



EAST EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS STANDARD



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Chapter I. General Provisions

Article 1. General Provisions

1. East European University LLC (hereinafter referred as - „university“) recognizes and protects international standards of research ethics. University pays substantial attention to implement and raise awareness of appropriate ethics code in the everyday life of the university, as per the mission of the university.
2. Standard of research ethics is developed based on the mission, decree and other legislative acts of the university (hereinafter referred as – standard).

Article 2. Objective of the standard

1. Objective of the standard is to ensure the impartial research process in the university, development of scientific and academic activities, academic freedom and objectivity, implementation and maintenance of international scientific standards together with publishing and reviewing of international level papers.
2. The standard also aims to protect the dignity, rights, safety and well-being of research participants.
3. The standard is based on and protects the constitutional principle of academic freedom and ensures the introduction of a high ethical standard in scientific research activities.
4. The standard defines the principles of research ethics in the research process, as well as the status and authority of the research ethics committee.
5. Research ethics is a set of ethical rules and professional codes that guide researchers in sociological research and that focuses on protecting privacy in the process of collecting, analyzing, submitting, and publishing information. This is accompanied by the right of the research object to refuse to provide data or express personal opinion.

Article 3. Scope of the standard

Scope of the standard covers:

- a) personnel of the university (hereinafter referred to as "personnel") who, within the scope of their official activities, are authorized to develop and / or publish a research product resulted from conducted scientific research activities;
- b) students who are authorized within the educational program to develop and / or publish a research product resulted from conducted scientific research activities.

Article 4. Academic Freedom

1. Academic freedom is one of the main values of the university's research strategy. The university recognizes and upholds the constitutional principle of academic freedom, which, according to the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, comprises the right of academic personnel, faculty and students to conduct independent teaching, research and study.
2. In compliance with the above-mentioned principle, the personnel and students of the university have the right, on behalf of the university and / or within it, in accordance with the established regulations, to conduct scientific research activities freely, without any pressure, unreasonable interference or restriction.
3. Academic freedom in the university space also means the freedom of researchers to explore issues of scientific and / or intellectual interest, to present research results, to publish data and conclusions without any control or censorship.

Chapter II. Criteria & Primary Principles of Research Ethics

Article 5. Criteria of Research Ethics

1. Scientific research - is a process that generates knowledge from observation, hypothesizing, conducting experiments and obtaining results.
2. A scientific paper carried out on behalf of and / or within the university shall meet the generally accepted specific requirements. Scientific reasoning should include rationality, questioning issues, finding facts, and considering them. However, it shall be open to criticism, verifiable, non-dogmatic and reliable, based on analysis and not on instincts.
3. The scientific work carried out on behalf of the university and / or within it shall meet the basic criteria for research ethics: good faith, objectivity (intersubjectivity), relevance, originality, intellectual and linguistic clarity, validity, validity.
4. Good faith is the basis of quality for a scientific paper. The researcher shall verify all the sources used and clearly demonstrate the principle of argumentation. Manipulating data, falsifying them and inventing results is not allowed in the process of scientific work.
5. Objectivity (intersubjectivity): The scientific work should be as neutral as possible and should not reveal the author's personal sympathies or attitude towards the research issue. The researcher's observations and arguments should be formulated in a practical and impartial way based on logical conclusion. The researcher should refrain from emotional and unsubstantiated opinions, should present the possibility of multiple perspectives in argumentation and give the reader more space for independent thinking.
6. Significance depends on the creation of new knowledge in the field and the advancement of discipline. Highly informative papers are important (compilation research) and those studies that contribute to the development of the relevant field. Thus, when a researcher starts selecting a topic for a scientific paper, he / she should first think about such issue, the research of which will forward ahead any field, the possibilities of what and how new knowledge may be created, what are the ways of solving a specific problem.
7. Originality: The originality of a scientific paper is achieved by creating a new concept, introducing an innovative scheme, establishing a new model / method of research or a new vision of problem solving.

