

Appendix 5: Participant information and consent form templates

Here we provide a template of a participant information form however the criteria for these may vary between institutions or formal human ethics review committees. We recommend the participant information form is presented digitally, with the surveyor verbally describing key information.

Participant information form template

Project title

List of researchers

Invite:

Introduce the project and why the participants' involvement is sought after, (e.g, "We invite you to participate in our project (insert project title). Your involvement is sought after as you are a marine recreational user of the area)."

What is the project about?

Briefly describe the project aim and what it is about.

What does participation involve?

Describe exactly what participation involves including associated time commitment (e.g., completion of 8 minute survey about your recreational activities in the area).

Voluntary participation and withdrawal from the study

Outline that participation is voluntary and that participants can discontinue their involvement in the study at any time with no consequences. They are not obligated to provide an explanation for their decision.

Your privacy

Emphasis that the survey is anonymous, and that data will be treated in a confidential manner with a brief description of the data security protocols. For surveys which collect personally identifying data, outline how the data will be used, shared and stored in line with privacy laws.

Whilst no discipline-specific repository exists for this data currently, we suggest researchers consider the possibility that they may like to publish data onto such a repository in the future. To allow this, respondents should be made aware of this here (e.g., “De-identified survey responses may be published on an online data repository to be available for other researchers to use for a range of appropriate purposes.”)

Possible benefits

Describe any potential advantages that the participant may obtain or the benefits to the broader scientific community. It's important that these benefits are not exaggerated. Outline how participants can access the study findings once they become available.

Possible risks and risk management plan

Clearly describe any possible risks and how they will be managed, or state that there is no foreseeable risks associated with the research

Contacts

Describe who can be contacted to discuss any aspects of the project and include their contact details.

Sincerely,

Lead researcher

Participant consent form template

Project title

I, _____, have carefully reviewed the provided information, and any questions I have raised have been adequately addressed. I hereby consent to take part in this research project, fully aware that I reserve the right to withdraw at any time, without the need to provide a reason, and without facing any adverse consequences.

Participant signature

Date