SAARLAND UNIVERSITY
COMPUTER SCIENCE

Faculty of Mathematics
and Computer Science
Saarland University

# Ethical Evaluation Request to the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science, Saarland University

If a researcher wants to receive an ethical evaluation on their research project, the following basic questionnaire needs to be filled, signed, and submitted (together with the additional material as specified below) to the Ethical Review Board (ERB). The board takes a position on each proposal on a case-by-case basis following its Statutes and Rules of Procedure. If a research project contains multiple studies, each study needs a separate request and vote.

The following questionnaire uses the term *project* to designate your research project/study/… for which you are requesting a vote.

## Basic Questionnaire

Provide a title of the project as an identifier so that we can reference this proposal (for example, the working title of the project):

_____

Briefly describe the context of the project (e.g., part of a Master thesis, part of a PhD thesis, part of a research project etc.) for which an ethical assessment should be done:

_____

**Executive researcher:**

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Research group: _____

Email address: _____

**Responsible supervisor, if applicable:**

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Research group: _____

Email address: _____

If the researcher is a Bachelor or Master student, this document must be additionally signed by the responsible supervisor.

Is this project an alteration or an addition to a project for which a vote of the ERB is already available?

☐ no

☐ yes – if this is checked then please fill the following box:

| Give the title and ERB number (can be found on the vote) of the previously inquired project:<br><br>_____<br>Additionally, please hand in a document which describes the modifications that were made. |
|---|

List all ERB members (see https://erb.cs.uni-saarland.de) who are conflicted to review this proposal.

_____

By default, a proposal is processed only if it has not yet been submitted for evaluation at any other ERB.

☐ I confirm that this proposal has not been submitted to another ERB.

☐ The proposal has been submitted to another ERB – if this is checked, please fill the following box:

| Give an explanation why you want to have an additional evaluation:<br><br>_____ |
|---|

Does the project involve a study with human participants?

☐ no

☐ yes – if this is checked, please answer Checklist 1

Does the project collect and/or use personal data?

☐ no

☐ yes – if this is checked, please answer Checklist 2

**Checklist 1** (needs to be filled if the project involves a study with human participants)

If a question cannot be clearly answered with *yes* or *no* select *unclear*.

| | yes | no | unclear |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Does the study involve participants who are unable to give informed consent (e.g., people under the age of 18 or people unable to consent in a legal sense)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Does the study involve participants who belong to a particularly vulnerable group (e.g., participants of clinical samples, people with learning disabilities, residents of a hospital or nursing home, or people serving a sentence)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Is it necessary that people participate without being informed about their participation upfront or without having given informed consent (e.g., covert observation)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. Is it necessary that the participants are not entirely informed about the purpose and content of the study? (Remark: Entire information does not imply the disclosure of the hypothesis but refers to informing participants of the purpose and procedure of the study. An example of incomplete or false information would be when a cover story is required to conduct the study.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. Is it necessary to actively mislead people concerning the purpose of the study? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Is it necessary to ask questions on subjects of an intimate nature for the respondents or the answer to which could be conceived as stigmatizing (e.g., relating to illegal or deviant behavior)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7. Is it expected that participants are going to suffer from stress, anxiety, exhaustion, physical pain, or other negative effects beyond the anticipated everyday life dimension? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8. Does the study involve the administration of medicine, placebo, or any other substances? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9. Will the participants be subject to any invasive or potentially harmful procedures? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Please provide additional context and explanation in your additional documents for each item you checked with *yes* or *unclear* in Checklist 1.

**Checklist 2** (needs to be filled if the project collects and/or uses personal data)

If a question cannot be clearly answered with *yes* or *no*, select *unclear*.

| | yes | no | unclear |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Does all data collection and data use comply with current laws and regulations? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. Is the quality and extent of used data appropriate (economical use)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. Does the project collect all personal or anonymized data itself (as opposed to: the project uses already collected personal or anonymized data)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| If *no* (or *unclear*): Which already collected data is (or might be) used? _____ | | | |
| 4. Is all personal data that is collected or used processed and stored anonymously? (Examples of non-anonymous data would be video or audio recordings of participants, or body substances like saliva samples.) | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| If *no* (or *unclear*): Which data is (or might be) non-anonymous? _____ | | | |
| 5. Is all personal data collected, used, and processed with the data subject's informed consent? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. Can the data subject demand that their personal data be deleted, and will they be informed about this as well? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7. Will personal data be stored appropriately, to ensure data protection? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Please provide additional context and explanation in your additional documents for each item you checked with *no* or *unclear* in Checklist 2.

I certify that all information in this proposal (including the checklists) and all attached documents are accurate to the best of my knowledge. The ethical review board must be consulted again in case of essential modifications to the project.

| | |
|---|---|
| Place, date | Signature of the executive researcher |
| Place, date | Signature of responsible supervisor (if applicable) |

**The following documents need to be handed in:**

- This filled-out and signed Basic Questionnaire.
- A description of the project (typically 1–5 pages long). This description should explain your project in a way that an external reviewer understands it sufficiently well to judge the ethical implications. This includes:
    - The aim of the project.
    - The kind of collected data, how it will be collected, processed, and stored; especially listing all kinds of personal data collected (including, but not limited to, audio and video recording and log files) and data storage in the light of data anonymization and plans on the eventual deletion of personal data after a predetermined amount of time.
    - For studies with human participants it must, if applicable, include:
        1. The type of test persons, as well as the criteria for their selection
        2. The steps of the examination procedure
        3. Burdens and risks for the test persons, including potential consequences and measures to prevent negative effects
        4. Information for test persons on the test process, which provides comprehensive and truthful information about the goals and the process of the test in a manner that is appropriate and understandable for the test person
        5. Information on the procedure to obtain informed consent from the participants, including their options to refuse participation or to withdraw their consent
        6. In case of participants with limited decision-making-ability (such as children, or people with legal incapacity): regulations regarding the possibility of agreement to participation in the test via legal guardians or custodians
    - In addition, for each question answered with *yes* or *unclear* in Checklist 1, or with *no* or *unclear* in Checklist 2, explanation must be provided.
- If the project involves human participants, the informed consent form.
  *Please note: It is necessary to provide participants in advance with as detailed information as possible about the procedure of the project to collect their informed consent and to ensure confidentiality of the data during collection and storage.*

If (and only if) this project is an alteration or addition of a previously project, for which a vote of the ERB is already available, it is sufficient to hand-in the (updated) Basic Questionnaire, a document summarizing all changes and everything else that has been changed (e.g., an updated informed consent form would need to be handed in as well in this case).