8. Intellectual and linguistic clarity: The language of the scientific paper should be simple, unambiguous and precise, the sentences should be clearly constructed and should not allow interpretations. To achieve this, the researcher shall write clearly, avoid pictorial style and long (complex sub-sentences) sentences, which make it difficult to read the text and even more so - to understand it. Moreover, the researcher should pay attention to spelling issues and avoid grammatical, typographical and stylistic errors. The researcher should write in scientific meta-language (descriptive language) and use industry terms related to the research topic, and if necessary, include explanation of them so that the multiplicity of terms does not cause misunderstanding or ambiguity in the reader.
9. Validity (thoroughness, substantiation): The paper should provide an opportunity to verify and refute the point of view raised. It is important that the research problem is thoroughly clear in the academic paper, that the scientific literature or other research tools are carefully selected, and that their interrelationships are clearly presented.
10. Transparency / Verifiability: A scientific paper should be based not on assumptions but on verified, credible facts and data, and the arguments presented should be thoroughly and error-free so that the reader, if desired, does not find it difficult to verify the research presented.
11. The researcher is obliged to present accurate and impartially researched data. He shall share the limitations and weaknesses of his research with colleagues and not hide it from the reader if the research hypothesis is not justified. The researcher is responsible in front of both, the research participants and their colleagues.

Article 6. Primary principles of research ethics

1. When conducting scientific research on behalf of and / or within the university, the researcher shall follow the guidelines of research ethics.
2. Research conducted on behalf of and / or within the university should be valuable. The benefits of research should be compared with any possible risks. The research methodology shall be properly selected to achieve the best results.
3. The research carried out on behalf of the university and / or within it, shall ensure the protection and well-being of the participants in the research, so that the research participants do not suffer any physical and / or mental harm or pose a risk of harm.
4. If the research is related to the potential risk of the person participating in the study, then the researcher should warn all research participants concerning the expected risk and receive a signed written consent from them. In this case, the researcher shall apply to the Ethics Committee for approval. Otherwise, the research will be considered unethical.
5. The principle of informed consent shall be observed during the research conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it. The researcher should provide any research participant with complete information about the research objectives and all aspects of the research.
6. A person may participate in the research process only of his own volition and without any coercion. The research participant independently makes the final decision about participating in the research. In cases provided by law, the researcher must obtain informed consent from the legal or authorized representative of the person participating in the study.
7. The researcher should not use his / her influence for the benefit of personal interests of the research participants under the influence. Any financial or other benefits may not be used to influence potential research participants to agree on a possible risk that they would not agree to without financial or other benefits.
8. It is not allowed to deceive the participants in the research process carried out on behalf of and / or within the university, unless the research participants do not know the real reason and purpose of the research due to the objectives of the research. However, the researcher should always try to avoid cases of cheating of research participants.
9. The participant of the research has the right to withdraw from the research at any time and refuse to participate in it, without submitting any explanations and without imposing any

responsibility. The researcher should explain this right to the research participant before starting the research. The person participating in the research has the right to request the destruction of any personal data related to him.

10. In case the results of the research are to be published or otherwise made known to the general public, the researcher must inform all participants in the research and obtain informed consent from them. However, if the survey is confidential or anonymous, all survey participants should be informed.

11. The principle of confidentiality must be observed during the research conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it. Personal data should only be available to a group of researchers unless the research participant agrees to the disclosure of personal data.

12. If after the completion of the research the research participant does not have complete information about the results of the research and wants to receive it, the researcher is obliged to provide him / her with complete information about the research results.

Article 7. Standard of research ethics

1. If the research is carried out on behalf of the university and / or within it, the researcher is obliged to:

- a) provide complete information to research participants about their own and institutional affiliation;
- b) explain in detail the objectives and procedures of the research to the research participants before starting the research;
- c) anticipate expected contradictions and ethical dilemmas prior to conducting research;
- d) obtain informed consent from all research participants;
- e) respect all agreements reached in the research process;
- f) reach an agreement with the research participant requesting the survey results and provide the survey results in writing;
- g) strictly adhere to the research ethics standards at every stage of the research;
- h) if required, submit the research project to the Research Ethics Committee;
- i) introduce research participants with the information development process including the sources where it will be placed;

