SIT SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

Human Subjects Review Application Form

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1 Kipling Road, PO Box 676 • Brattleboro, VT 05302-0676 USA

Name of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

How to Complete This Form

The researcher has the primary responsibility to ensure safe research design and to protect human participants from all types of harm. Research that exposes human participants to the risk of unreasonable harm shall not be conducted. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has the primary responsibility for determining whether the proposed research design exposes participants to risk of harm.

In order to ensure expeditious review of the form, the applicant must provide sufficient detail and be explicit about how the proposed research study upholds ethical standards. Incomplete information may delay review. **While proposals should be included, it is expected that the researcher provide all necessary details within the HSR form.**

Please Note:

- **All materials must be typed**; handwritten materials will be returned.
- **Submit one file**, with the HSR form at the beginning and all other documents (interview guides, surveys, recruitment letters or fliers, consent forms, proposals) as appendices.
  Exception: Organizational letters of support may be submitted separately as PDFs. Proposal should be appended last.
- **Students must obtain the advisor's approval before submitting the form.** The advisor may sign the form digitally.
- **Submit CITI ethics training certificate*** along with the HSR application.
  **Not required for undergraduate students*
- **Please submit application AS ONE FILE to irb@sit.edu—or, if you are an undergraduate student, please submit your application to your academic director.**
  Submission must come from your official SIT email with the following file name: **last_first_type.**
  Example: Mary_Jones_abbreviated title_expedited.docx
- If your application qualifies for a full committee review, **the deadline is the 25th day of the month prior to the IRB full committee meeting.** IRB meets 1st Tuesday of each month.
- If your application qualifies for an expedited or exempt review, **the submission deadline is on a rolling basis.**
- Unsigned or incomplete applications **will be returned for resubmission.**
- **DO NOT begin contacting potential project participants or data collection** until the IRB notifies you that your project has been approved.
- **DO NOT leave a question blank in Section IV**; write "N/A" if a question does not apply to the application.

Expectations

- You must ensure that you have all the **necessary travel documents (including visas)** that you will need to travel carefully and without incident.
- You must provide **travel and lodging specifics with contact numbers** to the academic director.
- You will **return by the established return time.** Failure to do so may result in disciplinary or academic sanctions.
- Any change to travel itinerary **must be approved by the academic director.** Any variance from approved travel plan may result in disciplinary sanctions.

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Section 1: General Information

Name of Researcher: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

What is the researcher's connection to SIT?

☐ **SIT Study Abroad Student** ☐ **SIT Graduate Student** ☐ **Faculty** ☐ **World Learning Staff**

Name of Advisor: _____

Type of Project:

☐ **Independent Study** ☐ **IPP** ☐ **Research Methods Course** ☐ **Capstone**

☐ **Dissertation** ☐ **Faculty Research** ☐ **World Learning Project**

Project Title: _____

Project Site(s): _____

Practicum/Project Site Supervisory Organization: _____

Contact: _____

Proposed Project Dates: _____

Section 2: Project Description

Briefly describe the proposed project, including the research question(s):

Briefly provide a summary of the research methods proposed:

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Section 3: Review Categories (Self-Assessment)

Identify the category of review. Your research project may apply only for one category of review (e.g. exempt, expedited, OR full). For complete descriptions of each category, please refer to the SIT policy on Research & Ethics in Field Study & Internships. Read and check all appropriate boxes within the selected category.

Requested Category of Review:

☐ **Full Review** ☐ **Expedited Review** ☐ **Exempt**

☐ **My research does not need an IRB review** because it does not involve the participation of human subjects.**

*** If you checked the box above, please go to the end of the form, sign, have your advisor (if applicable) sign (digital signature), attach your proposal, and submit the form to irb@sit.edu.*

My research design may require a FULL REVIEW because:

☐ Children or vulnerable groups are involved (e.g. prisoners, educationally disadvantaged persons, cognitively impaired persons, trauma survivors, or populations considered vulnerable in local social situations or cultural contexts).

