

How do I know if INSTITUTIONAL PERMISSION is required?

SECTION 8 [*Gatekeeper permission*]

- **Obtaining Institutional Permission from Stellenbosch University:** Kindly note that, if you intend to obtain any type of data from Stellenbosch University (SU) or if you intend to invite SU students and/or staff members to participate in your research, you'll need to apply for institutional permission at SU's Division for Information Governance before you can start with your data collection. You will need to submit a *separate* application (click [HERE](#)) in order to obtain institutional permission from the [Division for Information Governance](#) (IG). The approval process takes approximately **2 - 6 weeks**, and you can send an email to permission@sun.ac.za if you have any queries.
NB: The ethics application form will require you to submit proof of institutional permission clearance and, in turn, the institutional permission application form will require you to submit proof of ethics clearance. When completing your ethics application form, you can upload a screenshot of the email that you've received from the Division for Information Governance, to prove that you have indeed applied for institutional permission. Alternatively, when completing your institutional permission application form, you can include your ethics application reference number (e.g. ING-2023-56278), to prove that you have indeed applied for ethics clearance. By doing it this way, it will not affect the outcome of one application process if, for some reason, the other application processes is delayed.
- **Obtaining Institutional Permission from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED):** Kindly note that, if you intend to invite *public* schools in the Western Cape to participate in your research, you'll need to apply for institutional permission at the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) before you can start with your data collection (this does not apply to private schools, though). You will need to submit a *separate* online application in order to obtain institutional permission from the WCED (please click on [THIS](#) link to complete the online application form). The approval process takes approximately **2 - 4 weeks**, and you can send an email to Mr Meshack Kanzi (Meshack.Kanzi@westerncape.gov.za) or contact him at 021 021 467 9272 if you have any queries.
- **Obtaining Institutional Permission from the National Department of Health (NDoH):** Kindly note that, if you intend to invite *provincial/public/state* hospitals or clinics to participate in your research, you'll need to apply for institutional permission at the National Department of Health (NDoH) before you can start with your data collection (this does not apply to private hospitals or clinics). You will need to submit a *separate* application in order to obtain institutional permission from the NDoH (please click on [THIS](#) link to complete the application form via the National Health Research Database (NHRD) website). This website requires an ethics approval number (e.g. ING-2023-11011) before the application can be submitted, which means that you will first need to submit your ethics application via [Infonetica](#), then wait for ethics clearance to be granted by the FESC or the REC, and only then will you be able to apply for institutional permission via the NHRD website. The approval process takes approximately **4 – 6 weeks**, and you can click on [THIS](#) link to access the Researcher Manual, and on [THIS](#) link to access the FAQ section.
 - Once the NDoH has provided you with written letter of permission on a company letterhead, the signed Permission Letter needs to be uploaded to your ethics application form. However, you will *only* be able to upload this letter to your application form *after* you've received a formal letter of ethics clearance from the Research Ethics Committee (REC). To upload the permission letter, you'll need to create a "Documentation Form" (follow the steps in [THIS](#) manual, but please select the "Documentation Form" as opposed to the "Amendment Form" as depicted in this manual). Once you have created the "Documentation Form", you'll be able to upload the signed institutional permission letter, and thereafter both you and your supervisor will need to sign your ethics application form, so that the system can automatically submit your application to the REC.
 - Kindly note that you will need to wait until you receive a written Permission Letter from the NDoH *before being able to start with your data collection* (i.e. the conducting of interviews,

the distribution of online questionnaires, the collection of company data, etc) at any clinic and/or hospital. However, if the clinic and/or hospital is privately owned, then the procedure is slightly different – as such, kindly let me know asap if you intend on inviting a private clinic and/or hospital to participate in your research.

