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

To fill out this form electronically, you must download the free Adobe Reader application (get.adobe.com/reader). **Do not use Preview (Mac), or alternative PDF viewers (PC).** For help filling out this form, please see our HSR Form Tutorial and our guide on how to markup a PDF.

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.
- **Please state your responses concisely** and do not copy and paste all content from your proposal.
- **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.
- **Students must have their advisor sign the form before submitting it.** The advisor may sign the form digitally.
- **Everyone, except undergraduate students, is required to take the CITI Ethics course and submit the CITI certificate with their HSR application.**
- **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: Jones_Mary_expedited.pdf
- 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 4**; write “N/A” if a question does not apply to the application.

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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** ☐ **Internship**

Project Title: _____

Project Site(s): _____

Practicum/Project Site Supervisory Organization: _____

Contact: _____

Proposed Project Dates: _____

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.

_____

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Section 2: Project Description

A. Briefly, in no more than 4–5 sentences, describe the proposed project, including the research question(s):

B. In 2–3 sentences, 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 for only 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. (This does not apply to undergraduate students.)*

My research design requires a FULL REVIEW because:

Please check all boxes that apply.

☐ 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 requires an EXPEDITED REVIEW because:

Please check all boxes that apply.

- ☐ 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 is EXEMPT because:

Please check all boxes that apply.

- ☐ 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

A. 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 (over 18 years of age):** _____ **Female** _____ **Male** _____ **Other**

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

Please explain your response and how vulnerable populations will be protected.

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

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

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

F. How many meetings will you hold with participants and where will these meetings be held? What is the approximate length of each meeting? Based on the number and length of the meetings held, will they become a burden for participants of the research?

G. Explain your sampling protocol: How will you identify potential participants? What is your sampling strategy? What are the criteria for including or excluding participants?

H. How will participants be recruited? Describe your outreach strategies.

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I. Are participants compensated in some form? If yes, please describe. ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Make sure compensation does not serve as coercion.

J. 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. Address how you will protect them from feeling pressured.

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

L. What potential harm might be experienced by participants?

Many studies do involve at least some minimal risk of stress or harm. Please consider any potential harm carefully and describe the safeguards you will employ to minimize the risks for participants.

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M. 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 assent/consent forms for each type of research participant.

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

N. How will you obtain consent? This includes parental consent and child assent.

O. How are you providing participants with adequate understanding of your research process? How will the participants understand the process of the study? How will they understand the implications of the consent/assent forms?

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

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

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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).

Q. 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)?

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

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

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

T. IRB recommends that data be stored for five years unless doing so would pose a risk to participants. Please explain how long you will store data, how it will be stored during the indicated period, and what will happen to the data after that period.

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

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

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ADDITIONAL NOTES

W. 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** (required for all students conducting research with human subjects)
- ☐ ***Recruitment Letters or Flyers**
- ☐ ***Informed Consent Form**
- ☐ **Proposal** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Observation Guide** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Interview Guide** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Survey Instrument** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Minor Assent Form** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Parental Consent Form** (if applicable)
- ☐ **Organizational Letter of Support** (if applicable)
- ☐ **External 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: _____