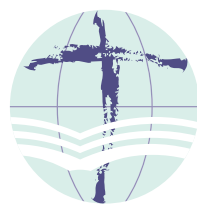


AGST Alliance

**Human Participants
Research Ethics**

**Document Templates
and Examples**



AGST
ALLIANCE

This document complements the *Human Participants Research Ethics Handbook*. You need that handbook in one hand, and this document in the other!

As you become familiar with the principles of and practices for responsible research detailed in the *Handbook*, you will be able to determine what forms and other documents you will need for your unique research project.

Here you will find a range of templates and examples to help you prepare your research ethics application, by helping you create the necessary forms, letters, etc. required for a complete ethics application – and, most of all, for an ethically sound research project.

Don't simply 'cut and paste' from here into your ethics application documents. You will need to adapt these documents for your specific research project. Be a thinking researcher!

Best wishes as you navigate your research ethics process.

The HPEP team

Contact details

AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel
Email ethics@agstalliance.org

AGST Alliance administration:
Email admin@agstalliance.org

AGST Alliance,
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Your ethics application goal: Ethics approval

As you prepare your ethics application and accompanying documents, keep in mind that your goal is to receive a letter like the one below: approval to move into the data-gathering phase of your research.

Paying good attention to what is required for ethics approval will enhance your competence and confidence as a responsible researcher, and so is well worth the effort to 'get it right'!



AGST Alliance Human Participants Research Ethics Approval

Name of researcher: Charis Shallum

Name of supervisor: Luke Cospell

Research project title: Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation program for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship.

Date of approval: 8/5/2023

Dear Charis,

We are pleased to inform you that ethics approval is now granted for your AGST Alliance DMin research. You may now proceed with your data collection.

At the end of all your forms, include this statement: "Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 08 May, 2023".

It is essential that you adhere closely to the procedures in the approved application and documents. If you see the need to change any of the approved processes or documents, you need to apply to this committee for an amendment to the approved application before proceeding with changed action.

May we also remind you that researchers who contravene the approved processes and documentation may face disciplinary action.

We wish you well as you proceed with your research.

Allan Harkness
Chair
Human Participants Ethics Panel
AGST Alliance

Email: ethics@agstalliance.org

HPEP application form (example)



AGST Alliance

Human Participants Research Ethics Application

You require ethics clearance if you propose to use living human participants in research, and/or research data which are not accessible in the public domain.

Ethics clearance must be obtained before you commence data collection for your research.

Ensure your answers are concise but clear. The members of the Human Research Ethics Panel may not have the same background as you have for your area of study, so write in plain English.

- Avoid jargon.
- Define technical terms.
- Write acronyms out in full the first time they appear in this application and in other documents.

As you prepare this form, refer to the AGST Alliance *Ethics Clearance and Informed Consent* guidelines.

When your application is completed, upload the form into the Ethics section in EdBrite, and email that you have done so to:

The Chair
AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel
ethics@agstalliance.org

If you have questions about aspects of this application form, contact:

The Chair
AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel
ethics@agstalliance.org

SECTION A: PERSONNEL

A1 Researcher's name: Charis Shallum

A2 Contact details:

Email: C.Shallum@eirene.edu. Phone: (69) 123-456-79

A3 Researcher's role:

Student Faculty Other ()

If you are a student:

Program enrolled in: DMin

Name of supervisor: Dr Luke Cospell

Supervisor's email: L.Cospell@eirene.edu. Phone: (69) 778-456-22

A4 Is your research being supervised or reviewed by an appropriately qualified person?

Yes | No

If 'no', explain.

SECTION B: RESEARCH FOCUS AND DESIGN

B1 Research project title

Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship

B2 Research project plain title (English)

If different from B1, for inclusion in material provided to research participants.

B3 Aims/objectives of the research project

Describe the purpose, research question(s)/hypotheses and objectives of your research project

The objective of my research is to review the effectiveness of the orientation courses for new mission partners of the World Challenge Fellowship (WCF) for spiritual formation which helps their resilience on the field. This has arisen because the last review of the orientation course was in 2010, and WCF leaders are hearing from members that they are really struggling to cope in their field ministry roles, and are seeing a number of burn-out situations. So a thorough review has been requested by the WCF board.

My specific research questions are:

1. What are the key components of spiritual formation which encourage resilience in intercultural Christian workers?
2. What aspects of the WCF orientation course either enhance or lessen resilience in participants in their field placements?
3. What recommendations may be made for the orientation course processes and content so as to enhance spiritual formation for maximising potential for resilience in new WCF members as they head to their field placements?

B4 Summary of the research project

Provide a summary of your project, including placing it in perspective with existing research or practice.

The need for research in the area I'm exploring has been highlighted in recent articles on the topic of resilience in mission partners in majority world settings (e.g. Wong 2022, Casey and Strong 2020, and Arcenas 2019). It was also a major focus at the 2022 inter-missions agencies Resilience in Challenging Contexts conference in Thailand.

My project is using qualitative research methodology. My findings will be reported in my DMin dissertation, which will later form the basis of a report to the WCF board, with recommendations on how the WCF new member orientation course might be revised to ensure it is really fit for purpose for the next 5 years.

B5 Research project data collection duration

Estimate how long you expect it will take for your data collection. The start date is when your application is approved.

3 months.

B6 Description of the research design

Describe what will happen during the project – the data collection process, time line, interventions and/or measures, etc.

I plan to interview up to 15 actively serving members of WCF, both male and female, on their experience when they participated in the WCF orientation course over the last 5 years. I will then undertake coding and thematic analysis of the data. Interviews may be conducted either in person or via the internet (given the scattered locations of many of the eligible WCF members). Data analysis and writing up my dissertation is likely to take 18 months.

B7 Methods to be used for obtaining information:

List all the methods you plan to use.

Interviews Yes | No

If 'yes', attach a list of proposed interview questions to your application.

Focus groups Yes | No

If 'yes', attach the Focus Group questions to your application.

Questionnaires/surveys Yes | No

If 'yes', attach the questionnaire/survey to your application.

• If a questionnaire is to be used, is it internet-based? Yes | No

• If a questionnaire is to be used, is it an anonymous questionnaire? Yes | No

If 'yes', indicate how anonymity will be preserved.

Observations Yes | No

If 'yes', explain how you will use observations, and attach an observation schedule to your application.

Action research Yes | No

If 'yes', explain.

Existing data Yes | No

For example, from existing records or databases. If 'yes', explain.

Other (specify) Yes | No

If 'yes', explain.

B8 Who will carry out the research data collection procedures?

I (Charis).

B9 Where will the research data collection procedures take place?

If permission is required to conduct the data collection at a specific location, please attach an appropriate Participant Information Sheet and consent form, or a support letter, to your application.

I plan to conduct the interviews at a time and location mutually agreed by the participants and me. With participants' permission, the interviews will be audio-recorded. If distance or other restrictions (e.g. COVID) prevent face-to-face interviews, I will use an internet-based medium (e.g. WhatsApp, Zoom or Skype). In-person interviews will take place in a public space (e.g. a quiet café).

