

Office of Authority	Vice-President, Research
	LU REB (approved November 7, 2014)
Date in effect	November 2014
Next revision	2018 or when TCPS2 is revised

POLICY ON RESEARCH INCENTIVES FOR HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify the ethical use of incentives that are provided to human participants in research while ensuring accountability of research funds provided by the Tri-Council funding agencies.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all research funding involving human participants where a funded research project has budgeted research incentives to recruit research participants.

3. DEFINITIONS

Confidentiality “The ethical duty of confidentiality refers to the obligation of an individual or organization to safeguard entrusted information. The ethical duty of confidentiality includes obligations to protect information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss or theft. Fulfilling the ethical duty of confidentiality is essential to the trust relationship between researcher and participant, and to the integrity of the research project” (Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects TCPS2 2010).

Compensation refers to honoraria or any other form of incentive or payments of \$500 or more per year.

Ethical Standards refers to international and national standards of ethics that require that researchers and their organizations meet well-established research protocols that protect the safety and security of human subjects, including the safeguarding of personal information and especially information that identifies research participants. It is an ethical standard that researchers do not reveal personal information gathered about human subjects. “Researchers shall safeguard information entrusted to them and not misuse or wrongfully disclose it. Institutions shall support their researchers in maintaining promises of confidentiality” (Ibid.)

Research Incentives “anything offered to participants, monetary or otherwise, for participation in research (incentives differ from reimbursements).¹ Some examples of incentives include gifts, prizes, stipends, or grades, or gift certificates to thank research participants for their involvement in a research project.

Research Participants refers to people who have agreed to be subjects who will be studied in a research project funded by Tri-Council agencies, through the Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) or the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) or National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) or any other university-based research project.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 Research involving human participants including the use of incentives or compensation shall be consistent with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans December 2010 or any subsequent versions.
- 4.2 Any incentive must be a) approved by Laurentian University at the time of funding application; b) included as a budgeted line in the funding application; c) approved as part of the funded project by the appropriate funding agency; d) approved by the Laurentian University Research Ethics Board as conforming to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. December 2010; and disclosed in the Informed Consent form signed by research participants;
- 4.3 The use of incentives shall be consistent with requirements under Chapter Three, Article 3.1 of the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans December 2010, including “Where incentives are offered to participants they should not be so large or attractive as to encourage reckless disregard of risks...The offer of incentives in some contexts may be perceived by prospective participants as a way for them to gain favour or improve their situation. This may amount to undue inducement and thus negate the voluntariness of participants’ consent.” Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans December 2010. Examples are and not limited to: a request from a professor for students to participate in a study, offering grades as an incentive; rewards or prizes to vulnerable populations such as people living in poverty;
- 4.4 The LUREB shall determine that research projects utilizing incentives for participants uphold the ethical requirements of researchers and the institution to safeguard as strictly confidential each research participant’s personal information.
- 4.5 In order to be reimbursed for purchase of incentives the researcher shall provide a receipt showing the total cost of the purchase of a prize, gift, reward cards, or gift

¹ Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. December 2010.

certificates to Financial Services attached to the request for reimbursement. The researcher shall also include in the request for reimbursement the number of participants and amount of the cash incentive provided to each participant. It will be the responsibility of the person with approval authority (i.e. the supervisor) to verify that the amounts are consistent with the budgeted amounts approved in 4.1;

- 4.6 Compensation of \$500 or more per year to research participants requires the University to issue a T4 slip to the recipient, This requires that the recipients' names and other personal information must be disclosed to the University's Financial Services and disclosed in the Consent Form so that any prospective participant knows fully the extent to which personal information will be disclosed (TCPS2 Chapter 3, Article 3.2 (j)). Aboriginal participants and Elder stipends are exempt under CRA regulations from this requirement when the research is undertaken within the territories of a First Nation.

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR RESEARCH INCENTIVES

This form is to be submitted along with receipts to your supervisor for approval and then to Financial Services.

Name:	Extension:
Department/School/Research Centre:	
Total amount spent on research incentives: \$	
Number of research participants who received the incentive:	
Amount of research incentive per participant: \$	
Type of incentive (check one):	Cash _____
	Gift Card _____
	Prize _____
	Other (specify) _____

I confirm that the use of these funds conforms to the approved Research Ethics Board certificate and to the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (December 2010).

Signature of claimant:	Date:
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