

TDSB External Research Application

Q1 The Toronto District School Board's External Research Review Committee (ERRC) reviews requests from external individuals and/or organizations applying to conduct research in TDSB schools. This review process ensures that proper procedures and guidelines are followed in conducting research. Please refer to the TDSB External Research Review Committee (ERRC) website when completing this application. Careful adherence to the guidelines and criteria will facilitate the review process by minimizing the frequency of conditional approvals and requests for modification.

Note, this application is adapted based on Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 (2022), TDSB's Guidelines for Conducting Research (2024), TDSB's relevant policies and procedures, York University's and Queens University's General Research Ethics Board Application. If you would like to review the questions, prior to submitting, please read the pdf attached here. If you have any questions, please email errc@tdsb.on.ca

Q2 Please complete the following applicant information.

Name of Investigator(s) _____

Institution/Agency _____

Mailing Address _____

Contact Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

Please re-enter your e-mail address

Q3 Please check all that apply:

- Doctoral Thesis
 - Master's Thesis
 - Institutionally Funded Project
 - Externally Funded Project
 - Other, please specify
-

Q4 Are you a TDSB employee?

- Yes
 - No
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Q4a What is your role/title at TDSB? If school-based, please include the name of the school site where you work.

Q5 Do you have a partnership MOU with the TDSB?

Yes

No

Q5a What is the name of the TDSB MOU/partnership connected with this research study?

Q5b Please share the name and contact information of the primary contact person for the MOU/partnership.

Q6 Please enter study information. If the information is not applicable to your study, please indicate 'n/a'.

Title of Study _____

Area of focus _____

Indicate other school boards to which you are applying

If applicable, Supervisor/Sponsoring Department

If applicable, Chairperson of Department

If applicable, TDSB Staff or School Principal endorsement (optional)

Q7 Please indicate details about your study milestones (mm/dd/yyyy). Please take into consideration that the application process takes approximately 8 weeks when indicating your anticipated start date.

Start date of study recruitment

End date of data collection

Report complete date _____

Q8 PURPOSE Explain in plain language a general and brief description of your research project. Please include the study/research project questions.

Q9 RELEVANCE Describe the relevance and value of the study/research project to education and the TDSB. Describe how the study supports the goals outlined in the TDSB's Multi Year Strategic Plan.

Q10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK Provide a brief summary of the project's theoretical framework and highlights of the most relevant literature and material. *Do not provide a complete literature review.*

Q11 Is this a multi-phase or multi-year study? If yes, please be aware that an annual renewal application must be submitted for ongoing research. Renewals must be submitted and approved by the ERRC Committee or Chair prior to the continuation of the research study. Please only include study details relevant to the current phase or year.

Yes

No

Q12 **METHODS** This study will involve the following (select all that apply): Note, at the end of the application, you will be asked to submit all final data collection instruments. Note, data collection instruments may require translations. If translations are required, please submit all final translated copies.

- Web-based Surveys/Questionnaires
 - In-person/Verbal Surveys/Questionnaires
 - Interviews
 - Focus Groups
 - Workshops
 - Audio/Video Recording
 - Virtual teleconferencing (e.g., Zoom, Teams, FaceTime, phone)
 - Sharing Circles/talking circles
 - Story-based research/learning from Elders
 - Arts-based data collection
 - Interventions/Exercise
 - Action Research
 - Experiments (lab-based, field, on-line)
 - Secondary Use of Data
 - Observation
 - Conducting, administering or supervising tests or therapies that require professional credentials. Please describe:
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Other. Please specify:

Q13 The TDSB discourages video recording of students under the age of 18. If you will be using audio/video recording or taking photographs/images of participants explain this process and why this information is required for research purposes.

Q14 **STUDY DESIGN** Describe how each method selected above will be implemented and the key concepts being measured. Please make sure to include all details in plain language.

Q15 SECONDARY DATA USE Will you be using secondary data (i.e. data originally collected for a purpose other than the current research study)? Please note, if this data is TDSB data, a data request form will need to be completed and attached to this application. Please email research@tdsb.on.ca to request a data request form.

Yes

No

Q16 DATA ANALYSIS Briefly describe the proposed methods of data analysis and theoretical framework you will be using.

Q17 BENEFITS AND RISKS Describe any benefits for participants of the study/research project and for the TDSB. Describe any direct benefits that participants and/or communities may receive from participating in this study. If there are no direct benefits to participants and/or communities, state this in the application form and the Letter of Information/Consent Form.

