**Recruitment Template: Email or Letter**

For your convenience, a recruitment template is provided on the next page. You are not required to use the template, but if you do not, you may inadvertently leave out important information, which will result in IRB revision requests and delayed study approval.

The contents of the recruitment template have been organized to facilitate comprehension. Additionally, your study information should be written in plain language. For more information on plain language, go to <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/>.

Please note the following:

1. Text in [brackets] represents information about your study that you must add.
2. A forward slash (/) indicates that you must select an option specific to your study (e.g., “will/will not” or “I/we”) and remove the remaining option(s).
3. Additional instructions or sample text are provided in boxes.
4. Before you submit your recruitment document to the IRB, delete this cover page, all brackets, and the boxes. You’ll also need to remove any extra spaces created when the boxes were removed.
5. Please follow the **instructions in blue** below, revising or providing the information in **red**. You will need to remove the instructions as you go, including these instructions. The font color of your completed document should be **black**.
6. The finished document should reflect what you will give to prospective participants.
7. If your study will involve multiple types of participants who will complete different procedures (e.g., teachers who will be interviewed and take part in a focus group and administrators who will complete a survey), you will need to create different recruitment documents for each participant group.
8. When you save your newly created recruitment documents, please use a file name for each that clearly identifies the type of recruitment and the intended audience (e.g., recruitment(teachers)(email), recruitment(students)(letter), etc.).

For questions about recruitment, please contact the IRB at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

In the first paragraph, introduce yourself, explain why you are conducting research, and provide information about the purpose or focus of your study.

Dear [Potential Participant/Parent/Student/etc.],

As a [student/graduate student/post-graduate/doctoral candidate/faculty member] in the [Provide the name of your academic school or department (e.g., School of Education, Psychology Department, etc.).] [\_\_\_] at Liberty University, I am conducting research [Retain and complete the applicable description.] [as part of the requirements for a [\_\_\_] degree]—OR—[to better understand a(n) [issue/phenomenon/etc.]]. The purpose of my research is to [Provide a **brief**summary of your research purpose.] [\_\_\_], and I am writing to invite [you/your child] to join my study.

\* The next paragraph should begin with your participant criteria. Make sure that all participant eligibility requirements are listed and that they match what is on your IRB application. An example is provided.

\* Next, you will need to list your study procedures, preferably in order, and include either expected time estimates for each procedure **or** an overall time estimate for total participation. Examples are provided.

\* For qualitative studies, if participants will be asked to review their interview transcripts, the developed themes, etc. to check for accuracy or confirm agreement (i.e., member checking), please list this as a procedure and include a time estimate. If you include the term *member checking*, be sure to include a description to allow for participant understanding.

\* Screening is not considered a study procedure, so **it should not** be discussed in the below paragraph.

\* Conclude the paragraph by choosing the applicable sentence and removing the inapplicable sentence. If participation will be anonymous, **you will not** be able to link participants to their data.

Participants must be [List your participant criteria.] [e.g., 18 years of age or older, college students who have earned at least 30 credit hours, etc.]. Participants will be asked to [List your study procedures.] [take an anonymous, online survey/take part in a one-on-one, audio-recorded, in-person interview/take part in a video-recorded focus group/etc.]. It should take approximately [time estimate in minutes/hours] to complete the procedure[s] listed. [Retain the applicable sentence.] [Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.]—OR—[Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of this study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.]

In the next paragraph, provide instructions for what they should do if they want to participate. Unless your participants will be minors and you will address your recruitment document to parents, information about your consent form **should not be included** in the next paragraph.

In general, **if participants will be minors**, the hyperlink to an online survey **should not** be included in initial recruitment documents, but there are exceptions to this limitation. Please contact the IRB for more information.

[Retain the applicable option.] [To participate/for your child to participate], please [Retain and, if needed, complete the applicable instructions, or provide your own.] [click here (insert hyperlink to online survey) to complete the [screening survey/study survey]/complete the attached survey and return it by [email/handing it to \_\_\_\_\_/placing it in the provided envelope/etc.]/contact me at [phone number/email address] [to schedule an interview/etc.]/read, sign, and return the attached parental consent document to your child’s [teacher/school]]. [Retain the following if you will screen potential participants by having them complete a screening survey or contact you to schedule an interview and be screened at that time.] [If you meet my participant criteria, I will [(If you will use an online screening survey) contact you to schedule an interview/ (If you will screen them when they contact you) work with you to schedule a time for an interview].]

Discuss your consent process in the next paragraph. To eliminate confusion, the contents have been separated, but you will need to **consolidate your consent information into a single paragraph** once you’ve selected the contents applicable to your study and removed the contents that are not applicable.

A consent document [Retain the applicable option.] [is provided as the first page of the survey (Only applicable for anonymous online surveys. Not applicable for stand-alone, online screening surveys.)/is attached to this [letter/email]/will be [given/emailed] to you if you meet the study criteria/will be sent home with your child/will be given to you [at the time of (Not applicable for minors.)/one week before/etc.] the [interview/focus group/etc.]]. The consent document contains additional information about my research.

Keep the following information if you **will not** be able to link participants to their responses (e.g., anonymous surveys), **AND** **your participants will be 18 or older**. Otherwise, remove it.

[Retain the applicable sentence.] [Because participation is anonymous, you do not need to sign and return the consent document unless you would prefer to do so. After you have read the consent form, please [click the [button/link] to proceed to the survey/complete and return the survey]. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the study.]

Keep the following information if you **will** be able to link participants to their responses, **OR** **your participants will be minors**. Otherwise, remove it.

[Retain the applicable sentence.] [If you [choose to participate/allow your child to participate], you will need to sign the consent document and return it to [me at the time of the [interview/focus group/etc.]]/[your child’s [school/teacher]. [If you keep the final option from the previous sentence, name the specific location in the school or the specific teacher.] [If minors will participate, please retain the applicable sentence from the following choices.] [(For minors between 14 and 17): If your child chooses to participate, he/she [will need to sign the same consent form that you will sign./will be presented with consent information before the survey/interview/etc.]/[(For minors under 14): If your child chooses to participate, she/he [will need to sign and return the attached assent form to [me at the time of the [interview/focus group/etc.]]/[your child’s [school/teacher].]/[will be given an assent form to sign before the survey/interview/etc.]/[will be read the assent information/have the assent information explained to him/her and asked if she/he wants to complete the study procedures.] [The requirement to obtain child assent can be waived if children may receive a direct benefit (e.g., learning opportunity, medical benefit, etc.) from participation that would not otherwise be available to them.] [This is the end of the consent information. Consolidate your retained consent information into a single paragraph.]

If you plan to compensate your participants, please include the below sentence; otherwise, remove it. If you plan to conduct a raffle, be sure to confirm that they are legal in your state and the state(s) where your potential participants reside. If they are not legal, you will need to decide on an alternative means of compensation.

Participants [will receive a [$[amount] [type/store] gift card/be entered in a raffle to receive [list prize(s)]/etc.].

Sincerely,

[Your Name]  
[Your Title]

[Your phone number and/or email address]