- k) describe the conditions and objectives of the research and provide the mentioned information to the research participants in written form;
 - l) be explicit concerning the objectives of the research and the conditions under which the research was conducted;
 - m) make public the current or potential cases of conflict of interest and conduct his/her research in accordance with recognized standards of academic integrity.
2. If the research is carried out on behalf of the university and / or within it, the researcher:
- a) should address relevant individuals, groups and authorities. The principles governing his/her operation shall be approved in advance by all;
 - b) research participants should be introduced to all the details of the research process, including personal interests;
 - c) shall obtain prior permission to make observations or to analyze documents developed for other purposes;
 - d) respect should also be given to those who have refused to participate in the project due to the fact that participation is voluntary;
 - e) the privacy of the people involved in the project shall be protected.
3. If the research is conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it, all information related to the research should be equally available to all participants. In addition, all participants should be involved in setting the direction and the desired results of the research, and they should have the right to guide the ongoing process.
4. If the research is carried out on behalf of the university and / or the whole process of activities within it should remain open and all members of the focus group should be able to advise or remarks on the actions taken.
3. If the research is conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it, it is necessary to obtain the consent of the people whose views or activities will be described in the research.
4. Research conducted on behalf of and / or within the university should be as impartial as possible. Particular attention should be paid to design of the research, process, and description of research results. The dignity, confidentiality and interests of the research participants shall be protected at all stages of the research even after completion of the research.

Article 8. Obligation to protect ethics principles

1. Research conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it, in any scientific field, shall be conducted in compliance with ethical principles. Strict adherence to research ethics is extremely important in the social sciences, especially if it relates to human research.
2. The researcher, prior to starting the research, should know what is considered ethically or unethically for a focus society or group, which is a substantial aspect of guarantee for the successful conduct of the research.
3. Ethical principles shall be taken into account during formulating the purpose and objectives of the research, conducting the sampling, obtaining and analyzing data, as well as during discussing issues of credibility and validity.
4. Conducted planned empirical research should be expedient. The research should provide valuable information concerning the research group to the scientific community. At the same time, the research should not lead to a feeling of superficial attitude or unfair treatment among the members of the research group. Only in such case the research will be considered as ethical.

Article 9. Activities related to the invitation of research participants

1. Invitation / selection of research participants in the research conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it shall be carried out in compliance with the following principles:
 - a) participation is voluntary;
 - b) participants are invited based on the main question (purpose) and methods of the research;
 - c) participants are selected without discrimination.
2. Research conducted on behalf of the university and / or within it should be based on the participation of volunteers, who should be well aware from the outset that they are free to refuse to participate in the research (as well as to exclude research already started) without naming a reason.
3. A person who refuses to participate in the research process or refuses to continue participating in the one after its initiation, should not be discriminated.



4. The application submitted to the Research Ethics Committee should clearly describe the methods used to select participants. The application should also describe the measures taken to assist the researcher ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the participants during the invitation process.
5. Any conducted research, involving human resources for that, should be in line with the worldwide recognized ethical principles of autonomy, utility and non-harm, as well as fairness.
6. The basis of the above mentioned principles is the need to respect and protect human dignity, which, in turn, means the recognition of human supremacy, which is especially crucial in sociological research.
7. The interests and well-being of the person participating in the research should be placed above the interests of society and science. In case conflict arises between the above mentioned, the priority should always be given to the former, since it is more important than the latter.

Article 10. The principle of autonomy

1. Respect for autonomy means recognizing a person's ability to choose. In sociological research, the principle of autonomy is especially evident in free and informed consent, which can be rejected at any time without harm.
2. The research participant should be provided with relevant, accurate and explicit information regarding the research project before being asked if he / she agrees to participate in the research.
3. In order to ensure the informed consent of the individual, the information provided to him / her should explicitly describe the intended research procedures, their purpose, expected risk and benefits. The way and form of information delivery is especially considerable for ensuring an understanding of the information provided.
4. Free and informed consent implies that coercion or attempt to influence a potential research participant in the form of motivating or threatening him or her is out of the question.
5. There is an unjustified financial impact, an attempt to influence close relatives, a covert threat to refuse services that an individual has the right to receive without hindrance.

