

# Letters of Cooperation Guidance

*Note: This document is about recruitment of research sites, not of individual participants.*

Documentation of study site cooperation must be provided to the IRB in the form of letters, informal emails, templates, or study site research forms. See the [IRB website](#) for general procedures. This list below explains the circumstances under which such documentation is or is not typically required by the IRB, as determined by the IRB Administrator. Note that these requirements do not address the question of when investigators should inform or seek the approval of various individuals within an organization where they propose to conduct research. It only addresses when documentation of cooperation must be provided to the IRB.

## **Studies in schools**

*Letter/email required from either principal or superintendent (not both):*

When entering the school to recruit or collect data, or asking teachers to do so

When interviewing teachers on school grounds

When asking teachers to send home or forward by email the information about a study, even if the parents or kids contact the researcher directly and/or do surveys online. (In other words, any time you are asking teachers to do anything to help with the research.)

When asking the school to provide data or datasets

*Letter/email not required:*

When asking the school or principal to provide email addresses or mailing list

When using publicly available school emails to invite participation

When interviewing teachers, parents, and/or students outside of school grounds

When conducting online surveys with school personnel or parents

## **External businesses or organization sites**

*Letter/email required from owner/director:*

When putting up recruitment posters

When inviting participation or collecting data on site or in front of the building

When requesting data or datasets

When accessing a mailing list or data as a researcher that is available to you as an employee or member of that organization (except social media platforms-see below)

*Letter/email not required:*

When requesting email addresses or mailing lists

When using publicly available emails or phone numbers to invite participation or do surveys

When asking anyone in the business to forward email(s)

When accessing a website or social media for a group or organization the researcher belongs to

## **Other/public locations**

*Letter/email required:*

Malls (quasi-public) or stores

Churches – same as schools

Private support groups or civic clubs – like UNI student groups – need permission to attend meeting

*Letter/email not required:*

Bringing someone into a restaurant to conduct an interview

Recruitment or data collection in libraries, parks, or on the street generally

### **Data collection at UNI**

#### *Letter/email required:*

When asking student club, organization, or team to allow an oral presentation

When accessing a mailing list or data as a researcher that is already available to you as an employee or student

#### *Letter/email not required:*

When requesting a mailing list

When asking anyone to forward an email invitation

When visiting UNI classrooms to recruit or collect data

When asking IEP, ITS, or the Registrar for mailing lists or datasets (they typically ask the IRB for a letter/email)

From funders or contractors, internal or external

Recruitment or data collection anywhere on campus (except at student organization or team meetings)

Faculty at UNI providing a dataset to a student at UNI for new analysis

**Studies involving UNI athletes**– permission required from team coach (OR when appropriate, the Athletic Director, but not both). A second permission may be required from the Strength & Conditioning coach for the team – this will be determined by the reviewer for the study, or the IRB Administrator.

#### *Letter/email required:*

When collecting exercise-related data or existing data/records from members of an athletic team

When inviting participation or collecting any kind of data at team meetings

When asking team members to do exercise activities in-season (S & C coach)

#### *Letter/email not required:*

When inviting team members or other athletes outside of team meetings/practice sessions to do non-exercise-related research

When inviting team members outside of team meetings to do exercise activities off-season

When inviting general student populations to do research that happens to attract an athlete

When asking coaches to forward emails or provide a mailing list to invite team members to do an online survey on any topic on their own time

### **Data collection at other universities**

If smaller institution such as Hawkeye, permission from central administration (e.g., an IRB, if there is one, or other upper administrator).

If larger institution, permission encouraged but not required from faculty or admins (whoever is close to the research), or coach or AD, if athletes. However, PI is advised to check IRB requirements for research being done on that institution's campus.

### **Social media**

#### *Letter/email required:*

None

#### *Letter/email not required:*

Members of an organization, support group, or website manager who can access their organization's social media or website can post to them without providing a letter/email of cooperation. However, they are required to be aware of and follow their own group's rules.

When your "friends" are "sharing" your study information

Posting on an online survey platform