

STFX Research Ethics Board (REB) Application Template

Do NOT submit this form, you must submit using the [ROMEO portal](#).

This document is provided so that you may **review** all questions / information requested, before beginning your online submission. You may also wish to use this template, first, to develop the content of your submission, and then, when satisfied, cut and paste the information in each of your answer boxes into the appropriate answer boxes in the online form. **NOTE:** Character count limits apply in all cases – the character limits (including spaces) are provided for each relevant answer box, below.

Instructions

St. Francis Xavier University academic staff (i.e., faculty, lab instructors, nurse educators, Coady Program Staff, Librarians, adjuncts, etc.), honours, Master's, and PhD students must provide the University's Research Ethics Board (REB) with this completed application before conducting any research involving human participants, whether the research takes place on campus or elsewhere. Similarly, researchers from another institution who wish to conduct research at StFX using StFX resources to implement their research (e.g., asking a member of StFX staff or faculty to distribute a survey link) must complete and submit this form.

All applicants must complete the Tri-Council Course on Research Ethics (2022) (CORE 2022). Applicants must provide the certificate obtained upon successful completion of the CORE 2022 with each application submitted.

Please note the following:

1. Please ensure all attachments to your application are included in **a single PDF document** and all pages **numbered consecutively**.
2. Incomplete applications will be returned and may not be considered if submitted after the deadline.
3. The REB endeavors to review applications in a timely fashion; however, researchers realistically should allow **4-6 weeks** for the review process to be completed (in most instances, this includes time for revisions).
4. Applications will normally be reviewed at the first scheduled meeting of the REB following the receipt of the application, as long as it is received by the submission deadline as posted on the REB website. **Please note:** The REB does not meet in July or August.
5. The REB operates within the [Tri-Council Policy Statement Guidelines](#). Please consult these for detailed discussion on the various ethical issues raised.
6. Suggestions about the preparation of Invitations to Participate and of Consent/Assent Forms are provided in a separate document titled [Guidelines and Examples for Invitation to Participate and Consent Forms](#).
7. Ethics approval is required for all undergraduate research with human participants:
 - a. **Honours Students:** in accordance with Tri-Council policy, the University Research Ethics Board must approve all Honours students' research with human participants. Honours students complete and submit their application, [using the form found here](#), to their departmental or program Research Ethics Committee (REC) first. Upon completion of its review, the chair of the departmental or program REC signs the application and sends it to the student. The student then uploads the file and related information through the [ROMEO system](#) for final deliberation and approval by the REB. Students list their **Supervisors** as "co-investigators" in the **Project Team** tab when submitting to the full REB.
 - b. This two-part process is intended to recognize departmental expertise in subject areas and to meet Tri-Council guidelines. The StFX REB does not wish to delay Honours students' research, so every effort is made to review these projects in an efficient manner. However, special attention will be paid to research projects involving high risk and/or particularly vulnerable groups of participants.
 - c. **Other Undergraduate Research:** Ethics approval for other undergraduate research and for course-based research is reviewed at the departmental level only by departmental Research Ethics Committees.

It is important to ensure that your submission is **free of spelling, grammatical and typographical errors**. Applications found to contain multiple errors may be returned to the researcher for revisions prior to being reviewed by the board.

1. Instructions

Question	Answer
Is this an application for either a Masters' or PhD student project?	
If yes, has the Supervisory Committee approved the project?	
If yes, provide the date of approval from the Supervisory Committee.	
Is this an application for an undergraduate Honours thesis project?	
If yes, has the Department/Program Research Ethics Committee approved the project?	
If yes, provide the date of approval from the Department/Program Research Ethics Committee.	

2. Other REB Approvals

#	Question	Answer
2.1	Will application for ethical approval of this research be required from other Research Ethics Boards, in addition to StFX REB?	
2.2	If Yes, to which REBs do you plan on submitting and in what time frame? (1,000)	
2.3	Have you already submitted an application to another REB for this project?	
2.4	If Yes, have you received approval for this project?	
2.5	If the research involves Indigenous individuals, describe your community engagement plan (see TCPS-2 Articles 9.1 to 9.6). Supply all relevant documents including supporting letters, research agreements, etc. If community engagement will not be sought, explain why the research does not need it, referencing TCPS-2 Article 9.2. (5,000)	