B10 Do you have a role or position in the institution/setting from which your research participants will be drawn?

Yes | No

If 'yes', name and briefly describe that role.

I am a member of WCF, and have been the Orientation Course supervisor for the last three years.

B11 Does the research involve a conflict of interest for you the researcher (or appear to others to be a conflict of interest)?

Yes | No

If 'yes', explain, and describe how do you plan to minimise the possibility.

As both a member of WCF and Orientation Course supervisor, I have a vested interest in the findings of this research. To lessen any sense of coercion of participants, a senior WCF administrator will email information about the research to WCF members who completed the orientation course in the last five years, asking them to reply back to me if they are willing to participate. Two WCF members who fit the inclusion criteria work closely with me in my department, but I will not interview them.

SECTION C: RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

C1 Who are the participants in the research?

Adults Yes | No

Children or young people Yes | No

under the age of majority in your country

(typically under 18 years old)

If 'yes', explain in Section E2 and E3.

Pastors or church workers Yes | No

Members of a church Yes | No

Seminary students Yes | No

If 'yes', you will need to provide approval from the seminary leadership.

People who are in a dependent situation (e.g. with a disability, patients in a hospital, other) Yes | No

If 'yes', explain in E2 and E3.

People with whom you have a special relationship (e.g. colleagues, family or friends)? Yes | No

If 'yes', explain if you will collect information of a personal nature, and/or whether participants will be able to be identified.

Those being interviewed are fellow-members in WCF, and many will have been in an orientation course I facilitated. The interview questions relate to their experience on how the orientation course was run and how helpful it was for their field ministry placements. Some of the information they share could be quite personal, but in my reports I will ensure they are not identifiable.

Other Yes | No

If 'yes', specify who they are.

C2 How many participants will be involved in your research?

Up to 15 participants.

C3 How much time will the participants need to give to the research?

The interviews will take up to 1 hour. If participants wish to view their interview transcript, that may take 30-40 minutes.

C4 How will you identify potential participants and invite them to take part in your research?

Attach copies of any advertisement, email or letter text you plan to use.

Invitations will go to all the adult participants in the WCF orientation courses 2018-2022. An email will be sent to them by a senior WCF administrator, with the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form attached.

C5 Will access to participants be gained with permission/consent of any organisation? Yes | No

If 'yes', explain, and attach an appropriate Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, or a support letter.

The International Director of WCF will need to give his permission for me to conduct the research among the members. See the attached letter draft to him.

C6 Will information on the participants be obtained from a third party (i.e. people other than the participants)? Yes | No

If 'yes', explain.

C7 Will participants receive any payment, reimbursement or other benefit from participating in the research? Yes | No

If 'yes', detail the level of payment/benefit.

There will be no direct benefit from participating. Participants won't receive any financial benefit, but a token of my appreciation I will give them a copy of Hwa Yung's 'Leadership or Servanthood'. I will pay for refreshments for in-person interviews at a café. I will send a summary of my research to participants if they request it, and/or a link to my dissertation when it has passed.

SECTION D: SOCIO-CULTURAL ISSUES

D1 Does the research involve participation of people selected on the basis of their ethnic origin? Yes | No
If 'yes', identify the group and explain.

D2 Are there any aspects of the research that might raise specific social and/or cultural issues (e.g. relating to cultural ethical values, informed consent, etc.)? Yes | No
If 'yes', explain. For example, what consultation is required with the group(s), their support for your research, and how you will inform them of the results of your research.

It is possible that some of the participants (especially of Asian ethnicity) will be a bit reluctant to provide the sort of critical comments that come more naturally from those of other ethnicities. I have structured the interview questions to take this possibility into account.

SECTION E: INFORMATION AND CONSENT

E1 How and by whom will information about the research be given to potential participants?
 A senior WCF administrator will email people in the target group, with a copy of the PIS and CF. My research will also be mentioned in one of the monthly all-member bulletins sent from WCF HQ.

E2 How and by whom will consent for participation be obtained?
For example, written consent, assent form for children, guardian's consent, voluntary response to an anonymous survey, verbal consent; and obtained by the researcher, a colleague, or someone else.
 Written consent will be obtained. I will request it at the start of each interview, after I've ascertained that the interviewee is fully aware of what participation entails. Those being interviewed via the internet will be asked at the beginning of the interview for their consent, followed up by a scanned, signed copy of the CF.

E3 What language(s) will be used for the participant information and consent documents, permission requests, etc.?
 English only.

E4 Will the participants have difficulty giving informed consent on their own behalf? Yes | No
Consider mental or physical capacity, age, language, or other barriers. If 'yes', explain.

E5 Does the research involve participants giving oral consent rather than written consent? Yes | No
If 'yes', explain.

E6 What period will you allow for participants to change their mind about involvement and/or their data being used?
 Participants can stop the interview at any time without needing to give a reason. Then, the recording will be erased and their data not used. They will have up to two weeks after the interview (or up to two weeks after receiving the interview transcript) to request to withdraw from the study and that their data not be used.

E7: Is access to the consent forms restricted to the researcher and/or supervisor? Yes | No
If 'no', explain who else may have access to them.

E8 How will consent forms be stored securely?
 Paper copies will be scanned and then destroyed. Soft copies will be stored on my password protected and encrypted computer.

SECTION F: STORAGE AND USE OF RESULTS

F1 Will the participants be recorded (audio or video)? Yes | No
If 'yes', indicate the type(s) of recording.
 Audio recording of in-person interviews. On-line interviews (e.g. on Zoom) might be video recorded (as the only option available).

F1a Will the recordings be transcribed or translated? Yes | No
If 'yes', who will transcribe/translate the recordings? If a third party is involved in transcribing/ translating, they should sign a Confidentiality Agreement.
 Sally McQuarie (a non-WCF friend) will transcribe the interviews.

F1b If recordings are made, will participants be offered the opportunity to edit the transcripts of the recordings? Yes | No
If 'yes', explain the process.
 Those who request to do so will be sent a copy of the transcript, and may edit it.

F2 How will the data be used?
For example, in a thesis/dissertation, journal article, other publication, conference presentation.
 In my DMin dissertation, in a report to the WCF board, and perhaps in a journal article and conference presentations.

F3 Will the participants be identified or identifiable in any report/publication about the research? Yes | No

F4 Will information on your research findings be made available to participants? Yes | No
If 'yes', explain how and when. For example, will participants be offered their recordings and/or transcripts, a summary of the research, etc.?
 I will offer a summary to participants. They will also be given access to my full dissertation once completed and passed.

F5 How will the data (including any recordings) be stored, and for how long?
 Paper copies of the CFs will be destroyed straight after they have been digitised. The recordings and soft copy consent forms will be kept for two years after I submit my dissertation. The data will be de-identified and kept indefinitely.

F6 How will the data (including recordings, consent forms, etc.) be destroyed?
 Paper copies of the CFs will be shredded. Digital copies of the recordings and CFs will be deleted from my computer harddrive.

F7 Who will own the data and results of your research?
 I will own the data and results.

SECTION G: RISKS AND BENEFITS

G1 What are the possible benefits to participants by taking part in your research?