Q18 Select all risks (real or potential) associated with participation in this study (select all that apply):

- Physical risk (e.g., injury)
 - Privacy Risk (e.g., sending information, collection of sensitive and personal information)
 - Less than 6 participants (increased risk of identification/re-identification)
 - Psychological or emotional risk
 - Questions about sensitive or personal issues
 - Social risk
 - Risks to participants due to power imbalance (e.g., Instructor/Student)
 - Cultural sensitivities
 - Third party risks (e.g., risks to family)
 - Risk to greater community
 - Other, please specify
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- No known risks

Q19 Describe all potential short-term/long-term risks, foreseeable harms, discomforts, and inconveniences, etc. for study participants and/or the general population/community. Ensure that you describe risks to all participant populations/communities as applicable. If you are including images/videos or content that may be upsetting it is recommended that language be added in advance of this type of content to provide an immediate notification in advance (e.g., trigger warnings for on-line survey).

Q20 Describe your plan if an identified risk were to occur. Describe how you will provide support to participants/communities in the context of these risks:

Q21 **RECRUITMENT** Explain how participants will be recruited (e.g., snowball technique, random sampling, previously known to interviewer, telephone solicitation, etc.). Provide information about who will be recruiting participants. Please note, where applicable, all external researchers must approach the school principal first during recruitment. Please provide a copy of an Information Letter to school principals (see Schedule "A" of the Guidelines for Conducting External Research in the Toronto District School Board ("TDSB")) that outlines the purpose and scope of the study/research, and includes the commitments required of all potential participants. Please note that the information letter shall clearly state that this is a third-party study/research project and not a TDSB study/research project. Note, at the end of the application, you will be asked to submit all final recruitment emails and letters of information.

Q22 Describe how schools/participants will be selected. (Note: Individual names and/or other personal information will not be disclosed to researchers for their sample selection.). Please confirm if the PI knows or has approached the participants/school selected already (prior to approval).

Q23 Specify the number of elementary, middle and/or secondary schools requested and names of preferred schools (if applicable).

Q24 Please detail the participant numbers involved in this study.

- Students _____
 - Teachers _____
 - School Administrators _____
 - School Support Staff _____
 - Central TDSB Staff _____
 - Parents _____
 - Other _____
-

Q25 Please detail the participant time commitments involved in this study.

- Students _____
 - Teachers _____
 - School Administrators _____
 - School Support Staff _____
 - Central TDSB Staff _____
 - Parents _____
 - Other _____
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Q26 Describe where the study/research project will be conducted and what facilities will be required.

Q27 Describe any incentives or compensation being provided and explain why it is being offered:

Q28 INFORMED CONSENT Active parental permission is required for any research with or about students under the age of 18 years in TDSB schools. Passive or implied consent is not accepted and parental/guardian permission must be signed for informed consent. Copies of consent letters that will be provided to the participants must be submitted at the end of this application. Please ensure that application consent forms include all the information noted in: Schedules "A", "B" and "C" of the Guideline document. Please note that explicit consent is required to use methods of recording (audio and video). Explain how and when participants will be approached and who will obtain consent/assent. If there is a relationship between the potential participants and the person obtaining the consent/assent, explain the nature of the relationship (e.g., circle of care, employer, supervisor, instructor, etc.) and describe how you will minimize any undue influence/power imbalance. Note, at the end of the application, you will be asked to submit all final letter of information and consent forms.

Q29 Describe the process by which participants can withdraw their consent and, if they desire, withdraw consent to use their data.

Q30 **PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY** List all Demographic Information, Personal Information, Sensitive Information, and/or Personal Health Information that you will be collecting. Explain why you need to collect this information and how it will be used for the study, including all research and logistical purposes (e.g., as research data, for scheduling appointments/interviews, providing compensation, etc.). Note, at the end of the application, you will be asked to submit all final letter data collection instruments.

Q31 **CONFIDENTIALITY SAFEGUARDS, AND DATA MANAGEMENT** Describe the provisions and specific safeguards that will be taken to ensure privacy and confidentiality of participant information, including the collection, use and disclosure of personal information (if any).

Q32 Describe who will have access to the data and personal information. How will the research team and other collaborators access, modify, and contribute data throughout the project (if applicable). Please note that the TDSB reserves the right to request that any individual to whom personal information may be accessible for the study/research project purposes sign a privacy and confidentiality agreement in the form acceptable to the TDSB.

Q33 Describe how the data and personal information will be protected from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss or theft. Include information on physical, administrative and/or technical security measures in place to protect the data and personal information.

Q34 Provide a detailed description of the procedures and timeframes for the secure use of data through the the course of your research study. How and where will your data be stored and backed up during your research project?

Q35 When the study is completed, how long will the data be kept? Where will you deposit your data for long-term preservation and access at the end of your research project?