3. Research Methods

#	Question	Answer
3.1	Provide the research topic. (2,000)	

3.2	Literature Review: provide a brief critical summary of the relevant research literature. (7,500)	
3.3	Reference List (7,500)	
3.4	Describe the design of the study including a description of the research methodology. (7,500)	
3.5	Detail the research methods to be used and provide a rationale for the use of these methods. (15,000)	
3.6	Please describe how the findings will be disseminated to the academic community. Will the findings be disseminated to any other stakeholder groups (e.g., participants, organizations)? If so, please describe the process of dissemination among each of the relevant groups. (5,000)	

4. Participants

#	Question	Answer
4.1	Describe the participant population; who will the participants be? (2,000)	
4.2	What is the approximate number of participants? (1,500)	
4.3	How large a group will the participants be selected from? (1,500)	
4.4	How will your participants be selected? (2,500)	
4.5	Provide specific details about the recruitment process. (7,500)	
4.6	Is there a relationship (for example, supervisory, teacher/student/child) between you and the participants in your study?	
4.7	If Yes, what is the nature of that relationship? Does it involve a difference in power (e.g., do any of the participants report to you, or are you involved with decisions affecting their careers)? (2,000)	
4.8	Indicate any possible conflicts of interest or other ethical difficulties that could exist or arise as a consequence of the nature of the proposed participants, and describe the steps you will take to overcome such problems. (2,500)	

4.9	Describe the informed consent process: A) How, when and by whom will the study information be conveyed to prospective participants? B) How will the researcher ensure prospective participants are fully informed? C) Describe whether and how you will obtain informed consent (e.g., written signature, audio-recorded, verbal agreement, implied consent for low risk studies etc.). (2,500)	
4.10	How will you make sure that participants know their involvement is voluntary? (2,500)	
4.11	Discuss how participants will be given the opportunity to withdraw their participation (and/or their data) and any time (or content) limitations on this. If participants will not have opportunity to withdraw their participation and/or their data explain why. (2,500)	
4.12	Is the research to be carried out within an organizational setting such as a school board, government department, or private company?	
4.13	If Yes, provide a copy of your letter requesting permission to carry out the research in this setting or provide any explanation for the REB of why such approval will not be sought. (2,000)	
4.14	If you do not intend to use an Invitation to Participate Form, how will the nature and purpose of the research be explained to the participants? (2,000)	
4.15	Transcriptions of Interviews or of Group Discussions: If transcription is necessary, who will do the transcription? (2,000)	

5. Additional Information

#	Question	Answer
5.1	Plain Language Usage: What is the estimated literacy or grade level of your participants? (2,000)	
5.2	If there is reason to believe that reading comprehension could be an issue, explain your reasons for believing that the information provided will be readily understood by the target population. Provide a Flesch-Kincaid score of your participant documents. (2,000)	

5.3	Deception: Does your research involve deception?	
5.4	If Yes, explain why it is necessary for your research and how it will be explained to the participants that deception has been involved. Please describe the procedure for obtaining post-debriefing consent. (2,000)	
5.5	Describe any financial or other incentives that will be offered to participants (for example, everyone gets a gift card or a "gift"; they will be entered into a draw for prizes; they will receive academic credit, etc.). Describe whether or not participants who start but do not complete the study will also receive any or all of the incentives given to those who do complete the study. How will this be handled? (5,000)	
5.6	Discuss any expenses participants are likely to incur in order to participate and whether/how these will be reimbursed. (2,500)	
5.7	Potential Benefits: Please describe the benefits associated with the research for the participant. Also describe the benefits to either a specific group within society, or society as a whole. Please describe / explain in as much detail as possible. (2,000)	
5.8	Costs for Participants: For research where there are potential costs - physical, psychological, or social - for the participants other than those of time or effort, please describe. Costs may be physical (including bodily contact, administration of a substance, fatigue/exhaustion), psychological/ emotional (including feeling uncomfortable, embarrassed, anxious, or upset), social (including possible loss of status, privacy, or reputation). Other costs may involve data security (i.e., risk to participant from data exposure) or be tied to deception. (2,500)	
5.9	If yes to 5.8 (there are "costs" to participants), will you have systems or supports in place to assist participants who become distressed due to study participation? If so, please describe these completely. (2,500)	
5.10	Distribution of Findings to Participants: Do you intend to make the results of your research available to those who participated in your study? (2,500)	