No direct benefit to participants. However, they will likely be encouraged that their input could make the orientation course experience more beneficial for future WCF members.

G2 Is the research likely to place the participants and/or you as researcher at risk of harm beyond that normally encountered in everyday life?

Yes | No

For example, psychological, emotional, social, spiritual, legal harm, etc.

If 'yes', explain, and detail the safeguards put in place to minimise the risk of harm.

There are unlikely to be unusual risks or vulnerability. However, it is possible some of the questions could lead to distress and/or negative emotions. If any distress is shown, the interview will stop, and if necessary I will refer the participant to possible assistance or counselling options.

G3 Does the research involve processes that potentially could disadvantage a person or group?

Yes | No

For example, collecting information which may expose the person/group to discrimination.

If 'yes', explain.

G4 Does the research involve deceiving the participants, or lack of full disclosure to them?

Yes | No

If 'yes', give a justification, and note how you will limit the impact (e.g. debriefing).

G5 Will your data be kept confidential?

Yes | No

If 'yes', explain how you will protect the confidentiality of identifiable data.

Only me, my supervisor and transcriber will know who has participated, and only we will have access to their data. Pseudonyms will be given to participants in the transcripts and reporting of the data.

G6 Will you anonymise your data?

Yes | No

If 'yes', explain how you will ensure your data is anonymised.

Data kept long term will be de-identified (by name and any other potentially identifying details)

G7 Does your research raise privacy issues?

Yes | No

If 'yes', explain.

G8 Is it possible that your research could give rise to incidental findings or adverse events?

Yes | No

If 'yes', explain, and describe how you will manage the situation.

SECTION H: ETHICAL ISSUES

Summarise how the ethical issues arising for your research will be resolved.

For example anonymity and confidentiality, informed consent, participant's right to withdraw, conflict of interest, social and cultural sensitivity, minimisation of harm, privacy, incidental findings, etc.

1. Anonymity/confidentiality: Participation and responses will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in any reporting of the data.
2. All participants will give informed consent. They have the right to withdraw at any time.
3. Potential conflict of interest is recognised, and addressed by using an independent person to invite people to participate.
4. I'm alert to possible ethnic sensitivity on the part of some participants.

SECTION I: APPLICATION DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

- Have you attached a participant information sheet(s)? Yes | No
- Have you attached a consent/assent form(s)? Yes | No
- Have you attached any advertisement, invitation letter or letter to churches/organisations? Yes | No
- Have you attached any questionnaires, interview questions, and/or focus group questions? Yes | No
- Have you attached a transcribe/translator confidentiality agreement? Yes | No
- Have you attached other necessary supporting documents? Yes | No

SECTION J: CERTIFICATION

I certify that my research will be conducted in accordance with this ethics application.

Researcher's name/signature: Charis Shallum

Your name is sufficient if this form is submitted as soft copy.

If the researcher is a student, the supervisor needs to certify this application.

I certify that I have read this application and consider it to be complete.

Supervisor's name/signature: Luke Cospell

Your name is sufficient if this form is submitted as soft copy.

Date of application (dd/mm/yyyy): 23/4/2023

The content of this application form has been drawn and adapted from numerous sources. Special acknowledgement goes to the National Healthcare Group (Singapore) and University of Auckland (New Zealand) for their comprehensive human participant research ethics resources.

Participant information sheet (PIS)

The PIS is an essential element in the process of obtaining informed consent from participants. The purpose of the PIS is to give enough detail so that prospective participants can make an informed decision about taking part, or not taking part, in the research.

- The PIS needs to be a stand-alone document that potential participants can take away to share with others and consider in their own time and place.
- Use language in the PIS that is easy-to-understand (non-technical) and appropriate to the participants (for example, to their age and expected knowledge of the subject).
- Avoid jargon and academic terms as much as possible.
- The PIS needs to contain sufficient information for potential participants to understand the key aspects of what the research is about and what it will entail for them.
- Write the PIS in the first and second person (that is, 'I' and 'you'), as if you (the researcher) are addressing prospective participants.
- Where consent is required from participants whose main language is not English, the PIS should be translated into a language that the participants can readily understand.

PIS (template)

Information to include in the participant information sheet includes these elements:

1. Heading information

Include 'Participant Information Sheet' and the project title.

Participant Information Sheet [Project title]

2. Who is carrying out the research project?

Include the name of the researcher and appropriate identifying information. If you are a student, include the name of the degree for which the research is being undertaken and the name and position of your supervisor(s)

This research project is being conducted by [your name and position] and will form the basis for the degree of [degree undertaken] through AGST Alliance under the supervision of [name of supervisor and position].

3. What is the research about?

Invite potential participants to be involved in your research. State the rationale and aims for the project, in non-technical language appropriate for the readers. Explain *why* (the criteria they need to meet) and *how* (the selection method) they have been selected to be invited. Emphasise that their participation is voluntary.

4. What does participation involve?

Describe, in lay terms, the procedures the participants will undertake if they participate in your research (e.g. questionnaires, surveys, focus groups, interviews). Give the location of interviews/focus groups. Indicate whether any of the procedures may reasonably be expected to cause distress or discomfort.

If appropriate (e.g. if participants are students in a course or staff of an organisation are participants), state that a person in authority in the school/college or organisation has given an assurance that participation or non-participation in the research will not affect participants' grades, employment or relationships.

[Name of leader] *has given an assurance that your participation or non-participation in this research will not affect your [relationships, role, employment, grades, etc. as appropriate] in [name of institution/organisation/church].*

5. How much time will participation take?

Explain the length of time involvement for participants in the research, e.g. the time to complete questionnaire/surveys, time allocated for interviews/focus groups.

6. Can I withdraw from the research?

Participants have the right to withdraw from participation at any time without giving a reason. They also have the right to withdraw their data from the research up to a specified date or period of time. (Note: Participants cannot withdraw their data from focus groups or anonymous questionnaires/surveys.)

Being in this research is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to consent and, if you do consent, you can withdraw from the research at any time without needing to give a reason. You also have the right to withdraw your responses from the research up to [a date or period of time, e.g. 'up to two weeks after the interview', or 'up to two weeks after you receive the transcript of the interview.'].

[Additional paragraph for interviews]

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, without giving a reason, and the information you have provided will not be included in the research.

[Paragraph for focus groups]

You may refuse to answer any questions, and are free to leave the focus group at any time, without giving a reason. However, because of the nature of the group situation, information you have contributed up to that point cannot be withdrawn, because to do so will affect the meaning of the contribution of the other participants.

[Paragraph for named/identifiable questionnaires/surveys if there is no consent form]

Being in this research is completely voluntary and you are not under any obligation to consent to complete the [questionnaire/survey]. Submitting a completed [questionnaire/survey] is an indication of your consent to participate in the research. You can withdraw any time prior to submitting your completed [questionnaire/survey].

[Paragraph for anonymous questionnaires/surveys]

Being in this research is completely voluntary and you are not under any obligation to consent to complete the [questionnaire/survey]. Submitting a completed [questionnaire/survey] is an indication of your consent to participate in the research. You can withdraw any time prior to submitting your completed [questionnaire/survey]. Once you have submitted your [questionnaire/survey], your response cannot be withdrawn because I won't know which your response is.