6. In research, special attention should be paid to dependent and vulnerable people. The intention to engage them in the research shall always be particularly argued. Among the potential participants required to achieve the research objectives, the least vulnerable individuals should usually be selected.
7. It is necessary to obtain a permit to ensure the protection of persons who do not have the ability to give consent due to age (minors), mental condition, illness or other reasons.
8. Personal information obtained for research purposes or reflected in research results should be considered as confidential and may be disclosed only in cases and in compliance with the legislative rules and regulations.

Article 11. Usefulness and non-harm principles

1. Based on the principle of usefulness and non-harm, the risk and burden associated with participating in the research should be proportionate to the potential benefit. Risk and burden should always be minimized appropriately.
2. The principle of usefulness and non-harm implies a moral obligation to maximize the potential benefit and minimize the potential harm.
3. The principle of usefulness means proper substantiation of the research project such as compliance with scientific quality criteria, compliance of the researcher's competence with professional obligations and standards and ensuring the protection of the research participant.
4. Participation of people in the research is permissible only if there is no alternative method of obtaining matching results.
5. In terms of research ethics, a balance between the usefulness and potential harm of the research participant is crucial. A research project can only be carried out if there is no disproportion between the estimated risk and the level of burden on the one hand and the expected benefit on the other. All research projects should be considered from a position of comparative risk / benefit assessment.
6. Risk can be not only physical but also mental. Research may also involve social or economic risk. If the expected benefit of a research project unequivocally outweighs the potential risk, but the latter implies a very high probability of serious harm, the research

cannot be considered as justified. Certain types and degrees of risk are unacceptable, even if the person agrees to participate in the research.

Article 12. Principle of justice

1. The principle of justice implies equality and impartiality.
2. In human research, special attention should be paid to the selection of research participants. Selection criteria should be derived from the substance of the research and should not be based solely on the ease with which consent can be obtained.

Article 13. Informed consent

1. The milestone of research ethics is obtaining informed consent from research participants. Voluntary consent is a prerequisite for participating in the research process. The research is not conducted without the consent of potential research participants. However, in cases stipulated by law, the permission of the legal or authorized representative of the person participating in the research is required.
2. Consent shall be given in written by the research participants. In certain cases, where written consent is not possible, verbal consent is permitted if it is properly documented and certified by an independent third party.

Article 14. Protection of research participants from harm

1. Protecting research participants from harm is a crucial ethical principle. Harm may be expressed in the fear of research participants to look unacceptable, ridiculous, which will negatively affect their self-esteem, as well as real danger - the damage may be caused to their social status, job position or even physical safety.
2. The researcher should treat the participants with compassion and take special care to discuss "sensitive" topics so as not to cause psychological harm to the participants. In addition, he/she shall ensure the confidentiality of research participants so that they are not identified by outsiders.
3. A major guarantee for the protection of participants from harm is the research ethics committee, to whom the researcher submits the details of the planned research project in advance. If the research ethics committee decides that participants are not adequately protected from harm, then the researcher should plan the research process in a different way.

Article 15. Protecting the confidentiality of research participants

1. Protecting the confidentiality of research participants is an integral part of qualitative research ethics.
2. In a qualitative research, the researcher knows the respondents and during an in-depth interview can relate to a specific person, but he or she should not disclose this information. The identity of the research participants should be covered in the qualitative report - the names should be amended, the initials can be used instead of the names, sometimes the locations should be changed to exclude the identification of specific persons / individuals.

Chapter III. Research ethics committee

Article 16. Research ethics committee

1. The Research Ethics Committee is a multidisciplinary, independent, collegial body of the university.
2. The purpose of the Research Ethics Committee is to review the research project conducted with the participation of people in order to ensure respect and protection of the dignity, fundamental rights, safety and well-being of the research participants.
3. The Research Ethics Committee shall be guided in its work by internationally recognized ethical principles and this standard.
4. The structure of the Research Ethics Committee, their competence in ethical and scientific matters, as well as the working methods and activities shall ensure that its members are credible and capable of carrying out their functions effectively and impartially.