6. Confidentiality, Anonymity, Data Retention

#	Question	Answer
6.1	List the name and positions of all team members (and any research assistants) who will have knowledge of participants' identities. (1,500)	
6.2	What is the level of participant identifiability in the study data?	Anonymous Anonymized De-identified/coded Identifying
6.3	Specify which members of the research team (or others, such as research assistants) will have access to participants' data and for what purpose. (1,500)	
6.4	Describe measures to ensure privacy and confidentiality of study documents and participant data during the data collection and analysis phase. [Note that plans for long term storage are covered in Question 6.9.] (5,000)	
6.5	How will participant confidentiality be protected when quantitative research results (study data) are reported?	Only aggregate data will be presented Individual de-identified, anonymized or anonymous data will be presented Other (describe below) Participant confidentiality will not be protected in the research results Not applicable (no quantitative data)
6.6	If "other", briefly describe dissemination plans with regard to identifiability of quantitative data. (1,500)	
6.7	How will participant confidentiality be protected when qualitative research results (study data) are reported?	Only aggregate data will be presented Individual de-identified, anonymized or anonymous data will be presented Other (describe below) Participant confidentiality will not be protected in the research results Not applicable (no qualitative data)
6.8	If "other", briefly describe dissemination plans with regard to identifiability of qualitative data. (1,500)	
6.9	Describe plans for data retention and long-term storage (i.e., how long data will be retained, in what form and where). Will the data eventually be destroyed or irreversibly anonymized? If so, what procedures will be used for this? Discuss	

	any plans for future use of the data or materials beyond the study currently being reviewed. (2,500)	
6.10	If applicable, identify and describe the data repository in which the research data will be deposited. What is its focus, who are its target users, who can access deposited data and under what circumstances? For how long will the data be kept in the repository? (2,500)	
6.11	If applicable, describe the data set to be released to the repository. If there is personal and/or sensitive information in the data, describe how you will prepare the data for submission to the repository and mitigate risks to privacy. (2,500)	
6.12	Is agreeing to have one’s data deposited a requirement for participation in the study? If yes, provide a justification. If no, indicate how participants can opt in or out. (2,500)	
6.13	Will you be using any electronic tool (e.g. survey company, software, data repository) to help you collect, manage, store, share, or analyze personally identifiable data that makes the data accessible from outside Canada? Describe. (2,500)	
6.14	Will any information that may reasonably be expected to identify an individual (alone or in combination with other available information) be accessible outside Canada? Describe. (2,500)	
6.15	Is there information critical to your study that has not been described or discussed elsewhere / in any other section? (2,500)	

7. Program Review | Evaluation

#	Question	Answer
7.1	Does your research involve the review of an existing program?	
7.2	If your application involves program review or an examination of quality assurance, please indicate for the REB your reasons for believing that the research requires ethical review. (2,000)	
7.3	Will the results of this evaluation study be made available to the research community?	
7.4	If Yes, how will this be completed? (2,000)	

8. Funded Research

#	Question	Answer
8.1	Is your research being funded or financially supported?	
8.2	If Yes, provide the sponsor/agency/funder name and program.	
8.3	What is the EXACT title of the project associated with the funding application? (500)	
8.4	Name of Principal Investigator for whom the award was granted (if not yourself).	
8.5	Date when the funding was granted?	

9. Support Material and Documents

#	Question	Answer
9.1	Which of the following consent-related forms and materials are included in your file attachments?	Invitation to Participate Consent Form(s) Assent Form(s) Community Engagement Plan Any scripts to be used to in the procedure None / not applicable
9.2	Which of the following test instruments are included in your file attachments?	Interview / focus group guide(s) Surveys / questionnaires Other test instruments None / not applicable
9.3	Which of the following recruitment-related materials are included in your file attachments?	Recruitment ad(s) / poster(s) None / not applicable
9.4	Which of the following debriefing materials are included in your file attachments?	Debriefing form Post-debriefing consent form(s)
9.5	Which of the following external permissions and approvals have been included in your file attachments?	Letter(s) seeking permission from organizations &/or institutions Received permission letter(s) from organizations &/or institutions REB approval from other institutions None / not applicable
9.6	Which of the following research team agreements have been included in your file attachments?	Signed research assistant confidentiality agreement Signed transcriptionist confidentiality agreement None / not applicable
9.7	What other documents have been included in your file attachments?	TCPS-2 CORE 2022 Certificate Any other documents not listed above None / not applicable

9.8	If any other documents have been included, list them here.	
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