Does Your Project Require IRB Approval?

Will you, a member of your research team or a collaborator observe, interact with, or intervene with living individuals to gather information that will be used for research? Examples:

- Surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews
- Games, experiments, or tasks in physical or in electronic environments
- Physical or biomedical procedures – imaging, scanning, blood collections, anthropomorphic measurement procedures, exercise
- Diet or nutrition studies, taste tests
- Studies examining effectiveness of educational strategies, teaching methods, curricula
- Use of instruments, sensors, electronic devices, apps, software, or recording mechanisms (e.g., video, screen capture, key logging, etc.) to collect data or monitor or influence behavior
- Passive observation of private behavior (in physical or online environments, including social media)
- Studies examining individuals’ responses to manipulation of their physical or online environment
- Any other activity that involves observation of, or interaction with, individuals to gather information for research (in physical or online environments, including social media)

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**Decision Tree #1**

**YES**

Is the information being collected ‘about’ individuals?

- The project gathers information about people (their behaviors, attitudes, opinions, personal characteristics, demographics, decisions, reactions to stimuli, biological specimens, physical or physiological responses, etc.).

  **YES**
  
  Is this a class assignment or project?

  **YES**
  
  Is the project an oral history, ethnography, or journalistic piece?

  **NO**

  Is this a quality assurance/quality improvement/organizational effectiveness study? (i.e.: to assess, improve, or develop programs or services for an organization?)

  **NO**

  Is there intent to generalize outcomes for other organizations, programs, or services?

  **NO**

  Data will involve only factual information (not opinions, attitudes, beliefs, etc.) on products, methods, policies, procedures, organizations (e.g., interviewing school staff about school policies or factual information)

  **YES**

  Not human subjects research, IRB review/ approval is NOT REQUIRED.

  **NO**

  Research involves secondary use of data/specimens

  **YES**

  Refer to IRB Decision Tree #2 on Secondary Use of Data

**NO**

**YES**

Is the information being collected ‘about’ individuals?

- The project gathers information about people (their behaviors, attitudes, opinions, personal characteristics, demographics, decisions, reactions to stimuli, biological specimens, physical or physiological responses, etc.).

  **NO**

  Research involves secondary use of data/specimens

  **YES**

  Not human subjects research, IRB review/ approval is NOT REQUIRED.

  **NO**

  The results of the project may be shared outside of the classroom (e.g., for publication, presentation at academic conferences, in a thesis/dissertation/graduate creative component, etc.) or departmental/interdepartmental seminars designed to exhibit coursework.

  See Student Projects Involving Human Participants

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Project is research with human subjects, and IRB APPROVAL or DETERMINATION OF EXEMPTION IS REQUIRED before the study may begin. An IRB application may be completed in IRBManager. Questions? Contact IRB@iastate.edu.