[Paragraph for parents/guardians in research with children]

If you decide to permit your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your child's participation at any time.

7. Is recording involved?

If recording (audio and/or video) is involved, this should be indicated. For interviews, include a statement that the participant has the right to have the device turned off at any point. If being recording is optional, say so.

The interview will be [audio/video] recorded. You can stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, the [audio/video] recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the research.

[For focus groups]

The focus group discussion will be [audio/video] recorded. The recording can't be stopped during the discussion, as it is recording a conversation with a number of participants.

8. Will anyone else know the results?

Ensure participants are clear which of these options apply:

- The participants' identity is anonymous – the researcher does not know who the participants are.
- The participants are known to the researchers and their supervisors, but their data is anonymised so that no one can link data back to the participants.
- The names and details of the participants are known to the researchers and their supervisors, but the participants' identity and their data won't be known by others.
- The names and details of the participants are known to the researchers and their supervisors, as well as to others (e.g. in a focus group).

If the research involves focus groups, interviews with a small number of participants from a particular setting, or interviews with well-known leaders or members of a community, indicate that confidentiality with respect to the identity of the participants cannot be guaranteed.

Possible statements include these:

All aspects of the research, including results, will be strictly confidential and only me and my supervisor will have access to information on participants [If applicable to your study, insert the phrase 'except as required by law' (without the '...')].

A report of the research may be submitted for publication, but you will not be named and none of the information you give will identify you in the report.

Confidentiality of any data you give in the focus group cannot be guaranteed. However, any data you provide will be kept in confidence by me and my supervisor, and participants in the focus group will be asked not to talk about the content of the focus group.

All aspects of the research, including results, will be kept confidential by me and my supervisor. However, due to [the small numbers of participants, and/or from a particular setting, etc.] it may be possible for some people to guess the source of comments and quotations in my written reports.

9. What will happen to the data collected?

Explain here how long, where and in what format the collected data will be stored and (later) destroyed. State if the data is to be retained beyond the end of the research, and give a reason why.

10. Will the research benefit me? (if so, in what way?)

State objectively the likely benefit of participation in the research. Avoid overstating possible benefits.

11. Do I receive any reimbursement for my participation?

Give details of any compensation or reimbursements offered to participants. Include any refreshments offered during an interview or focus group.

12. Can I tell other people about the research?

State if you prefer that participants not talk about the research and their participation to others, and until what time period.

13. What if I require further information?

Include an invitation to the participant to contact you (and/or your supervisor) if they have questions or concerns about participating and/or about aspects of the research. Include names and contact email and phone number.

To protect you as a researcher, it may be appropriate for you to set up a new, dedicated email account and/or mobile phone/WhatsApp number for your research rather than using your personal email address and phone number.

If you would like more information or have any questions answered before you make your decision whether to participate, please contact me at [contact telephone number] and/or email me at [email address].

14. What if I have any concerns?

Provide details of the Human Participants Ethics Panel so that participants can contact someone independent of your research if they have concerns or complaints.

If you would like to discuss your participation in this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving this research project.

15. Sign off

[INSERT your full name and address.]

16. Add approval wording

At the bottom of the PIS (and on all documents made available to participants), add this text:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on [date].

17. Final sentence

Finally, add this sentence to the bottom of the PIS:

This information sheet is for you to keep.

* * * * *

PIS for interview (example)

Participant Information Sheet

Project Title:

Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship.

Who is carrying out this research project?

This project is being conducted by me, Charis Shallum, as part of my Doctor of Ministry degree through Eirene Seminary, under the supervision of Dr Luke Cospell.

What is the research about?

The objective of the research is to review the effectiveness of the orientation courses for new mission partners of the World Challenge Fellowship (WCF) for spiritual formation which helps resilience for them on the field. You are invited to participate in the research because, as a member of WCF, you completed one of the orientation courses in the past five years.

Your participation will be voluntary. You don't have to participate if you don't want to.

What does participation involve?

If you choose to participate, you will be interviewed about your experience when you undertook your WCF orientation course. The interview will take about one hour, and will be at a time and in a place to suit each participant. If a face-to-face interview is difficult, it may be conducted by an internet medium (e.g. WhatsApp or Zoom). You will be given the opportunity to review and edit the transcript of your interview.

The interview will relate to aspects of the way the orientation course was run. The questions are unlikely to cause you discomfort. But if any of the questions do distress you, the interview can be paused. Also, I will be able to refer you to someone competent to help you work through the thoughts and feelings aroused.

Can you withdraw from the research?

Being in this research is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to consent to participate. If you do consent, you can withdraw from the research at any time without needing to give a reason.

You may stop the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue, and the information you have provided will not be included in the research.

Will participation affect your relationships/role in WCF?

Dr Will Blessing, the International Director of WCF, has given an assurance that your participation or non-participation will not affect your relationships and role in WCF.

Will the interview be recorded?

With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded. If you stop the interview the recording will be erased and the information will not be included in the research.

Will anyone else know the results?

Your participation and insights will be kept confidential. Only me, my supervisor and the person who will transcribe the recordings will have access to your information. My research will appear in my DMin dissertation, in a report to the WCF Board, and possibly other reports and presentations, but you will not be named and none of the information you give will identify you.

What will happen to the data collected?

The audio recording and soft-copy transcripts will be kept on my password protected and encrypted computer. The recording will be deleted two years after I complete my DMin program. The interview transcripts will be stored indefinitely but interviewees will be given pseudonyms.

How will the research benefit me?

You will not benefit directly from participating. However, your insights are likely to contribute to recommendations for enhancing the quality of the WCF orientation courses, and so better equip new mission partners for their service.

Do I receive any compensation/reimbursement for my participation?

You won't receive any financial benefit from your participation. As an expression of my gratitude for your participation I will offer you a copy of Hwa Yung's *Leadership or Servanthood*. I will provide refreshments during the interview if we have it in a cafe. If you are interested, I will send you a summary of my research and/or a link to the full dissertation after it is passed.

Can I tell other people about the research?

You may talk with others about your participation in this research.

What if I require further information?

If you would like more information or have any questions answered to help you make your decision whether to participate, please contact me at 012-3456789, and/or email me Charis.Shallum@EireneSeminary.edu.

What if I have concerns about my participation?

If you would like to discuss your participation in this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving this research project.

Thank you for considering participating in my research.

Charis Shallum
34 Burny Drive
Khomsai, 3423

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 08 May 2023.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

* * * * *

PIS for on-line anonymous questionnaire (example)

Note: no separate consent form is required for an on-line questionnaire/survey like this, as consent is implied when the completed questionnaire/survey is submitted. This information appears at the start of the questionnaire/survey.

Before you complete this questionnaire please read this information about it.

Project Title: An investigation into the continuing learning experiences of Manchani State Baptist pastors, with particular reference to their use of andragogical practices.

Thank you for your willingness to consider participating in this on-line questionnaire.

