copy. For the latter, signed soft copies can be obtained by using Photo to PDF Converter apps available for smartphones. You can take a photo of the signed hard copy with the app, and send the PDF to the participant via email.

It is also your responsibility to keep a record of all signed Consent Forms from all your participants for auditing purposes. At the end of your study, you may be asked to submit the full record.
Requirement for consent of research involving Minors

On 8 May 2018 NTU IRB has updated its policy. If your participants are below 21 years old, you need to obtain Parental Consent. If your participants are below 18 years old, your supervisor needs to apply for NTU IRB approval.

For projects that are of less than minimal risk, where there is no likelihood of harm, it is possible to take parental/guardian consent via “online consent”. For details, please see Section 3.2 Requirement for consent of research involving Minors (updated 8 May 2018) of the NTU IRB Guidelines (http://research.ntu.edu.sg/rieo/IRB/Pages/Guidelines.aspx). Note that online consents must be documented and archived as a standard Consent Form.

Minimum Training Requirements

There is a need for minimum standards in training requirements to ensure the proper and ethical conduct of research on human subjects. This is to enable investigators and study team members to apply these ethical principles in the design, conduct and reporting of your research.

NTU has partnered with the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) to offer the web-based training programme to cover various foundational topics on ethical research and human protection. On the CITI webpage (https://www.citiprogram.org/) login or create an account using your NTU login credentials. Then Add a Course and select the course titled "Students conducting no more than minimal risk research". The rest of the instructions are provided in the new Guidelines on NTUlearn. If you already have a certificate that will not expire by the end of your study, you do not need to take the course again. CITI certification is required for all domains in NTU IRB, before the review of your ethics application can proceed.
Part I. Details of the proposed study

In a separate document, please address each of the following sections separately:

i. Title and Purpose of the study (100 words or less)

Participants

ii. Estimated number of participants to be involved in the study
iii. Do your participants include people older than 65 or under 18?
iv. Estimate the amount of time (in minutes) to involve each participant (or each group of participants if they will be tested/queried in groups).
v. How do you plan to recruit or otherwise make contact with prospective participants for your study?
vi. Briefly describe who your participants will be and how you will identify them. In other words, is there a particular group or profile that you are targeting for your study, and if so, what are its characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity, language background, etc.)?
vii. Estimate the total amount of time (in hours) you will spend collecting data.

Procedure

viii. All student research must be conducted in a way that maintains the confidentiality of participants. This means that data must be recorded in such a manner that participants cannot be identified from it, either directly or through identifiers linked to the participants. Briefly explain how you will maintain the confidentiality of the information you obtain from participants in your study.
ix. Does this study entail possible risk of harm or stress to the participants beyond that encountered in daily life? Briefly explain the risks and the steps you will take to minimize them.
x. What is the location or setting for the study (e.g., a speech laboratory, an interview room, a shopping mall or other public space, etc.)?
xii. Sound ethical procedure requires that informed consent is obtained from participants prior to their participation. Briefly describe how informed consent will be obtained and by whom. Be sure to include with this application a copy of the consent form you will use.
xiii. Provide a detailed description of the procedure you will use with your participants. Be sure to mention how instructions will be given, what tasks the participants will be expected to perform, and how their responses or behaviours will be documented or recorded (i.e., by audio/video recording, computer input, use of notes, paper survey, etc.).
xiii. Describe your study materials, including interview questions, survey questions, stimuli, as well as any devices (e.g., computers, field recorders, video recorders) or software that you will use when in contact with your participants.
xiv. It is important to provide participants with a brief explanation of the study following their participation. How will participants be debriefed?
Part II. Documents Checklist
The following documents must be sent in a single email:

- Application form (this document)
- Updated Informed Consent form
- Debriefing form
- Flyer/advertisement/other publicity document(s)
- Ethics Course completion certificate from CITI
- Study materials:
  - Survey questions/fields
  - Interview questions
  - Stimuli (if textual, otherwise, provide representative samples)
  - Other (describe):
- Check-list form

Part III. Declarations

Name of Supervisor:________________________________________

Title of the study:__________________________________________

☐ I confirm that all information submitted in this application is correct, and that all accompanying documents are comprehensive of those to be used in the proposed study. I further agree to report to my faculty supervisor any substantive changes in procedures, materials, participants, and/or other aspects of the study that may be considered relevant to ethical concerns.

☐ My supervisor has reviewed and approved this application form and the use of all listed documents and any other materials associated with this study before they were submitted to the LMS Ethics Committee.

☐ My consent and debriefing forms do not have grammar or punctuation errors. They use normal everyday language to explain the study to the participants.

Note: Failure to answer the above questions truthfully could result in disciplinary action taken against the applicant for ethics violation.

Name of Student Investigator:__________________________________

Signature of Student Investigator and Date:________________________