- **Obtaining Institutional Permission from various *outside* institutions:** If you intend to invite the employees/members/customers/staff/students of a *specific* institution to participate in your research, it is absolutely vital that you apply for institutional permission at that institution as soon as possible, seeing as the approval process can take a few weeks to finalise. Kindly note that it is necessary for written and signed gatekeeper (institutional) permission to be obtained (on an official letterhead) from an institution -
 - if you plan to obtain quantitative data from that institution (i.e. financial data, consumer demographics, statistical data, etc.) that is not in the public domain;
 - if the type of questions included in your Data Collection document require prospective participants to share specific institutional information (i.e. the name of the institution, how many employees work at that institution, what type of processes/procedures are followed by that institution – i.e. how they go about doing specific things, or *any* other information that is relevant to that specific institution);
 - if you have targeted a *specific* institution and would like to interview the employees/members/customers/staff/students of that specific institution (even if, for example, all the questions are geared towards the prospective participant's personal opinion about things that are *not* in any way related to the institution itself), then the researcher would still need to apply for institutional permission in order to invite the employees/members/customers/staff/students of that particular institution to participate in the research.
 - In light of the above three points, kindly also note that there are only two instances where institutional permission is not required. In both instances below, it is important to note that an informed consent form would still need to be signed by each participant before you start with your data collection. Kindly also stipulate in your research proposal, in your application form, as well as in your informed consent form, that the prospective participants (as well as the institutions they represent) will **not be identifiable** in your research results. If perhaps it does become necessary to identify the institutions, then institutional permission must be sought from these institutions before you report on, or publish, your research findings. Institutional permission is **not** required:
 - if you plan to collect data from either the **owner** or the **CEO** of a particular institution (i.e. this does not apply to managers or any other employees employed by that institution); and/or
 - if you plan on interviewing individuals as experts in their own right (i.e. not as representatives of the institution they work for) and if, at the same time, you are not going to obtain any information about the institution they work for (i.e. their company processes/procedures/policies, or how they go about doing specific things, or any other information that is relevant to their particular institution). PS: Individuals as experts in their own right can be defined as subject-matter experts, where the institution they work for is completely incidental to your research – i.e. it makes no difference who their employer is, or which company they work for, as long as they are subject-matter experts.
- **NB:** Based on the section marked in green above, please follow these instructions step-by-step (*where applicable*):
- **Question 8.1:** Please identify the gatekeepers (i.e. institutions/organisations) you need permission from. If many institutions/organisations will be approached for this study, please click on "add another" to add more institutions/organisations.
 - **Question 8.1.1:** Please list the names of all the institutions/organisations you would need to obtain permission from. **NB:** Kindly note that your application can unfortunately not be accepted unless your "Application Letter for Institutional Permission" (see below) contains all the relevant contact details (i.e. name, telephone number, email address) of the

person in charge of granting you the necessary permission at that particular institution. If you are not 100% sure which institutions will participate in your research, then you will need to fully complete and upload **at least one** "Application Letter for Institutional Permission" before you can sign your application form. **NB:** Where applicable, please also ensure that you clearly stipulate here that you're not exactly sure at this stage which other institutions will participate in your research, but that you'll most definitely obtain written institutional (gatekeeper) permission from the relevant institution BEFORE you start with your data collection at that particular institution.

- **Question 8.1.2:** Please select the "NO" option for this question (*would seeking permission from gatekeepers jeopardise access to data/participants*).
- **Question 8.1.3:** Please select the "NO" option for this question (*have you obtained permission from the relevant organisations/authorities*).
- **Question 8.1.6:** Please attach the "Application Letter for Institutional Permission". In order to help you save time in this regard, we've created Template 4 (Application Letter for Institutional Permission) and Template 6 (Permission Letter), which you can download in order to create the necessary documents required for obtaining institutional permission. Please refer to the "Templates" section towards the end of this email, where you'll find a link for Template 4 and Template 6.
- **Template 4 (Application Letter for Institutional Permission):**
 - Please refer to the "Templates" section towards the end of this email, where you'll find a web link for Template 4 (i.e. the "Application Letter").
 - Template 4 should be customised before emailing it to the relevant institution. As such, please complete all the sections marked in yellow in Template 4, including the specific name, telephone number and email address of the person in charge of granting you the necessary institutional permission. Please also let them know that you've included a copy of the survey/interview questions at the end of the document, or that you'll include these interview questions as an attachment to your email. **NB:** Please attach all of your "Data Collection" documents, detailing the type of questions you'll be asking, before sending the completed "Application Letter" to the relevant institution – alternatively, you can copy and paste all your interview questions at the end of your document, so that it forms one long combined document.
 - Once you've completed all the sections marked in yellow, you'll then need to email the completed version of Template 4 (i.e. the "Application Letter") as soon as possible to the person in charge of granting you institutional permission – preferably either the MD, CEO or owner of the company.
 - Once you've emailed the Application Letter to the responsible person at the relevant institution, you'll need to upload the Application Letter to this section of your application form. Please note that, at this stage, you *only* need to upload the "Application Letter" to this section of your application form, i.e. you *don't* need to upload the signed "Permission Letter" (unless, of course, you've already received it).
 - Please ensure that a *separate* Application Letter is created (and uploaded to this section of your application form) for each and every participating institution.
 - Please also add a copy of your Data Collection document/s directly below your Application Letter for Institutional Permission. This means that your Application Letter will become quite lengthy, but it is much safer to do it this way, seeing as the institution will then be 100% sure of what type of company-related questions are included in the interview/survey with its employees. Please also include the following sentence (or something to this effect) in your Application Letter for Institutional Permission: "For your information, kindly refer to the company-related questions below, which will form part of the interview/questionnaire."