This project is being conducted by me, Samson Neeson, as part of my Doctor of Ministry degree through Eirene Seminary, under the supervision of Dr Paul Winsome.

The aim of this research is to investigate how Baptist pastors in Manchani State continue to learn after their seminary training, especially if they use ways adults especially learn. You are invited to participate in this project because you are an actively serving Manchani State Baptist pastor.

This questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You can stop filling in the questionnaire at any question, and not submit it. Clicking SUBMIT at the end of the questionnaire implies your consent to participate. If you complete and submit the questionnaire, you will not be able to withdraw your data as it is anonymous, and I won't know which one is your response.

All aspects of my study will be strictly confidential and only my supervisor and I will have access to information given by the participants. Because the questionnaire responses are anonymous, none of the information you give will identify you in any reports.

The data collected from the questionnaires will be analysed and used in my dissertation and other reports or presentations. The data will be kept in my computer, which is password protected and encrypted, and will be deleted from my computer after five years.

You may not benefit immediately from participating in this project. However, your insights are likely to contribute to recommendations for enhancing ongoing pastoral development among Baptist pastors. You may talk to others about your participation in this research.

There is no direct reimbursement to you for your participation. But I am happy to send you a summary of my research if you indicate your interest in receiving it. Please email your request for a copy to me at Samson.Neeson@EireneSeminary.edu.

Dr Garos Woodsman, President of the Baptist Union, has given an assurance that your participation or non-participation in my research project will not affect your relationships and role in the Union.

If you would like more information or have any questions answered before you make your decision whether to participate, please contact me at 012-345-6789, or email me Samson.Neeson@EireneSeminary.edu.

If you would like to discuss your participation in this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving this study.

Thank you for considering participating in my research.

Samson Neeson

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 08 March 2024.

* * * * *

Consent form for research participants (CF)

Usually written consent is required from potential participants before they provide data.

- The consent form includes acknowledgement by the participants that they have read and understood the PIS, and a specific statement of agreement to participate.
- It also states any other issues requiring specific consent. It may include statements explicitly acknowledging understanding of significant aspects of the research.
- No information should appear in the CF which is not included in the PIS.
- Simplified versions of a CF are used (titled 'Assent Form') for recording children's assent to participate.
- Try to keep the CF to one page.

The signed consent form is retained by the researcher and safely stored (separate from the research data) for the stated duration of the research and its data.

Anonymous questionnaires/surveys do not require signing of a consent form, as the submission of the questionnaire/survey is taken as consent to participate.

If verbal consent is sought, this must be explained in the application. In this case, there must be a procedure for documenting that consent has been obtained.

CF (template)

Consent Form

Project title:

Name of Researcher:

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand the nature of the research, why I have been invited to participate, and what my participation will require. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and that I can stop being part of the research at any time, without needing to give a reason.
- I am free to withdraw my contribution up to *[date /period of time]*
- [If recordings are made]* I agree to *[audio/video]* recording of the interview. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the *[audio/video]* recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the research.
- [For focus groups]* I understand that I can stop my participation in the focus group at any time if I do not wish to continue. But recording of the discussion cannot be stopped and information I have contributed cannot be withdrawn.
- [For focus groups]* I agree to not disclose anything discussed in the focus group.
- I understand that everything I say is confidential. The only people who will know what I have said will be the researcher and the supervisor *[and the person transcribing the data]*.

- [Name of leader]* has given an assurance that my participation or non-participation in this study will not affect my *[relationships, role, employment, grades, etc.]* in *[name of institution/organisation/church]*.
- I wish / do not wish (circle one) to receive a transcript of my interview for editing. *[Include if appropriate, and include a space below to provide an email or postal address. Note that it is not usual for focus group participants to be offered a transcript for editing.]*
- I wish / do not wish (circle one) to receive the summary of findings of the research. *[Include if appropriate, and include a space below to provide an email or postal address.]*

Name:

Signature:

Date:

[If appropriate] Email/postal address of participant, if a transcript and/or summary is requested:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

CF for interview (example)

Consent form

Project Title: Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship

Name of Researcher: Charis Shallum

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand the nature of the research, why I have been invited to participate, and what my participation will require. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, and that I can stop being part of the research if I don't want to be involved further without needing to give a reason.
- I agree to audio or video (if internet-based) recording of the interview. I understand that I can stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, the recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the research.
- I understand that everything I say is confidential. The only people who will know what I have said will be the researcher, her supervisor and the person transcribing the interview.
- I am free to withdraw my contribution up to two weeks after the interview or two weeks after I receive the transcript, without needing to give a reason.
- I have been given an assurance by the WCF International Director that my participation or non-participation in this research will not affect my role and relationships in WCF.
- I wish / do not wish (circle one) to receive a transcript of my interview for editing.
- I wish / do not wish (circle one) to receive the summary of findings of the research.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Email of Participant (if you wish to receive a summary of the research findings):

Invitation and request letters

Invitation from researcher to potential participants (template)

Date:

Dear ...,

May I request your assistance, by *[completing a short [anonymous] survey, being interviewed, participating in a focus group]*.

I am a participant in the *[name of program]* program of AGST Alliance. My supervisor is *[name]*. As part of my program, I am undertaking *[a research project entitled "[name of research]"; or: a research project exploring [a brief description of the focus of the research].]*

My research requires the views of participants who are *[list the criteria for participation]*.

[If a paper-based survey] Because you are in this category, I invite you to participate in my research, by completing the attached survey. Read the survey carefully and answer all the questions with as much detail as possible. Then, return your completed survey to me in the envelope provided before *[date]*. *[or: Then, please place your completed survey in the sealed box at the administrator's office before [date].]*

[If an on-line survey] Because you are in this category, I invite you to participate in my research by completing an on-line survey. Please go to this link: *[link]*. Read the survey carefully and answer all the questions in as much detail as possible. Please complete the survey by *[date]*.

[If an interview] Because you are in this category, I invite you to participate in my research by being interviewed by me. The interview will take *[time involved]*, and will be conducted *[location, on-line, ...]*.

[If a focus group] Because you are in this category, I invite you to participate in a focus group discussion. The focus group will take *[time involved]*, and will be conducted *[location, on-line, ...]*.

[If names and identifying details of respondents are known to the researcher] Your participation in my research is completely voluntary, and you will be able to withdraw at any time. The information you give will be kept confidential to me and my supervisor: Your name and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing. *[For a focus group: Members of the focus group will be asked not to talk with others about the discussion.]*

[If the survey is anonymous] Your participation in my research is completely voluntary. Once you have submitted your form you will not be able to withdraw your data, because we will not know which is your survey form.

[Name of leader] has given an assurance that your participation or non-participation in my research will not affect your *[relationships, employment, etc.]* in *[name of institution/church]*.

A detailed participation information sheet is attached to this *[email, letter]*. If you would like more information to help you decide whether to participate, or if you have questions about this request, please contact me at *[phone no.]* or email *[xx@yyyy.zzz]*.

I am grateful for your valuable time, and hope that you will agree to participate.

Yours faithfully,
[Researcher's signature]

[Researcher's name]

Invitation from organisational leader/administrator to potential participants (template)

Date:

Dear ...,

May I request your assistance, by considering participating in a research project.

