Instructions for completion:

1. The Participant Information Sheet (PIS) is what participants will use to make their decision about whether to participate. They will keep this sheet, so it is important that all information useful to this decision is present.
2. This document should be written in clear, brief, non-technical language.
3. Write the PIS in the first person (TO the participants, not ABOUT them).
4. Remove the instruction text prior to submission.
5. For some kinds of participants (e.g. children, or people who may not be able to read), you can produce and use a simplified language version of the Information Sheet. Examples are included below of alternative simplified wording you might use in such contexts.
6. When research is to be conducted with participants who do not speak English, the Information Sheet will need to be translated. This translation should preserve all the main elements included below.
7. Sections that can be removed are marked with "(where applicable)" do not delete mandatory sections (such as the privacy notice or ethics approval information)

The critical elements in all Information Sheets are voluntary participation, opportunity to withdraw, privacy and confidentiality, contact details and, what the research is about.

# Participant Information Sheet

##### Researcher

Introduce yourself. (Name, ANU, College/school). Add any role external to the University that is relevant and ensure participants know the research is not associated with external role.

##### Project Title

Ensure that the title matches the project in REMS

##### Outline of the project

**Description and Methodology:** overview of the project goals (avoid jargon, no more than a paragraph)

**Participants:** How and from whom will data be collected. How many participants will be involved.

**Use of data and Feedback:** How will data be used and presented (e.g. thesis, publication, future research)

Will results be shared with participants? If so, how? ensure the method is appropriate for the setting (e.g. summary of the research, website, book)

**Project Funding:** (where applicable) Indicate whether the project has received specific funding. Include the funding body. Ensure any Conflicts of Interest (COI) associated with funding sources is considered.

##### Participant Involvement

Note: Think about this section from the point of view of the participant. What would you wish to know before deciding whether to participate in a research project or not

**Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:** Ensure participants know that participation is voluntary and that they may decline to participate, decline to answer a question, or withdraw without explanation. Tell them about their options for withdrawal and what will happen to their data if they withdraw.

* For anonymous participation (e.g. anonymous surveys) - then withdrawal may not be possible (as you do not have the ability identify their responses).
* For de-identified information (interviews or surveys that collect identifying information)
* Focus groups - isolating and destroying individual contributions may be impossible given the group nature of the discussion, this should be advised. You can give participants the option of allowing you to continue to use their data, but this should be opt-in.

**What does participation involve:** Describe what the participants will be asked to do (complete survey, undertake an interview, participate in focus group, and/or permit access to personal records).

How will their contribution be captured. (e.g. audio/video recorded then transcribed for analysis). Will transcripts of the recording will be provided for review before the analysis is finalised. What will you do with the recordings and who will have access to them. Provide enough detail to allow them to provide informed consent to participate. (e.g. if the interview will involve sensitive questions, tell participants, and explain the nature of the questions)

**Location and duration:** Where (e.g. in person, online) How many occasions, and the length of time on each occasion. For multiple interactions, an estimate of the total time commitment is also useful. (e.g. interviews are expected to last about an hour, and the total time requested of you in this research is two hours).

**Remuneration:** (where applicable) indicate the amount and method of payment. Payment must be proportionate to the time and involvement required of the participant. It is not ethical to offer remuneration that is so large that it would incentivise people those who would otherwise not want to participate. The committee strongly advises against the use of prize draws and lotteries. If proposing draws/lotteries ensure you are aware of the requirements under the ACT [Trade Promotion Lottery](https://www.gamblingandracing.act.gov.au/industry/lotteries/trade-promotions) conditions. Describe how this lottery will be managed and prize winners chosen for transparency.

**Risks:** Describe any risks, discomforts, hazards or side effects that might arise because of the subject or methods Involved In the research. (Including discomfort, distress, third party identification, social or legal harm). Also include mitigation strategies you have in place to support participants and how they can access the support. (e.g. contact details of a counselling service or a help line such as Lifeline in Australia). The key principle guiding assessment of the ethics of research is that risks need to be offset by benefits (e.g. Third Party Identification - if there is a chance that participants could be identified by what they tell you despite your best efforts to hide their identities, provide participants with information about the nature and scope of risks, and to show them that you have a plan to manage those risks.)

**Benefits:** Describe the benefits that you anticipate will accrue from this research. Show the participants that the research meets the beneficence requirements for the prospective benefits of the research to outweigh the risks. If you do not expect there will be benefits for the participants themselves, include a statement such as “it is unlikely that you will personally benefit from participating in this research, but…” and include a statement of benefit to the community, society, etc. Do not be overly general (e.g. “this research will benefit the discipline”) or too personal (e.g. “this research will benefit me”), and do not overstate any benefits you think will result.

