**Participant information sheet**

You will need to give participants this information sheet to help them decide if they would like to take part.

It should provide clear information on the essential elements of your specific project including:

* the topic of your project
* that taking part is voluntary
* what will happen during and after the research
* what the project involves for the participant
* how data will be stored
* any potential risks or inconvenience for the participant balanced against any possible benefits for the participant or the wider community, including the advancement of knowledge and understanding.

It should provide participants with contact details in case they would like to discuss the project further.

Modify the below template with your project details.

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**Participant Information Sheet**

**Project title:**

**Invitation paragraph**

The invitation paragraph should ask the potential participant to consider getting involved in the project, and then ask them to decide whether they wish to take part.

For example:

I/We would like to invite you to take part in my/our research project. Before you decide whether to participate, I/we would like you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it would involve for you. Talk to others about the study if you wish. Please ask me/us questions if anything is unclear.

**What is the purpose of the project?**

Explain in a paragraph:

* what your project is about
* why you are undertaking this project
* what you are examining
* what the research is being used for, for example, as part of a dissertation for a BA degree.

**Why have I been invited to participate?**

Explain in a paragraph:

* why and how the participant was chosen or recruited
* how many others will participate in the project

**Do I have to take part?**

Explain that taking part in the research is entirely voluntary.

For example:

It is up to you to decide whether you wish to participate in the project. I/We will describe the study and go through this information sheet with you before you participate and answer any questions you might have. If you agree to take part, I/we will then ask you to sign a consent form. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

If data is to be anonymised, or if you will you use the data for an assignment that needs to be submitted on a certain date, you will need to explain in this paragraph that there is a cut-off date for withdrawal and specify exactly when this is. It might cause problems for your research if a participant withdrew very close to the submission date for your assessed work, so set a cut-off date for withdrawal that will minimise such problems.

**What will happen to me if I take part and what will I have to do?**

Explain:

* What will the participant be asked to do?

Example: Take part in a focus group or be the subject of an interview

* How long will this take?

Example: an hour for a focus group meeting, around two hours for an interview

* Any other relevant information

Example:

* + A digital voice recorder will be used to capture the interview
  + The event will be filmed. (If you publish material derived from the project that can be used to identify a participant, you will need to get specific written consent for this on the consent form that you ask participants to sign)

**What are the possible disadvantages and risks involved in taking part in the project?**

Explain in a paragraph:

* any risks, discomfort, or inconvenience for the participant
* If you can foresee no risks, then please state this explicitly

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

Explain in a paragraph:

* any possible benefits for the participant or for the wider community, including benefits in terms of the advancement of knowledge and understanding.
* Be clear and realistic – if there are no direct benefits for the participant, then state this.

**Will my participation in this project be kept confidential?**

Tell the participant the measures that you will take to keep their participation and any data that you gather through their participation confidential, during and after the study.

Explain:

* how their data will be collected (research notes, sound recordings, video recordings, etc.).
* where data will be stored, and the measures in place to store data in a secure fashion. You should consult and comply with the University’s guidance on information security: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/infosec/uobdata/research/>.
* whether you will anonymise data, both in terms of how you will store data and how you will use data in any submitted work or publications. If it will be possible to identify individual participants from the data, you should explain who will have access to this data. For some projects, it might be neither necessary nor desirable to keep participants anonymous e.g. if you are interviewing public figures, you might explain to them that you plan to use their comments in association with their names in your work.
* how long data will be retained, and what will happen to it after you submit or publish your research, e.g. will you destroy the data at the end of your project, or do you plan to retain it securely for future use?

For example:

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential, and any information about you will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised (if it is applicable to your research). Data will be stored securely on my University of Bristol file store. Data will be destroyed after I have graduated.

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**

Participants will often want to know about the results of a project they have been involved in.

Explain:

* what will happen to the results of the research
* what they will be submitted for in terms of your degree
* whether you intend to publish the results
* whether results will be made available to participants, for example, by sending them a copy of your dissertation. You should make it clear that they will not be identified as a named individual in any report/publication unless they have given their consent.

**Who is organising and funding the research?**

Include the organisation or person. You might give the name of your department and degree programme.

**Who has reviewed the study?**

Give the name and department of your supervisor, or the Faculty Research Ethics Committee if your project has been submitted for full ethical review via the online tool.

**Further information and contact details**

Participants may want further information in relation to the study and may have questions about what they are being asked to do. Your contact details should be included here.

If participants have any concerns related to your participation in this study, please direct them to the Research Governance Team: research-governance@bristol.ac.uk