APPLICATION PROCEDURES AND CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSALS SUBMITTED FOR IRB APPROVAL

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) ensures that all research involving human participants adheres to established ethical standards, safeguards participant rights, and complies with institutional and regulatory guidelines. All researchers are required to follow the procedures outlined below when submitting proposals for ethical review.

I. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Use of Prescribed Templates

All applications must strictly adhere to the official templates available on the institution's website. Submissions that do not conform to the prescribed format will not be processed.

2. Compilation and Format of Submission

Applications must be compiled into **a single consolidated PDF document** in the following sequence:

1. Cover Letter
2. Face Sheet (Template 1)
3. Research Ethics Framework (Template 2)
4. Full Research Proposal
5. Data Collection Tools
6. Participant Information Sheet(s) (Template 3)
7. Informed Consent Form(s)
8. Curriculum Vitae of the Principal Investigator (maximum two pages)
9. Additional Required Documents (as applicable):
    - Principal's approval (mandatory for faculty projects)
    - Guide's approval (mandatory for PhD projects)
    - Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for collaborative research with ethical clearance from collaborating organization(s)
    - Head of Institute's approval (mandatory for outside organisations seeking ethical clearance of their projects)

3. Mode of Submission

The complete application (single PDF) must be submitted in HARD COPY to the Research and Development Cell of the college.

4. Review Process and Communication

- The IRB decision will be communicated to the Principal Investigator (PI) via email.
- Decisions may include:
    - Approval
    - Approval with minor revisions
    - Major revisions required
    - Deferral or rejection
- If revisions are recommended, the PI must submit:
    - The revised document(s), and
    - A point-wise response to IRB comments
      within the stipulated timeline mentioned in the communication.

Failure to respond within the specified time may require fresh submission.

5. Eligibility Criteria for Submission

a. Doctoral Scholars

Doctoral scholars are eligible to submit their proposal to the IRB only after presentation and defense of the research proposal before the Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC), and incorporation of suggested revisions. IRB approval must be obtained before commencement of data collection.

b. Faculty/ Collaborative Research Projects

Faculty/ Collaborative Research projects may be submitted to the IRB only after presentation of the proposal and preliminary approval by funding agency/ institute authorities.

c. Research Projects of Other Organisations

Research projects may be submitted to the IRB by other organisations through proper chanell. The head of the organisation should forward such a request to the IRB.

6. Mandatory Declaration on Data Collection

The IRB will consider only those proposals where data collection has not yet commenced. A clear and explicit statement affirming that data collection has not begun must be included in the cover letter. This declaration is mandatory.

II. CHECKLIST FOR APPLICATIONS

The Cover Letter (separate formats for scholars and faculty) must be accompanied by the following documents:

1. Face Sheet (Template 1)

- Duly completed and signed by:
    - Principal Investigator(s)
    - Co-Investigator(s), if applicable

2. Research Ethics Framework (Template 2)

- Comprehensive detailing of:
    - Ethical considerations
    - Risk assessment
    - Participant protection mechanisms
    - Confidentiality and data management plans

3. Research Proposal

- For scholars:
    - Must incorporate suggestions from the Research Advisory Committee and the proposal presentation stage
    - A statement from the guide confirming incorporation of revisions must be included in the cover letter

4. Data Collection Tools

All relevant instruments must be attached, including (as applicable):

- Questionnaires/ Interview schedules/ Interview guides/ Focus Group Discussion (FGD) guides/ Observation checklists/ Any additional instruments

These must be provided in:

- English, and
- Relevant local/regional language(s), wherever applicable

5. Participant Information Sheet (Template 3) and Informed Consent Form

- Must be submitted in English and relevant languages.
- If multiple participant categories are involved, separate PIS and Consent Forms must be clearly labeled for each group.

- Documents must be written in simple, everyday language to ensure clarity and comprehension.
- In the Participant Information Sheet, the term “you” refers to the respondent/participant and not the researcher.
- If funding

6. Curriculum Vitae of the Principal Investigator

- Maximum two pages
- Highlight relevant research and publications

7. Collaborative Research Requirements

Where applicable:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with collaborating organization(s)
- Ethical Clearance Certificate/Report from collaborating organization(s)

8. Faculty Proposals

- Must include a copy of the initial approval from the Principal.

9. Compliance

IRB approval is mandatory prior to initiation of any data collection involving human participants. Retrospective ethical clearance will not be granted. Any modification to the approved protocol must be reported to and approved by the IRB before implementation. Non-compliance with IRB procedures may result in suspension of research activities and institutional disciplinary action.