[name of researcher] is a participant in the *[name of program]* program of AGST Alliance. As part of *[his/her]* program, *[he/she]* is undertaking *[a research project entitled "[name of research]"; or: a research project exploring [a brief description of the focus of the research].]*

This research requires the views of participants who are *[list the criteria for participation]*. Because you are in this category, you are invited to participate in *[name of researcher's]* research.

Your participation in the survey will entail *[interview, survey, focus group, etc.]*. It is completely voluntary and your participation and the views you express *[will be kept confidential by the researcher; or, will be anonymous]*.

[I give my assurance; or: [leader's name] has given an assurance] that your participation or non-participation in this research will not affect your *[relationships, roles, ministry]* in *[name of church/organisation]*.

A detailed participation information sheet is attached to this *[email, letter]*. If you would like to participate or if you would like further information to help you decide, please contact *[name of researcher]* directly. *[Her/his]* contact details are: *[email, mobile, whatsapp, etc.]*.

[Alternatively, for an on-line survey:

If you would like to participate, go to [this link](#) for further details and to complete the survey. If you would like further information to help you decide, please contact *[name of researcher]* directly. *[Her/his]* contact details are: *[email, mobile, whatsapp, etc.]*.]

Thank you for considering participating in this research.

Yours faithfully,

[Name of pastor/church leader, or administrator]

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

Invitation from organisation administrator to potential participants (example)

02 August 2023

Dear WCF member,

I am writing this email to inform you about a research project, and to invite you to consider participating in it.

Charis Shallum, our Orientation Course supervisor, is undertaking a DMin at Eirene Seminary. Her supervisor is Dr Luke Cospell. As part of her program, she is working on a research project entitled 'Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship.'

This project requires the views of members who participated in the WCF orientation course over the last five years. As you are one of those members, you are invited to be interviewed by Charis about your experience when you went through the course. Interviews will last about one hour, and will be either in person or on-line.

Your participation will be totally voluntary. Dr Will Blessing, our International Director, has given his assurance that your participation or non-participation in Charis' research will not affect your relationships and roles in WCF.

I have attached a copy of the research Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form which gives further details about what participation will entail.

If you are interested to participate, or to find out more, please contact Charis directly: C.Shallum@eirene.edu (Tel. +69-123-456-79).

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

In Christian Fellowship,

[Name]

WCF Administrator

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 08 May 2023.

Letter of request to use organisation members as participants (template)

Date:

Dear ...,

May I request your permission to invite *[the members of (name of the group, e.g. two of the adult education classes)] [or those holding particular roles, e.g. elders, staff]* in *[church/organisation]* to participate in a research project I am conducting.

I am a participant in the *[name of program]* program of AGST Alliance. My supervisor is *[name]*. As part of my program, I am working on a research project entitled "*[name of project]*." This project requires the views of participants in *[setting, e.g. local church adult education classes or congregation; and other selection criteria]*.

Participants will be required to *[complete a survey, be interviewed, participate in a focus group, etc.]*

Participation will be voluntary. At any time up until *[date or marker point]* they may withdraw from the research and ask that their contribution not be included in my research. The information participants give will be kept confidential *[or anonymous]*: their names and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing.

[If appropriate, include a request that someone from the church e.g. the pastor or administrator make the initial contact with potential participants.]

If you allow your members to participate in my research, I would appreciate an assurance that their participation or non-participation in my research will not affect their *[relationships, employment, etc. as appropriate]* in *[name of institution/church]*.

The attached Participant Information Sheet gives fuller details about participation. If you would like more information before you make your decision about whether to allow your members to participate, or you have questions about this request, please contact me at *[phone no.]* or email *[xx@yyyy.zzz]*.

If you would like to discuss participation in this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving this research project.

If you are interested to receive a summary of the results of my research *[and/or, receive a copy of my dissertation]*, I will send it to you at the conclusion of my research.

I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

In Christian fellowship,

[Researcher's signature]

[Researcher's name]

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

Letter of request to use organisation members as participants (example)

25 July 2023

Dear Dr Blessing,

May I request your permission to invite members of WCF to participate in a research project I am conducting.

As you know, I am undertaking my DMin at Eirene Seminary. My supervisor is Dr Luke Cospell. As part of my program, I am working on a research project entitled 'Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship.'

This project requires the views of WCF members who participated in the WCF orientation course over the last five years. I plan to interview up to 15 of them about their experience when they went through the course. Interviews will last about one hour, and will be either in person or on-line.

Participation by any member will be voluntary. To lessen any sense of coercion, I will ask a senior administrator to send an email of invitation to the WCF members who fit the criteria for my study, asking them to respond back to me if they are interested in participating.

At any time up until I have processed the data participants may request that their data not be used. The information participants give in their interview will be kept confidential to me, my supervisor and the transcriber of the interview recordings: their names and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing.

If you allow WCF members to participate in my research, I would appreciate an assurance that their participation or non-participation in my research will not affect their relationships and roles in WCF.

At the end of my research, I will send it to you a summary, and a copy of my dissertation.

If you would like more information before you make your decision about my request please contact me at 0123-456-79.

If you would like to discuss aspects of this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving my study.

I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

In Christian Fellowship,

Charis

Charis Shallum

(C.Shallum@eirene.edu)

Confidentiality agreement

Confidentiality agreement (template)

[For someone other than the researcher/supervisor who has access to the research data, e.g. to transcribe a recorded interview, collate questionnaire data, etc.]

Project title:

Researcher:

- I agree to *[transcribe the audio/video recordings; collate the data; etc.]* for this research project.
- I understand that all the research material that I have access to is confidential, and I will not discuss it with anyone other than the researcher and *[his/her]* supervisor.
- When I have completed my task I will delete any copies I have made as part of my work for this research.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

* * * * *

Confidentiality agreement (example)

Confidentiality agreement

**Project Title: Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation courses
for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship**

Researcher: Charis Shallum

- I agree to transcribe the interview recordings for this research project.
- I understand that all the research material that I have access to is confidential, and I must not discuss it with anyone other than the researcher and her supervisor.
- When I have completed my task I will delete any copies I have made as part of the process.

Name of transcriber:

Signature:

Date:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 08 May 2023.

* * * * *

Interview/focus group question guides

Semi-structured interview question guide (example)

Semi-structured Interview Process & Questions

Introductions

- Welcome & thanks for participation.
- Use consent form points to highlight key elements of the interview process (same as the PIS).
- Any questions?
- Get consent form signed

Key indicative questions

1. What has been your experience on the field in terms of having the resources and energy to 'keep going' in your role and relationships (i.e. resilience)?
 - a. What strategies have you adopted to build resilience?
 - b. Focus in on spiritual formation aspects.
2. Think back to your time on the orientation course...
 - a. What elements of the OC process and content helped you 'keep going' as you settled into, and established, your field role?
 - b. What elements of the OC process and content actually made it more difficult for you to settle into your field role and 'keep going'.
3. What suggestions do you have about how the OC process and content might maximise potential for resilience in new WCF members as they head to their field placements?
 - a. Focus in on spiritual formation aspects.
4. Is there anything else you would like to share on the topic?

