



## Advertising to Recruit Participants for Research

One Method of recruiting participants for research is through advertisements. Recruitment and use of advertisements is a part of the informed consent process. As a part of the consent process, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review of human participant research must ensure that the information in advertisements are not misleading to participants, does not imply certainty of a favorable outcome, and/or benefit beyond what is stated for the informed consent.

This guidance summarizes guidelines for what should and should not be included in a research recruitment ad and the IRB's requirements.

### Guidelines for Appropriate Advertisement

Any advertisement to recruit research participants should be limited to the information the prospective participant would need to determine their eligibility and interest according to the following guidelines:

#### Do's and Don'ts of Recruitment Advertisements:



#### Do:

1. Clearly indicate the purpose of the ad which is to recruit participants for **research purposes**.
2. Identify the targeted audience:
  - a. i.e., "Are you a researcher looking for guidance on advertisement criteria?"
3. Make sure the targeted audience can tell what the research is about
4. Provide the name of the researcher and how they can be contacted
5. Include the IRB approval number
6. Only use or post advertisements approved by the IRB



#### Don't:



1. Design the ad to draw attention to information about compensation:
  - a. Larger font size, **color**, *style*, or use of graphics to draw attention to compensation is **not permitted**.
2. Use information about compensation that could be misleading,
3. Use information that could imply or elicit undue influence,
4. Describe the research in the ad in a way that may seem deceptive or misleading,
5. Imply any type of favorable outcome or benefits beyond what is outlined in the consent form

#### Relevant Information to Include in Advertisements: (all listed below are not required).

- The name and address of the researcher and location where research will take place.
- The purpose of the research and a brief description of who might be eligible for the study.
- A brief statement regarding the benefits or incentives of participation, if any.
- The time or other commitment required of the participants.
- The name of the person or office to contact for further information.

## Advertisements must not use any of the following statements or claims:

- Advertisements may not be coercive or imply undue pressure.
- Advertisements may be limited to the information the prospective participants need to determine their eligibility and interest.
- May not imply a certainty of favorable outcome or benefits beyond what is outlined in the informed consent.
- Advertisements should not promise "free treatment", when the intent is only to say that participants will not be charged for taking part in the investigation.
- Advertisements may state that the participants will be paid but should not emphasize the payment or the amount to be paid, by such means as larger or bold type.
- Advertisements may not include exculpatory language.

### Additional requirements for FDA regulated Research:

- My not make any claims that a drug, biologic or device is safe or effective for the purposes under investigation, or that the test article is known to be equivalent or superior to any other drug, biologic or device.
- The terms "new treatment", "new medication" or "new drug" cannot be used without explaining that the test article is investigational. A phrase such as "receive new treatments" leads study subjects to believe that they will be receiving newly improved products of proven worth.

The IRB must review the final version of printed advertisements to evaluate the content, relative size of type used and any images. Furthermore, any changes or updates to IRB approved advertisements must be submitted to the IRB as an amendment for review and approval, prior to implementation.

## Academica Advertisements:

Investigators can use Academica to post advertisements to recruit WSU staff, students, or faculty in accordance with guidelines in this guidance, IRB Policy & the terms of the study's IRB approval. The IRB asks researchers to include the IRB # in all research advertisements posted on Academica.

## ResearchMatch:

ResearchMatch is a recruitment resource available to all health researchers at WSU. (This resource is not available for educational research). This resource helps to connect people interested in research studies with researchers from medical centers across the U.S. For more information, contact the WSU ResearchMatch Liaison by emailing [researchmatchws@wayne.edu](mailto:researchmatchws@wayne.edu), and visit [www.researchmatch.org/researchers/faq](http://www.researchmatch.org/researchers/faq).

WSU researchers who propose to use ResearchMatch to recruit research participants must have approval by the WSU IRB to use ResearchMatch as a recruitment tool.

IRB Submissions for studies using ResearchMatch as a part of their recruitment plan must include the following:

- \*ResearchMatch Contact Message
- IRB submission must indicate internet use in research. This requires the following:
  - Completion of the eProtocol Addendum for Internet Use in Research.
  - All WSU research personnel must complete the Internet Research CITI training module.

A request to use research Match must be sent to the WSU Research Match Liaison: [researchmatchws@wayne.edu](mailto:researchmatchws@wayne.edu). Requests must include the IRB approval memo and the IRB approved ResearchMatch Contact message.

**\*The ResearchMatch Contact Message:** A ResearchMatch contact message is not the same as an email. It is an IRB approved message which includes information about the purpose of the study, the requirements of participating (e.g. time requirements, clinic visits), and any other important information (e.g. exclusion criteria, compensation). **The contact message must not include the following:**

- Names of the research team
- Any contact information - emails, phone numbers
- URLs (e.g., links to websites)

## Social Media:

Social media recruitment is held to the same standards and regulatory requirements as traditional recruitment methods summarized in this guidance. The IRB will consider social media recruitment methods with a clear justification and rationale. When preparing to submit a study to the IRB involving social media recruitment, the IRB will need the following information:

- A detailed recruitment plan that includes all social media platforms that will be used and the specific domain within each social media platform that will be used.
- Complete the Addendum for Internet Use in Research (located within the eProtocol submission system)
- If the recruitment plan involves the private social media groups, a letter of support from the group administrator is required.
- The process to protect the privacy and confidentiality of research participants must adhere to the privacy policies of all social media platforms and social media groups.

It is the PI's responsibility to be knowledgeable of and compliant with all social media privacy and confidentiality policies that apply to the research.

## Veterans Affairs Research (VHA Directive 1200.05(3)):

### VA Research Requirements for recruiting participants with phone calls:

VA investigators must make initial contact with potential research participants in person or by letter prior to initiating any telephone contact, unless there is written documentation that the participant is willing to be contacted by telephone about the study in question or a specific kind of research as outlined in the study.

- When investigators make any initial contact with potential research participants by letter or telephone, they must provide potential research participants with information that the potential subject can use to verify that the study constitutes VA research such as a telephone number;
- If a contractor makes the initial contact by letter, the VA investigator must sign the letter;

## Department of Defense Research:

Civilian investigators attempting to access military volunteers should seek collaboration with a military researcher familiar with service-specific requirements