

Research Ethics Recruitment Poster Guidance

Study recruitment materials must be respectful of participants and in compliance with ethical standards and university policies. Check each poster for conformity with the points listed below:

All recruitment materials should have the following information:

- Study title
- Name of the principal investigator/the person to contact for more information
- Purpose of the research study
- Participant eligibility criteria
- The time commitment required of participants
- The location where the research will take place
- State if compensation is provided (but not necessarily how much)
- Specify deadline for responding only if recruitment is time limited
- All text, illustrations, photos, music, or video must to be sensitive and appropriate to the target audience and not be disrespectful of other individuals or groups

Language:

- Use “participant” in place of the terms “patient”, “subject”, or “volunteer”
- Use simple/lay language instead of discipline-specific jargon
- Avoid acronyms, abbreviations or mnemonics unless they are well known to the public or to the group you are targeting AND are not enticing or sensationalistic
- Avoid terms such as “new treatment”, “new medication” or “new drug” without explaining that it is under investigation (that is, not yet approved by FDA – not yet proven to be safe or effective)

Recruitment materials should avoid:

- Statements that may be considered coercive (e.g., Get Big Bucks for this Study!; All the Cool People are Doing it!).
- Sensationalistic or suggestive wording (e.g., Feeling Aroused?).
- Use of stereotypes in words (e.g., Do Blondes Have More Fun?) or use of stereotypes in pictures such as cartoons or photos that reinforce negative or uninformed stereotypes.
- Stating or implying a favourable outcome or benefit beyond what is outlined in the informed consent form and the protocol. (e.g., This Study will make you Smarter!).
- Claims, either explicitly or implicitly, that a drug, biologic or device is safe or effective for the purposes under investigation, or that it is known to be equivalent or superior to any other drug, biologic or device.
- Promising “free” or “enhanced” medical treatment when the intent is only to say that participants will not be charged for taking part in the research.
- Featuring compensation as a lead in before the description of the study purpose (e.g., Win an iPod Nano!).
- Using the name of the commercial sponsor or product manufacturer (e.g., Sponsored by Pfizer).

***It is important to not turn the recruitment poster into an LOI. The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that all recruitment posters are non-offensive and not misleading.