**Implications of Participation:** (where applicable) it may be necessary to indicate exactly how the project relates to care being given by medical practitioners or courses of study or employment requirements or other activities. Potential participants need enough information to be confident that declining participation in the research will not have adverse personal effects.

**Exclusion criteria:** (where applicable) detail the reasons for which potential participants would be excluded from the project.

##### Confidentiality:

* Who will have access: Indicate whether anyone but the nominated researchers will have access to the material provided by the participants and how the confidentiality of the participants is to be preserved.
* Data: Ensure participants understand how their data will be kept confidential during both the collection phase and in the publication of results.
* Attribution: Indicate how participant information will be attributed – e.g. full name, pseudonym, or no attribution within published materials.

Confidential or Anonymous: Confidentiality and anonymity are not the same. If you know who your participants are – they are not anonymous, but you can still seek to provide confidentiality. In cases where it is difficult to protect confidentiality, do not understate these difficulties. It is more ethical to warn potential participants that you may not be able to guarantee confidentiality, and therefore, they should avoid providing e.g. any sensitive information or information about illegal activities and should not say anything defamatory. Phrases like “Confidentiality will be protected as far as the law allows” can be helpful here.

Simplified language e.g.: "I won’t tell anybody who you are or that you told me what you did unless you say it is okay for me to. If you tell me certain things – e.g. that someone might be hurt – I might need to tell someone else, so try not to tell me things like that."

Focus Groups As group members may know each other (and will witness each other’s contributions) you should include advice in this section requesting that focus group members maintain the confidentiality of group discussions, and that individuals in focus groups should refrain from making statements of a confidential nature or that are defamatory of any person.

##### Privacy Notice

If your research involves the collection of personal (including sensitive) information, such as (but not limited to) health information from participants, then you must include a section on privacy for compliance with the Privacy Act 1988.

Standard option:

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP 010007](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007). It contains information about how a person can:

* Access or seek correction to their personal information;
* Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint

Simplified example:

Australian privacy law (or rules) requires me to tell you how my university handles your private information, and you can ask me to give you more Information about that and you can find out what information we have about you and you can fix it if it is wrong.

##### Data Storage

Please consult the following pages for assistance with this section:

[Research Data Management](https://anulib.anu.edu.au/research-learn/research-data-management/managing-your-data)

[ANU code of Conduct](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_000388)

**Where**: provide storage Information and outline how the security of personal information will be maintained during collection, analysis and preparation of results. If you intend to archive your data, you should provide details about where the material will be archived, for how long and under what access conditions. If you are seeking to store data outside of the ANU network, please provide justification. Storage on any computer should be password-protected and, ideally, encrypted.

**How long:** Data must be stored for a period of at least five years from the date of any publication arising from the research. Longer periods and different locations may apply if the research is conducted in conjunction with other agencies or is medical research.

* Undergraduate/Honours: data must be kept for a year following the submission of your thesis.
* Masters/PhD candidates: If you will graduate before the end of the storage period you need to make arrangements for the continued storage of research data at the University – e.g., by your supervisor or Head of School/Department

**Handling of data following the required storage period:** Indicate whether data will be destroyed at the end of the storage period or if you will be seeking consent to archive or retain data in a de-identified format for future use either by you, or by other researchers.

The National Statement does not require destruction of data after the storage period. It is ethical to seek consent to allow later use of the data provided that later use does not expose participants to new or additional risks.

##### Queries and Concerns

**Contact details for more information:** requests for information or queries regarding the study participants should be directed to the Primary Investigator. Provide name contact details (at least telephone AND email). If the Primary Investigator is a student, provide the supervisor’s contact details also. Note that an ANU e-mail address is required.Also ensure that this ANU e-mail address will be checked (or forwarded to an address you do check).

**Overseas contacts:** (Where applicable) Provide a local contact person’s details so that when the researcher leaves the area, the participants have someone knowledgeable to ask further questions about the research project. In cases for which it is not prohibitively costly or for which there is no security risk, it is acceptable not to have a Local Contact once the researcher has left the field; in such cases, participants may use the usual e-mail or telephone contact details.

**Contact details if in distress:** (Where applicable) If any of the questions that you are asking could be seen as stressful, you may like to include contact details to a counselling service. For example, if you are doing your research at the ANU, you could include contact details for the ANU Counselling service (although this service will only see ANU-affiliated people), or within Australia, for Lifeline.

##### Ethics Committee Clearance

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 20xx/xxx).

If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee  
The Australian National University  
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427  
Email: [Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au](mailto:Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au)