Prompts/probing questions if needed:

- Can you describe this a little more to me?
- What are your thoughts about this?
- How does it make you feel?
- Why do you think it made you feel that way?

Rounding off

- Thanks for your valuable contribution.
- Reminder about being able to withdraw participation and data within 2 weeks (or within 2 weeks after receiving the transcript, if requested).

Focus group question guide (template)

Introduction

- Welcome & statement of thanks for participation.
- Introduction of researcher.
- Brief introduction of participants to one another.
- Brief overview of the research in context of the AGST Alliance program (same as PIS).
- Procedural information:
 - Time: 60 minute session.
 - Respect for one another throughout the discussion.
 - Agreement not to talk over one another.
 - Agreement that the focus group discussion is to remain confidential.
 - Reiterate permission to withdraw from the focus group at any time, but note it will not be possible to exclude individual contributions once the session has commenced because to do so will affect the meaning of the contribution of the other participants.
 - Refer to audio recording, process of transcription, and safe data storage.
 - Ask if participants have any questions about the process.
 - Confirm consent and collect signed consent forms.
 - Begin focus group questions.

Discussion questions

[List the proposed main questions and sub-questions]

Prompts/probing questions if needed:

- Can you describe this a little more to me?
- What are your thoughts about this?
- How does it make you feel?
- Why do you think it made you feel that way?

Is there anything else you would like to share at this time?

Conclusion

- Thank all participants for taking part.
- Reminder that the focus group discussion is to remain confidential.
- Mention when a summary of the research will be available.
- Ask if participants have any questions about the process.
- Thank all participants again.

* * * * *

Research involving children: Templates and examples

PIS for parent/guardian (template)

Project title:

I am a participant in the *[name of program]* program of AGST Alliance. *[Name]* is my supervisor. As part of my program, I am working on a research project which requires the views of children on *[state what is being studied, in what setting, e.g. Sunday school classes, after school club]*. *[State also any other selection criteria, e.g. gender, age.]*

Your child/children is invited to participate in my study because they fit the selection criteria.

If you permit your child to participate, I will *[describe in simple language the procedures, to be followed, their purposes, how long they will take, and their frequency. Include an estimate of the total time required]*.

Your child will also be asked if they are willing to participate, and they will need to give their assent.

[Describe the possible risks reasonably to be expected. Describe any benefits to the child reasonably to be expected. If benefits are mentioned, add: 'We cannot promise that your child will receive any benefits from the study'.]

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. We plan to *[discuss/publish]* the results *[where and how e.g. in my dissertation, journal articles, conference presentations]*. In any publication, your child will not be able to be identified.

[Paragraph for interviews]

Your child may stop the interview at any time if they do not wish to continue, the audio recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study.

[Paragraph for focus groups]

If your child takes part in a focus group and wishes to withdraw, it will not be possible to exclude their individual data once the focus group has commenced, because that would affect the meaning of the contribution of the other children.

If you allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your child's participation at any time without giving a reason. Your child is also free to discontinue their participation at any time and without giving a reason.

This study is unlikely to cause your child distress. However, if your child experiences any undue anxiety or stress as a result of participation, I will inform you. Your child will be offered *[state what referral strategy is in place and offered for it to be addressed]*.

[Name of leader] has given an assurance that the participation or non-participation of your child in my research will not affect their or your *[relationships, roles, etc.]* in *[name of institution/church]*.

[If appropriate] At the end of the interview I will give your child a small gift of *[state what]* to show my gratitude for their participation. *[State also whether you will provide drinks and/or nibbles – this may need parental approval for allergy/dietary reasons.]*

If you would like more information before you make your decision about whether to allow your child to participate, or if you have questions about this request, please contact me at *[phone no.]* or email *[xx@yyyy.zzz]*.

If you would like to discuss aspects of this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving my study.

If you are interested to receive a summary of the results of my research, I will send it to you at the conclusion of my research.

I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

[Researcher's signature]

[Researcher's name]

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

A copy of this information sheet is for you to keep

* * * * *

PIS/Invitation for parent/guardian (example)

Project Title: Appropriate Parental Participation in the Faith Nurture of Primary School-Aged Children in Singapore Presbyterian Churches.

Researcher: Sheena Lim

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Yeo,

I have been given you names by your pastor, Rev. Wong Shee Woon.

I am a candidate in the EdD program of Eirene Seminary. Dr Joseph Lee is my supervisor. As part of my program, I am working on a research project entitled "Appropriate Parental Participation in the Faith Nurture of Primary School-Aged Children in Singapore Presbyterian Churches". This project requires that I get the views of children from three Presbyterian congregations in Singapore about what they think about how their faith is nurtured.

Rev. Wong has suggested your children because fit the criteria for my research: children aged 9-12 years old, whose family have been attending church consistently for at least two years.

If you permit your children to participate, they will be part of a 45-60 minutes focus group discussion with some other children from your church. The focus group session will be held at the church at a suitable time for the children and you. You are also invited to be an observer of the focus group, if you wish.

If your child participates, you are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue your child's participation at any time. At any time your children are also free to say that they don't want to participate any more either.

Your children's participation in the focus groups is completely voluntary. The information you children give will be kept confidential: their names and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing.

I cannot promise that you or your children will benefit directly from being in this study. But I hope that my research will help your church help its families more effectively.

Your pastor-in-charge has given an assurance that participation or non-participation by your children will not affect your and your children's relationships in your church.

We will have some drinks and nibbles during the focus group session. Please let me know if there are any food/drink items your child should not be offered. At the end of the session, I will give your child a small book gift as an expression of my gratitude for their participation.

If you are interested to receive a summary of the results of my research, I will send it to you at the conclusion of my research.

If you would like more information, or you have questions about this request, please contact me at tel. 123-456-789 or email sheenalim@gmail.com.

If you would like to discuss aspects of this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving my study.

I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

In Christian Fellowship,

[signature]

Sheena Lim

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 14 May 2024.

* * * * *

PIS for children for a focus group (example)

Hi, Anna.

How are you?

I would like your help. I want to learn some more about how children like you relate to God. Would you be willing to talk to me about this?

If you would like to help me, I will chat with you and some other children about your age for 45-60 minutes.

In our chat, if you feel uncomfortable, you can choose to not answer a question. It is even OK if you don't want to continue talking in the group. If you want to leave the group you can too, without having to tell me why.

What we talk about will be between us. I'm not going to report your ideas back to your mum and dad, or any other person.

Afterwards, I will write a report, but your name will not be used.

If you want to ask me any questions you can call me on my handphone 012345678. I will be happy to answer them.

Thank you for thinking about helping me in this way. If you say yes, I will be grateful. If you say you don't want to help, that's OK too.

God bless!

Auntie Sheen Lim

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 14 May 2024.

