Participant Information Sheet
GUIDANCE

Introduce the researcher to the participant, providing their name and Coventry University contact details as well as their status/role (e.g. staff, undergraduate/postgraduate/doctoral student). The language used in the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form should be tailored to the participants.

What is the purpose of this research?
This section should include the aim(s) of the research, the reason for the research and what the research is trying to achieve.

Where collecting personal data: Where personal data is being processed, as well as including purpose for participation, you must also include the purpose of collecting the participant's personal data. Although it is usually expected that full details of the purpose is provided, it is recognised that this may not be easy when conducting research, so it is acceptable to provide information about the general area of research and general use of data.

Who is organising and funding the research?
Include which organisations are sponsoring or funding your research (e.g. medical research charity, pharmaceutical company, academic institution, NHS organisation etc.). This section can be removed if internal e.g. undergraduate/postgraduate taught student research project.

Do you have to take part?
Explain that it is the participant's decision to take part in the research or not (i.e. that participation is voluntary and participants may change their minds at a later stage) and that refusing to participate or withdrawing participation will not affect any other aspects of the way a person is treated (i.e. participants have a right to withdraw from the research).

Where collecting personal data: Where personal data is being processed and we do not rely on 'consent' as the lawful basis, the below must be added: "Please note that for data protection purposes we are processing your data on the basis of [choose the relevant lawful basis]. This means that while you may withdraw your participation in the research, we may still continue to use the personal data you have already provided. For more information on your data protection rights in this regard, please see the Research Participants Privacy Notice." If you need assistance, you can seek guidance from the Information Governance Unit on which lawful basis is appropriate and for further information on data protection rights.

What will happen if I decide to take part?
This should provide participants with information on what they will be asked to do for the research (e.g. completing a questionnaire, interviews, attending meetings, etc.). If relevant, information on payment/ reimbursement should be provided here. This section should also provide the location and duration of the research project and dates that the participant should be aware of should be highlighted

Why have you been invited to take part?
This should explain the types of participants that are needed to take part in the research. It should also include an explanation of the nature of the participant sample; any screening procedures necessary; any inclusion/ exclusion criteria; and any special skills/ attributes involved. If participants haven't been specifically invited to take part, e.g. if they have responded to a poster, the heading and information should be adjusted accordingly.

What are the benefits and potential risks and benefits in taking part?
This should explain any benefits for taking part, any potential risk (be transparent), any burdens imposed and any specific preparatory requirements (e.g. special diet, exercise).

What information is being collected in the research?
Explain what information is being collected, then specify which of the information includes personal data (if applicable). If personal data is being obtained from sources other than the data subject, explain clearly what the source is and what data is being collected.

Where collecting personal data: **Lawful basis of processing**

If you are intending to collect identifiable personal data you must first consider the lawful basis you will use for handling this e.g. Consent / Contract / Legal Obligation / Vital Interests /Public Task / Legitimate Interests. Visit the ICO Lawful basis interactive guidance tool to find out more. Where the personal data is special category data you must consider a secondary lawful basis e.g. explicit consent, self-publication, medical purposes or necessary for archiving, research or statistics purposes. See the Guidance on special category data for more information, and if you have any questions on these lawful bases, please contact the Information Governance Unit.

It is anticipated that most research work will rely on the public task lawful basis.

Where you are relying on the consent lawful basis, you must obtain and record that consent via one of the approved methods for which there are templates (a paper consent form, online consent form, a verbal script or an email template).

What will happen to the results of the research?
Indicate whether / when you expect the results to be published, do you expect to use results in other project outputs, e.g. website, conferences etc., will data be archived or shared with others for any purposes (e.g. further research)?

e.g. No personal data will be shared, however anonymised (i.e. not identifiable) data may be used in publications, reports, presentations, web pages and other research outputs. At the end of the project, anonymised data may be archived and shared with others for legitimate research purposes.

Where collecting personal data: If personal data is to be used in outputs, archived or shared, then participants should be informed of this. If that data will be anonymised or pseudonymised, this should also be communicated to the participants.

Who will have access to the information?
This section should provide information on the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. If there is a reasonable possibility that a participant may disclose information that you cannot keep confidential (e.g. disclosures of serious, imminent harm), then include the limits to confidentiality here also.
Where collecting personal data: If personal data will be shared with any individuals or organisations outside the University, details of the external recipients should be provided. This includes any external transcription services or open access to data.

If personal data will be processed outside of the EEA, details of the processing should be provided, including the countries involved. Researchers should ensure they meet the legal requirements for international transfers outside the EEA by referring to the International Data Transfers Standard.

Where will the information be stored and how long will it be kept for?
Information about data storage, retention and destruction should be provided here. Personal data should only be retained for as long as it is necessary, usually once the research has concluded. Anonymous research data can be retained indefinitely by depositing it in a suitable data repository. Funder policy and guidelines on retention periods should be adhered to.

There are situations where you do not have to destroy the data once the research has concluded and it can be kept indefinitely without anonymisation. These situations are where you are going to hold it for archiving, scientific or statistical purposes and must be accompanied by safeguards such as pseudonymisation. Where you do this, the participant must be advised of such. Please seek guidance from the Information Governance Unit if you require further information.

Where collecting personal data: Reference should also be made to how the personal data will remain secure for the duration of its processing – for example, in secure electronic folders accessible only by certain people who have a reason to access it. Where the lawful basis is consent we need to reference how long the record of consent will be kept for.

What will happen next?
Explain what a participant should do if they would like to find out more about the project, or if they would like to participate. Explain who they should contact, and that they will be asked to sign a consent form to confirm this.

If the participant does not want to be involved in the project then thank them for their attention.

Explain the process for participants receiving feedback after the research is complete. Inform the participant if the results are to be published.

Researcher contact details:
This should include the name of the Researcher and Coventry University contact details (address, phone number and email address – do not include personal contact details).

Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about this research?
Follow the template example. A formal complaint procedure should provide contact details of a persona/role that is not involved in the research project and generic e-mails should be used as much as possible e.g. local ethics support team e-mail, or general ethics e-mail (ethics.uni@coventry.ac.uk).