Recommendations: Standard criteria for inclusion in research invitations

Purpose
To outline a standard set of criteria that applicants need to include in the communications which are distributed to potential research participants/on public invitations.

Including relevant information in research invitations demonstrates to participants that the project has received adequate consideration and an appropriate level of review. It is also a means of building and developing responsible research practices and embedding as a crucial part of the project.

Note
This is not an attempt to be prescriptive of/to faculty processes. It is an attempt to put in place minimum criteria that applicants can use when developing communications that form part of the research project.

Items which should be included:
- Title of project
- Purpose of the project (incl. if student/staff etc)
- Name of researcher(s)
- Inclusion criteria (who can/could participate?) or exclusion criteria (who cannot participate?)
- Potential benefits/risks to the participants
- What the research will involve (short description) and time commitment
- Proof of ethics and gatekeeper approval (reference number or similar)
- Guidance for how to participate (survey link or response via email)

Items that should NOT be included:
- Note for potential participants to contact the REC Chairperson with queries related to the project.
- Information which might lead or bias the potential participants.

Deception in research
In limited, well justified, and approved circumstances it may be necessary to the research to not fully disclose the nature of the of the research to potential participants, or to deceive them. This research is rare and must be approved by an REC (which has thoroughly reviewed it) before it can commence. In these cases it may be necessary to adjust the invitation letters appropriately to account for this peculiar feature of the research project.

Drafted by the Office of Research Integrity for the Senate Ethics in Research Committee.
Approved by the Ethics in Research Committee, August 2023.

For use by researchers, Faculty RECs and other stakeholders and gatekeepers to use when developing and/or considering invitations to research participants.