☐ Research involves the intentional deception of subjects, such that misleading or untruthful information will be provided to participants. Participants includes people being observed or interviewed as well as supervisors of those participants.

☐ Projects use procedures that are personally intrusive, stressful, or potentially traumatic (stress can be physical, psychological, social, financial, or legal).

☐ Research concerns sensitive subjects such as sexual attitudes, preferences, or practices; the use of alcohol, drugs, or other addictive products; activities that may be illegal, or likely to offend prevailing standards of ethical practice for a given country context.

☐ Research may collect information that:

- If released, could reasonably be damaging to an individual's financial standing, employability, or reputation within the community;
- If disclosed, could reasonably lead to social stigmatization or discrimination;
- Pertains to an individual's psychological well-being or mental health;
- If released, would put the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability
- May be considered sensitive because of specific cultural or other factors.

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Section 3: Review Categories (Self-Assessment), continued

My research design may require an EXPEDITED REVIEW because:

- ☐ Research does not involve children or other vulnerable participants. Vulnerable participants are children, the economically or educationally disadvantaged, prisoners, refugees and others vulnerable in the local research context.
- ☐ Research involves individual or group contact in no risk/minimal risk circumstances and with non-sensitive topics.
- ☐ Research involves collecting data from voice, video, digital or image recordings made for research purposes.
- ☐ Research concerns individual or group characteristics/behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior.)
- ☐ Research uses surveys, interviews, focus groups, program evaluations, human factors evaluations, or quality assurance methodologies in which subjects are or can be identified directly or indirectly.
- ☐ Project was approved under 12 months ago, minor changes to the research design have been made, and additional research will be conducted.

My research design may be EXEMPT because:

- ☐ Research involves the observation of public behavior.
- ☐ Research is conducted in an educational setting (classroom) involving normal educational practices such as evaluating tests procedures, curricula, or lessons and does not identify subjects or pose any risk.
- ☐ Research involves surveying or interviewing public officials.
- ☐ Research uses anonymous surveys, interviews, or observations of adults and poses no risks.

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Section 4: Steps to Ensure Ethical Protections

All questions must be completed. If the question does not apply to your research, please mark N/A. Please do not leave any questions blank. Answer all questions in complete sentences. Incomplete applications will be returned, and resubmission will be required.

DATA COLLECTION

Please estimate the maximum number of participants by age and gender in both categories (children and adults). If there is a possibility that your research may include participants under the age of 18, please indicate a reasonable estimate:

_____ **Children (under 18 years of age):** _____ **Female** _____ **Male** _____ **Other**

_____ **Adults (under 18 years of age):** _____ **Female** _____ **Male** _____ **Other**

Does the study involve any vulnerable populations? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Please explain your response and how vulnerable populations will be protected. Note that if you have selected "No" and your research does ultimately involve vulnerable populations, you will need to resubmit your HSR application for full committee review.

What will participants be asked to do in this research study?

Please append interview questions, focus group questions, survey instruments, and other relevant materials.

If participants are interviewed, will you conduct the interview yourself and, if not, who will?

In what language(s) will participants be interviewed? Where will these interviews take place?

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If you are conducting observations, describe the setting of observations, and whether or not your participants are informed you are observing them.

How many meetings will you hold with participants and where will these meetings be held?
Depending on the number of meetings held, will it become a burden to the participants of the research?

Explain your sampling protocol. What is your sample frame (all possible people relevant to your research question; in other words, the larger group you are sampling from)? How will you identify potential participants (what is your sampling strategy/ies)? What are the criteria for including or excluding participants?

How will participants be recruited? Describe your outreach strategies.

Are participants compensated in some form? If yes, please describe. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Make sure compensation does not serve as coercion.

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How will you protect participants from feeling pressured to participate in the study due to any power differential?

Articulate your power dynamic with your potential participants and how you will protect them from feeling pressured. For instance, if there is a formal relationship between researcher and participants (teacher/student, aid worker/client) that might influence a participant's ability to refuse to participate, identify alternative options to participation in the study.

