# Template for information letter **(opportunity to opt-out)**

This template is for research projects where the people whose personal data are included in the project are **given the opportunity to opt-out.**   
  
This is most appropriate in projects where you are not collecting data directly from the person themself, e.g. internet studies, registry studies, when information is provided by others, or where it is not possible/appropriate to gain consent for various reasons.   
  
The template uses layered information, where the most important information is in the first part of the letter, and the rest comes in the second part. Note that **all information** must be included. You can move information between the two parts if it works better for your project.  
  
Data protection legislation requires that the information is **concise and easy to understand**. We recommend that you use clear and simple language, which is tailored to the people who will read the information. Use headings, bullet points and avoid using complex words and concepts.

**Text in the template:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Blue text | Guidance for what to include, the text must be removed or adjusted. |
| Black text | Mandatory information, can be formulated differently, but not deleted. |

Information about the research project

[insert project title]

**Purpose of the project**

* Briefly describe the purpose of the project, outline the research questions/objectives
* Say whether it is a research project, a doctoral thesis, a bachelor’s/master’s thesis, other student project, etc.
* If you or others will use the collected personal data for other purposes (e.g. teaching, other research projects or archiving for future use), describe these other purposes.

**Why are you included in this project?**

* Describe why the person is being included in your project, how the person has been selected (selection criteria), and approximately how many people will receive this letter.
* If applicable, explain whether you have obtained the person's contact information from others (and what permissions you have obtained for this), or that others have sent out the information on your behalf.

**Who is responsible for the research project?**

[Institution] is responsible for the personal data processed in this project.

* Write which institution is responsible for the processing of personal data (the data controller(s)). It is often the institution you are employed at/where you are studying. NB: this is the institution you have registered under "Data Controller" in the Notification Form.
* If applicable, name other collaborating institutions, or an institution that has commissioned the research.

**You can opt-out**You can opt-out of being included in this project using the contact information at the end of this letter. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose to opt-out and you do not need to give a reason.   
  
**Which data are we processing?**Describe:

* Which methods or data sources you are using for data collection (e.g., data collected from other people or other sources, such as data registries, medical records, student records, social media, or from other people,
* Describe what the scope of data collection is (e.g. how much data and duration/time span),
* Which personal data will be collected (e.g. name and contact information, background information, any special (sensitive) categories of personal data)
* How the data is registered/collected (e.g. downloaded text content, electronic data file, audio/video recordings)
* If you are going to collect data from children: explain that parents can request to see the questionnaire/interview guide in advance

**Brief information about data protection**We will only use data about you for the purposes described in this letter. We will process personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation. You can read more about protection of your data below\*.

Sincerely,

Project Manager Student (if applicable)

(Researcher/supervisor)

\*If electronic information:

• You can read more about privacy by clicking the button below.  
  
\*If information on paper:

• You can read more about data protection on the next page/below.

**READ MORE (additional information that must also be included in the letter):  
  
Data protection - how we store and use your personal data**

* Describe who will have access to the personal data (e.g., the project group at the data controller(s), student and supervisor, only employees of the data controller, also external researchers at collaborating institutions).
* Describe the measures you will take to ensure that no unauthorized persons gain access to the personal data, e.g. "Your name and contact details will be replaced with a code that is stored on a list of names separate from other data", your store the collected data on a research server, locked/encrypted, etc.)
* Describe whether the participants will be recognisable in the publication/thesis or not, and, if applicable, which types of personal data will be published (e.g. name, age, occupation etc.).

If relevant, add:

* The name of the data processor that will collect, work with, store personal data, e.g. transcription service or online survey provider,
* That people at other institutions will be given access to the collected personal data; name the institutions, outline the number of people, specify the type of data they will have access to,
* That personal data will be processed outside the EU (e.g. fieldwork, analysis, cloud service); name the institution and country, and describe security measures.

**What gives us the right to process data about you?**

We will process your personal data research in the public interest.   
  
On behalf of [insert institution responsible (data controller)], Data Protection Services at Sikt - Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research have assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.  
  
**Your rights**  
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to request access to the data we are processing about you, to request that the data is corrected or deleted, and to object to the processing. You will hear from us within a month. We will provide an explanation if we cannot identify you or if your rights cannot be exercised. You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Authority about how we are processing your data.  
  
**What happens to your personal data when the project ends?**  
The project is expected to end [approximate end date of the project]. NB: This should be the same date provided under "End of project" in your Notification Form.

The collected data will then be [anonymised/deleted/stored for future use]. Please describe what will happen to the personal data when the project ends. Note that “personal data” is all data that can be linked back to individual people.   
  
If the personal data will be archived/stored for future research, you must describe:

* Why the personal data will be stored for future use (for example, for further research purposes within the same research field, educational purposes, or replication purposes).
* Where the personal data will be stored (e.g. at the same institution or a research archive).
* Who can access the personal data (e.g. students and other researchers).
* How long the personal data will be stored (provide an approximate date for anonymisation, or, if applicable, specify that the personal data will be stored indefinitely).

**Questions**

If you have questions or want to opt-out/exercise your rights, please contact:

* [Insert name and contact details of project leader]. In student projects you must include the contact details for your supervisor/person responsible for the project.
* Our Data Protection Officer: [insert contact details for the Data Protection Officer for the data controller].

If you have questions about how Data Protection Services have assessed the project, you can contact them by email: personverntjenester@sikt.no, or by phone: 73 98 40 40.