**Information Statement (Anonymous Survey / Questionnaire – sample content**

**Insert details at shading. Blue text provides guidance.**

**Do not include shading or blue text in your submission.**

[Chief Investigator / Project Supervisor name]

[School / Faculty / Organisation]

[Address]

[Telephone and Fax]

[Email address]

**Information Statement for the Research Project:**

**[simple short title]**

Document Version [number]; dated [dd/mm/yyyy]

The version number and date must be updated each time a new version is submitted for ethics approval.

Dear Potential Participant

You are invited to participate in the research project identified above which is being conducted by [names and positions of researchers] from the [School/unit] at the University of Newcastle.

If the research team is made up of several members, their names and affiliations may be listed under ***The Research Team*** at the top of the document under the project title, or at the end of the document after the signatures.

If a student research project, add: The research is part of [name’s] studies at the University of Newcastle, supervised by [name of supervisor(s)] from the [School / organisation].

If the project is funded, add: This project has been funded by [insert details].

***Why is the research being done?***

The purpose of the research is [in simple language state the aims of the project and why you consider it worth doing]. If appropriate, briefly put the research into context in relation to other peer reviewed research on the topic, eg *Previous research has shown that …* Don’t simply copy and paste from the application, as the content/language is often unnecessarily complex.

***Who can participate in the research?***

[State who is being invited to participate, *ie* the category or group, and how they have been identified to receive the invitation].

Eg *We are seeking people aged 18-60 years to participate in this research. Your name was selected at random from the White Pages telephone directory*.

If the invitation to participate has been forwarded to them by an organisation on behalf of the researchers, explain this so the potential participant understands that their privacy has not been breached.

If applicable, include information on who should not, or cannot, participate, *ie* identify the exclusion criteria, eg *If you are not currently in a management position then unfortunately you are not eligible to participate.* OR *If you suffer from a particular illness/condition … then unfortunately this study is not suitable for you.*

***What would you be asked to do?***

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to [using simple language give a clear and explicit explanation of what participants will be asked to do or what will be done to them]. Eg complete an online survey/ questionnaire about … List only what the research involves, not what participants need to do in order to confirm their consent (this should be addressed in the section *“What you need to do to participate?”)*.

For online questionnaires explain whether they must be completed in a single session or whether it’s possible to complete over multiple sessions. If multiple sessions are possible, explain how this process is managed in a way that still protects participant anonymity.

If you are offering participants the opportunity to enter a prize draw, explain how this process will be managed in a way that protects the anonymity of their questionnaire responses (eg, separation of names/contact information from questionnaire responses upon receipt or for online questionnaires, consider embedding a link at the end of the main questionnaire to a separate questionnaire that collects the identifying information.

***What choice do you have?***

Participation in this research is entirely your choice. Only those people who give their informed consent will be included in the project. Whether or not you decide to participate, your decision will not disadvantage you. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from the project at any time prior to submitting your completed questionnaire. Please note that due to the anonymous nature of the questionnaire, you will not be able to withdraw your response after it has been submitted.

***How much time will it take?***

The survey/questionnaire should take about [insert time] to complete.

***What are the risks and benefits of participating?***

(EITHER) – There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this research.

(OR) – Some of the questions deal with potentially sensitive issues such as…. Should you find any of the questions upsetting you can stop your participation at any time.

You can also contact [insert appropriate referral source, eg Lifeline on 131114] should you wish to seek support regarding any of the issues raised within the survey/questionnaire.

(EITHER)Whilst there are no anticipated benefits to you personally in participating in this research, the findings will…(eg, help contribute to the available literature on the subject, may be of benefit to …etc).

(OR) By participating in this questionnaire you will have the opportunity to (share your views on…., reflect on your personal experience/views of…., provide feedback on…., help improve the service offered by….etc).

*The research must be of some anticipated benefit (either to the participant, the wider community or others) in order to justify the research.*

***How will your privacy be protected?***

[State how the research data will be kept secure, who will have access to it, and how long it will be retained.]

Eg, *Data will be retained securely for a minimum period of 5 years from completion of the research and managed/stored in accordance with the University’s Research Data and Materials Management Guideline (see https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=72) or any successor Guideline, and applicable University of Newcastle policy provisions (as amended from time to time).*

If the questionnaire is online identify the site hosting the questionnaire, include some brief information on how the privacy of data is secured in this environment and provide a link to the site’s privacy policy.

Due to the anonymous nature of the survey/questionnaire the responses you provide will not be identifiable.

***How will the information collected be used?***

Explain how and where the data will be reported or presented], eg The collected data [will contribute towards (student researcher’s names)… DBA/PhD/Honours thesis] and/or may be presented in academic publications, journals or conferences.

[Explain what feedback will be available to participants about the results of the study and how they can access it.]

It is expected that participants be offered at least a summary of the results written in lay language. It is not appropriate to provide them with, or refer them to, journal publications (eg If you would like a copy of the summary of the results, please email the Chief Investigator [insert email address] after [insert approximate date of when it will be available] and / or by visiting the results webpage at [insert webpage] after [insert approximate date when it will be available] and / or a summary of the results will be made available within your staffroom/reception/school etc).

Individual participants will not be identifiable in any reports arising from the project although individual anonymous responses may be quoted.

Non-identifiable data may be also be shared with other parties to encourage scientific scrutiny, and to contribute to further research and public knowledge.

***What do you need to do to participate?***

Please read this Information Statement and be sure you understand its contents before you consent to participate. If there is anything you do not understand, or you have questions, please contact the researcher.

If you would like to participate, please [complete and return the attached anonymous questionnaire in the reply paid envelope provided] or [click on the following link [insert questionnaire link] and complete the online questionnaire].

Completion and submission/return of the paper/online survey/ questionnaire will be taken as your implied consent to participate.

***Further information***

If you would like further information please contact [name and contact details of a person(s) from whom potential participants can obtain further information about the project]. At least one contact must be the Chief Investigator or Project Supervisor.

Thank you for considering this invitation. Do not presume agreement to participate. ‘Thank you for agreeing to participate’ is inappropriate.

[Signature]

[Name] [Name]

[Chief Investigator] Student Researcher]

The printed name and position of at least the Chief Investigator must appear

For student projects, the Information Statement must be presented over the signature blocks of **both** the Project Supervisor and the student.

***Complaints about this research***

This project has been approved by the University’s Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. H-####-#### [insert the protocol reference number which will be identified in the written acknowledgement of your application].

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the Chief Investigator [insert Chief Investigator’s telephone number and email address], or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Ethics Officer, Research and Innovation Services, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 4921 6333 or email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.

For projects conducted internationally or in remote areas that require a local **independent** contactfor complaints, add to, or replace, the Human Research Ethics Officer’s details with those of that contact.