How might participation in this study benefit participants? *Note: there may be no benefit.*

Do participants risk any stress or harm by participating in this research? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, describe the risk or harm and the safeguards employed to minimize the risks.

Will participants receive a summary of results? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, explain how you will disseminate the results to them.

Indicate what type of consent you will obtain and explain any waiver of written consent.

For research with children, you will need a minor assent and parental consent form. Append sample consent/assent language, including consent forms for each type of research participant.

☐ **Written** ☐ **Electronic** ☐ **Oral**

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PROTECTION OF PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

Please note that answers must align with informed consent forms. The intended use of the research data, as stated in the informed consent form, and the actual use of data by the researcher in practice must be consistent.

Anonymity: Data are anonymous when no identifiers (e.g., name, address, phone number, professional status) are collected that link the information/records/samples to the individual from which they were obtained. Data collected in person cannot be anonymous, and the existence of a list of codes and associated identifiers means that the data are not anonymous.

Are your data anonymous? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Confidentiality: Confidentiality refers to the treatment of information (participation and/or data) disclosed in a trust relationship and with the expectation that it will not be divulged without permission to others in ways inconsistent with the understanding of the original disclosure. Confidentiality is an agreement between parties made via the consent process. Researchers must keep participants' contributions to the research confidential unless participants have agreed otherwise (preferably in writing).

What is considered confidential in the study according to the informed consent forms? How are you protecting confidentiality in the proposed study (e.g., how you are anonymizing/decoding data)?

What elements of a person's identity may be known in the final paper/report?

How are you providing participants with adequate understanding of your research processes?

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How will you obtain consent and/or parental permission and child assent?

Privacy: Privacy is an individual's control over the extent, timing and circumstances of sharing him/herself (physically, behaviorally, or intellectually) with others.

What measures will you put in place to safeguard participants' privacy during recruitment, data collection, and presentation of findings (e.g., published or non-published final reports)?

IRB recommends that data are stored for five years. Please explain how it will be stored during this period, and what will happen to the data afterwards.

Will the data be used in the future? If so, how will permission for further use be obtained?

Will your data be accessible online? If so, what are the measures of data protection online?

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EXTERNAL IRB APPROVAL

Does your study require approval from an external IRB (such as government body or research institute in the location of research) in addition to the SIT IRB?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If yes, please attach your external IRB approval, or identify the institution as well as your plans for seeking approval if your local institution requires SIT's approval first. Please make sure to submit your local approval once obtained.

If no, provide an explanation that external approval is not required.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

If necessary, please discuss other details or procedures of the study that should be known by the Institutional Review Board:

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Final Signature and Materials Checklist

By initialing below, I certify that all of the above information (and that attached) is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I agree to fully comply with all of the program's ethical guidelines as noted above and as presented in the program and/or discussed elsewhere in program materials. I further acknowledge that I will not engage in research activities until my advisor has notified me that both my proposal and my Human Subjects Review application are approved.

Applicant's Full Name (print): _____

Applicant's Initials: _____ Date: _____

ANNEXES REQUIRED FOR ALL TYPES OF REVIEW

Check all that apply and make sure they are annexed to the HSR application. An asterisk indicates required components.

- ☐ **CITI Ethics Training Certificate**
- ☐ **Recruitment Letters or Flyers**
- ☐ **Informed Consent Form**
- ☐ **Proposal** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Observation Guide** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Interview Guide** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Survey Instrument** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Minor Consent Form** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Parental Consent Form** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Organizational Letter of Support** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Local IRB Documents** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Other(s)** (please specify):

_____

Where applicable, the faculty advisor's/project approver's initials confirms that the composition of this proposal has been supervised and approved for submission to the IRB for review. If the proposed study does not require a faculty advisor's approval, please indicate N/A. In the case of World Learning staff, please include MERL's department signature.

Advisor's / Approver's Name (print): _____

Advisor's / Approver's Initials: _____ Date: _____

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Please submit application AS ONE FILE to irb@sit.edu. Submission must come from your official SIT email with the following file name: last_first_type. *Example: Mary_Jones_abbreviated title_expedited.docx*