Q36 If there are any plans to share study data outside of the research team, provide all of the details related to data transfer, including privacy and security considerations. If the data in this study will be accessed through secondary data for additional research studies in the future, please ensure participants are made aware of how their data will be used and shared in the future.

Q37 Identify any privacy risks and threats to the security of information for all stages of the research life cycle, and how appropriate measures will be implemented to protect against such risks.

Q38 PROVIDING FEEDBACK Describe the procedures for providing feedback to participating schools and communities involved. What are your intended plans for the future use and/or publication of results? As a condition of ERRC approval, it is required that an electronic copy of study results be submitted via email to the ERRC Chair. In addition to the full report, please attach a one to two-page abstract that highlights the key findings and describes the relevance and implications of the research findings to educational practice.

Q39 INDIGENOUS AND COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH Is this research designed to specifically recruit or analyze data from Indigenous participants and/or will it involve community based-research? Are you asking First Nation, Métis, or Inuit individual's to self-identify? Note: Per TCPS 2 Chapter 9 'Community – describes a group of people with a shared identity or interest that has the capacity to act or express itself as a collective. A community may include members from multiple cultural groups. A community may be territorial, organizational, or a community of interest. Please note, the TDSB is currently reviewing guidelines for external research with Indigenous peoples and community-based research. As this review is ongoing, additional information may be required outside of this application form.

- Yes
- No

Q40 Have potential participants/communities been involved with the development of this research project (individuals, organizations, advisory groups, etc.) to date? If no consultation process is planned explain why not. Describe if Elders and/or knowledge holders will be involved in the project. Explain the protocols used for engagement with Indigenous knowledge and describe how it will be protected. Describe how your project will help address participants' and/or communities local priorities and/or describe the relevance of this research project for the participants/communities. Describe how your project supports local needs.

Q41 Describe who will make decisions about data governance and discuss if a data governance agreement will be maintained with the participants/communities throughout the life of the project. Please note, Chapter 9 of the TCPS 2 Article 9.16 suggests that “Researchers and community partners shall address privacy and confidentiality for communities and individuals early on in the community engagement process.” If working with First Nation peoples, please describe how OCAP Principles will be taken into consideration. *What is OCAP®? The First Nations principles of OCAP® are a set of standards that establish how First Nations data should be collected, protected, used, or shared. They are the de facto standard for how to conduct research with First Nations. If you will be using the OCAP® principles, describe who will own the data and research results; who will have access to data; and describe how and where the data be stored. There are four components of OCAP®: Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession.*

Q42 Describe how the participants and/or communities will be involved in the interpretation, analysis, and dissemination of knowledge sharing (e.g., conferences, workshops, creation of audiovisual materials, co-creation of knowledge mobilization plan). If no external involvement is planned, explain why not.

Q43 Before submitting, please confirm your application complies with the following requirements:

- The application has the prior approval of the researcher's affiliated agency or institution. If you are associated with a university or hospital, your proposal must have successfully undergone the ethical review process in your organization before submitting to TDSB. A copy of the ethics approval is submitted with this application.
- FINAL copies of all data collection instruments and consent forms are included in this application.
- A copy of an Information Letter to School Principals that outlines the purpose and scope of the study/research project and the commitments required of all potential participants is included. All Information Letters to School Principals shall be reviewed and approved by TDSB prior to being provided to TDSB schools and participants.
- Written parental permission/consent is required for any research involving students less than 18 years of age. Copies of information letters and consent forms for staff, students or parents/guardians must be included with the application materials. In some cases, the translation of materials may be required. All supplementary documents, including consent and permission forms shall be reviewed and approved by the TDSB prior to being provided to TDSB schools and participants.
- The demands on staff and students have been considered. The numbers of schools, participants and the amount of time requested have been minimized. Large-scale studies or studies that are intrusive or interfere with regular school time will not be supported.
- Certification of a Vulnerable Sector Screening Check will be submitted for any person(s) conducting research with students under 18 or for any person(s) having access to data that personally identifies students.

Q44 Please submit all materials relevant to the study/research project. Materials must be submitted in **FINAL** form (e.g., data collection instruments, letters). Drafts will not be considered. The research proposal **must have the support of the researcher's affiliated agency or institution** and where applicable their Research Ethics Board's approval **PRIOR** to submission to the TDSB. By submitting your application, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the complete "Guidelines of Conducting External Research in the TDSB." **Please note:** Once a pdf file has been uploaded, it cannot be removed from the application. However, if you need to change the attached file you can simply drag and drop or select a different file from your computer to replace the existing pdf.