○ **Template 6 (Permission Letter):**

- The relevant institution then needs to provide you with a signed Permission Letter (on an official letterhead) in order to indicate that they have read your Application Letter, and that they have given you permission to go ahead and start with your data collection at their institution.
- Please refer to the "Templates" section towards the end of this email, where you'll find a web link for Template 6 (i.e. "Permission Letter").
- Template 6 should be customised before emailing it to the relevant institution. As such, please complete all the sections marked in yellow in Template 6, including the specific name, telephone number and email address of the person in charge of granting you the necessary institutional permission.
- Once you've completed all the sections marked in yellow, you will need to email the customised version of Template 6 (i.e. the "Permission Letter") as soon as possible to the person in charge of granting you institutional permission.
- In your email addressed to the person in charge of granting you the institutional permission, ask them to complete all the sections marked in green in the customised version of Template 6 (i.e. the "Permission Letter").
- It may take some time for the institution to provide you with their signed Permission Letter (which you'll need *before* you can start with your data collection at their institution), so please note that you do not need to upload the customised version of Template 6 to this section of the application form. You *only* need to upload the completed version of Template 4 (i.e. the "Application Letter") to this section of the application form.
- The person in charge of granting you institutional permission will need to complete all the sections marked in green, and thereafter he/she will need to send you an electronic copy of the completed and *signed* Permission Letter on a company letterhead.
- If, by chance, you've been lucky and the relevant institution has *already* provided you with their signed Permission Letter by the time you're ready to resubmit your application, then by all means – go ahead and upload the final Permission Letter to this section of your application form. **NB:** It is very important to note, however, that you *don't* have to wait for the institution to provide you with a signed Permission Letter before you can resubmit your ethics application. You can go ahead and resubmit your ethics application whilst you're waiting for the institution to prepare their Permission Letter. You will, however, need to wait for their signed Permission Letter *before* you can start with your data collection at that specific institution (i.e. the conducting of interviews, the distribution of online questionnaires, the collection of company data, etc).
- If you haven't yet received the signed Permission Letter by the time you'd like to resubmit your ethics application, then you'll need to upload the signed Permission Letter to your application form at a later stage (further details in this regard will follow a bit later).

Templates

- Click on the links below to access Template 1 to 9:
 - [Template 1 - Written Consent](#)
 - [Template 2 - Electronic Consent](#)
 - Template 3 – no longer applicable
 - [Template 4 - Application Letter for Institutional Permission](#) (only applicable if permission is sought from OUTSIDE institutions)

- [Template 5 - Online Application for SU Institutional Permission](#) (only applicable if permission is sought from Stellenbosch University)
- [Template 6 - Permission Letter](#) (only applicable if permission is sought from OUTSIDE institutions)
- [Template 7 - Written Consent \(Xhosa\)](#)
- [Template 8 - Electronic Consent \(Xhosa\)](#)
- [Template 9 - NDA for Fieldworkers](#)