Assent form for children (template)

Assent form

Project title *[simple]*:

Child's name:

Parent's/Guardian's name:

- I would like to participate in the research project that *[name of researcher]* has told me about. No one has made me participate.
- I understand that I will be asked some questions about *[topic of interview]*.
- I can choose not to answer any of the questions., and I can stop the interview at any time if I feel uncomfortable.
- I understand that *[name of researcher]* will write a report, but my name will not be used, so nobody else will know which of the ideas are mine.
- I won't talk about what is said to other people except to my parents.

Signature of participant:

Date:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

Assent form for children (example)

Child's name:

Parent's name:

- I would like to participate in the research project that Aunty Sheena Lim is conducting.
- No one has made me participate.
- I understand that I will be asked some questions about God and how I relate to him.
- I may choose to stop talking and not to answer any of the questions.
- I understand that I can leave the group at any time if I feel uncomfortable. I don't have to give a reason.
- I understand that Aunty Sheena will write a report about this research, but my name will not be used and so no one will know which of the ideas are mine.
- I won't talk about what is said in the group to other people except my parents.

Signature of child:

Date:

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 14 May 2024.

CF for parent/guardian (template)

Consent Form

Project title:

I have read the Participant Information Sheet. I understand the nature of the research, why my child has been invited to participate, and what my child's participation will require. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree that my child *[name of child]* may participate in this research project.
- I understand that my child's participation is completely voluntary, and that he/she and I are free to withdraw his/her participation at any time, and to withdraw data traceable to him/her up to *[INSERT date /period of time]* without needing to give a reason.
- [For an interview]* I agree to *[audio / video]* recording of the interview with my child. I understand that my child or I can stop the interview at any time if he/she or I do not wish it to continue, the *[audio / video]* recording will be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study
- [For a focus group]* I understand that my child or I can stop his/her participation in the focus group at any time if he/she or I do not wish it to continue. However, as it is a focus group discussion it will not be possible to erase my child's participation to the discussion to the point that he/she withdraws.
- I understand that the information and views my child provides will be kept confidential *[or anonymous – include if appropriate]*. His/her name and personal details will not be revealed in any of the research writing.
- [For a focus group]* My child and I have been asked to not disclose anything discussed in the focus group to other people.
- I understand that *[name of leader]* has given an assurance that the participation or non-participation of my child in will not affect their or my *[relationships, employment, etc.]* in *[name of institution/church]*.
- I wish / do not wish (circle one) to receive the summary of findings of the research. *[Include if appropriate, and include a space below to provide an email or postal address.]*

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Email/postal address of participant if a summary is requested: *[include if appropriate]:*

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on *[date]*.

CF for parent/guardian (example)

Project title: Appropriate Parental Participation in the Faith Nurture of Primary School-Aged Children in Singapore Presbyterian Churches

Researcher: Ms Sheena Lim

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, and I understand the nature of this research project, why my child **Anna** has been invited to participate, and what her participation will require. I have had opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

- I understand that I may stop my child/children's participation at any time and that my child/children may decline to participate or stop participating at any time without giving a reason.
- I understand that my child/children can stop their participation in the focus group at any time if they do not wish to continue. However, as it is a focus group discussion it will not be possible to erase their participation in the discussion to the point that they withdraw.
- I consent to video-recording of the focus group discussion, and understand it will be used by the researcher only to help her transcribe the discussion.
- I understand that the information and views my child/children provides will be kept confidential by the researcher and her supervisor: their names and personal details will not be revealed in any of the research reports.
- My child and I have been asked to not disclose anything discussed in the focus group to other people.
- I understand that Rev. Wong Shee Woon has given an assurance that the participation or non-participation of my child will not affect their or my relationships in our church.
- I am / am not (circle one) interested to receive a summary of the results of the research when it is available.

Parent/Guardian's Signature _____

Name _____

Date _____

Email address (if summary of results is requested): _____

Request to church leader for research with children (example)

Date: 24 July 2022

Dear Rev Wong Shee Woon,

May I please request your permission to invite the parents of four families with primary aged children from your congregation to allow their children to participate in a research project I am conducting?

I am a candidate in the EdD program of Eirene Seminary, My research supervisor is Dr. Joseph Lee. As part of my program, I am working on a research project entitled "Appropriate Parental Participation in the Faith Nurture of Primary School-Aged Children in Singapore Presbyterian Churches". This project requires that I get the views of children from three Presbyterian congregations in Singapore.

I would like to invite four families from your congregation to participate. The families need to have at least one child aged 9-12 years old, and to have been attending church consistently for at least two years. I would like you to suggest the names of families I could approach.

I will invite the parents to allow their children to participate in a 45-60 minute focus group discussion.

Participation by any family and their children will be voluntary. The information the participants give will be kept confidential to me and my supervisor: names and personal details will not be revealed in any of my research writing.

When you give permission and suggest names, may I also request you to give an assurance that participation or non-participation by any of the families will not affect their roles and relationships in your church.

If you would like more information, or you have questions about this request, please contact me at tel. 123-456-789 or email sheenalim@gmail.com.

If you would like to discuss aspects of this research with someone not directly involved, please email the Chair, AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org), which is responsible for reviewing and approving my study.

If you are interested to receive a summary of the results of my research, I will send it to you at the conclusion of my research.

I am grateful for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to your response.

In Christian Fellowship,

[signature]

Sheena Lim

Approved by the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel on 14 May 2024.

Amendment requests

Amendment request (template)



AGST Alliance

Human Participants Research Ethics Amendment Request

If changes to the original approved research ethics application are proposed, complete this form and submit it to the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org). Changes should not be implemented until approval is given.

With this form include the amended drafts of documents (participant information sheet(s), consent form(s), etc.).

Name of researcher:

Name of supervisor:

Research project title:

Date of submission of amendment request (dd/mm/yyyy): / /

Proposed amendments:

Amendments may be to your approved protocols relating to recruitment of participants, data collection, research aims, research methodology, etc. Make sure that you consult with your research supervisor.

[HPEP to complete]

Your request for amendment is Approved Not approved

Comments:

Date: / /

Name:

Signature:

Amendment request (example)



AGST Alliance

Human Participants Research Ethics Amendment Request

If changes to the original approved research ethics application are proposed, complete this form and submit it to the AGST Alliance Human Participants Ethics Panel (ethics@agstalliance.org). Changes should not be implemented until approval is given.

With this form include the amended drafts of documents (participant information sheet(s), consent form(s), etc.).

Name of researcher: Charis Shallum

Name of supervisor: Dr Luke Cospell

Research project title: Spiritual formation for resilience in the orientation program for new mission partners of World Challenge Fellowship.

Date of submission of amendment request (dd/mm/yyyy): 26/6/2023

Proposed amendments:

Amendments may be to your approved protocols relating to recruitment of participants, data collection, research aims, research methodology, etc. Make sure that you consult with your research supervisor.

I have managed to get only 9 WCF members who participated in the orientation course over the last 5 years to volunteer to be interviewed. In consultation with my supervisor, 9 will be too few for my research. So I request approval to modify the inclusion criteria to be those who have been through the orientation course in the last 7 years. This increases the sample population by about 26, and I hope that this will lead to another 5-7 volunteers.

[HPEP to complete]

Your request for amendment is Approved Not approved

Comments:

Date: / /

Name:

Signature: