



IRB PROCESS

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) Process

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What is the "IRB"?

"IRB" stands for Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Subjects (IRB). The IRB is mandated by the [Department of Health and Human Service's Office of Human Research Protections \(OHRP\)](#) to protect the rights and safety of all human research subjects. Every research institution, including universities, has an IRB that must evaluate and ultimately approve or reject all research proposals involving human subjects before the research is conducted.

NOTE: The committee that fulfills the function of the IRB on your campus may have a name other than "IRB". To locate the reviewing committee on your campus, we suggest you search your campus web site under "research", "human subjects", or "review board", or contact your campus' office of sponsored programs.

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What does this mean for me?

When you implement AWE or other measurement tools, you take on specific responsibilities to all participants involved in the data collection process, your institution, and federal IRB bodies. To ensure that these responsibilities are fulfilled, you must have IRB approval to conduct surveys, interviews, and evaluations of non-research activities (such as pre-college camps or other WIE student activities).

IRB approval requires that participants give "informed consent." This means that you must inform activity participants about why you are collecting data from them, what the possible benefits and risks involved in their participation are, and how they can leave the study at any point in time. To provide student respondents with this information, you create an "informed consent" document that must be submitted to the IRB for approval before any research with human subjects may take place. See examples of <Human Subject Consent Forms> offered below.

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Are IRB requirements the same for every institution?

Each institution determines its own IRB requirements, forms, procedures and protocols. To identify your institution's requirements, contact your campus committee. To locate this body on your campus, search your campus web site under "research", "human subjects", or "review board", or contact your campus' office of sponsored programs.

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How do I get started?

- We strongly recommend that you begin by contacting your campus' IRB organization for more information about requirements and resources.
- Institutional IRB's often provide templates and/or guidelines that you can use to prepare your IRB proposal.

- Find examples of successful IRB applications and informed consent documents for collecting survey, test or interview data. To do so, contact your campus IRB office for example applications or contact a colleague who has submitted a successful IRB application. Base your proposal and informed consent on those examples.
- Start the process early. Every campus IRB is different, so well in advance of when you need to begin data collection, prepare an IRB proposal and submit it. The review committee will probably come back to you with questions and suggestions—a process that will help you understand the requirements of your institution.

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Can I offer incentives for participation?

Typically institutions include a section of the IRB proposal format that asks about whether you will offer compensation for participants and how you will recruit participants. Information about any plans you have to compensate students for participating should be included in both. It should also be included in the consent form. Click [here](#) to access an overview of types of incentives and example language.

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Examples of IRB Documentation and IRB Resources

- [University of Minnesota IRB Web Site: Human Consent Form Examples](#)
- [Office for Human Research Participants](#)
- [Code of Federal Regulations](#)
- [University of Arkansas: "Policies and Procedures Governing Research with Human Subjects \(Web Slideshow\)"](#)
- [Kansas Wesleyan University: Online IRB Learning Modules](#)
- [University of Minnesota IRB Web Site: Informed Consent Online Tutorial](#)
- [University of Texas Arlington](#)
- [Penn State Web Human Subjects](#)

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