Article 17. Roles & activities of Research Ethic Committee in the research process

1. The Research Ethics Committee has a special role in approving, conducting, evaluating and publishing research results on a social research project. Accordingly, the general and practical responsibilities of the Research Ethics Committee extend to the full range of social research.
2. The purpose of the Research Ethics Committee is to ensure the ethical conduct of social research.
3. The Research Ethics Committee is committed to ensuring that researchers' knowledge concerning general research culture and research ethics issues is improved.
4. The Research Ethics Committee also ensures that researchers are informed about research ethics policies and research ethics issues.
5. The Research Ethics Committee reviews research projects where humans have been participated.

Article 18. Independence of Research Ethics Committee

1. Members of the Research Ethics Committee shall be independent and have the ability to avoid undue political, professional, institutional or market influence during decision-making.
2. In case of conflict of interest, the members of the Research Ethics Committee are obliged to declare a conflict of interest concerning activities of the Research Ethics Committee.

Article 19. Structure of Research Ethics Committee

1. Members of the Research Ethics Committee shall ensure effective and credible ethical review of submitted research projects.
2. In order to fulfill their obligations, members of the Research Ethics Committee shall have collective competence in the areas and disciplines necessary to perform their duties.
3. The mechanism for selecting members of the Research Ethics Committee shall ensure a proper balance between scientific qualifications, basic philosophical, legal or ethical education, and public opinion.
4. The composition of the Research Ethics Committee should be represented by scientists, specialists, lawyers, persons with specific qualifications in ethics.
5. Members of the Research Ethics Committee should be able to ensure a balance on the one hand, the goodness expected by the society through research and, on the other hand, the protection of the human dignity, rights, health, well-being and interests of research participants.
6. Members of the Research Ethics Committee should be able to guarantee that in the event of a conflict, the interests and well-being of the research participants will be of paramount importance.
7. Members of the Research Ethics Committee should be well aware of the significance of research, what goodness it can bring to society. They should have mastered the principles and methods of research, context and practical significance. Members of the Research Ethics Committee should be able to judge research project independently based on the ethical issues associated with one.



8. The Research Ethics Committee should be multidisciplinary and reflect a range of professional and non-professional views. In addition, it is desirable the gender balance to be considered in the research ethics committee.

9. Due to the specifics of the projects under consideration, the Research Ethics Committee has the right to invite external experts to seek for additional recommendations.

10. The Research Ethics Committee is independent from both the researchers and the university administration.

11. The composition of the Research Ethics Committee should be able to show impartiality, transparency, goodwill, ensure communication with other parties to engage in dialogue and to promote its usage in the research area.

12. The number and structure of the members of the Research Ethics Committee, including the Chairman, vice-chairman and the secretary of the Research Ethics Committee, shall be approved by the Rector of the university for a 5-year period. At the same time, the appointment of members of the Research Ethics Committee and the renewal of its structure should be transparent, fair and free from bias, so as not to jeopardize the independence of the committee.

Article 20. Chairman and vice-chairman of the Research Ethics Committee

1. The chairman of the research ethics committee shall have been trained appropriately to carry out the duties effectively.

2. Chairman of the Research Ethics Committee:

a) prepares, invites and runs committee meetings;

b) represents the research ethics committee to the university;

c) develops a meeting plan for the research ethics committee and other activities related to research ethics issues;

d) provides timely response to applications;

e) signs the official documents, such as the conclusion of the research ethics committee, reviewed research plan, as well as other documents;

- f) coordinates, directs and supervises the activities of the research ethics committee and various activities of the secretary;
- g) prepares and submits the budget of the research ethics committee;
- h) oversees and plans educational activities for members of the research ethics committee and for the committee as a whole;
- i) provides specific consultations with researchers on behalf of the research ethics committee;
- j) if necessary, make a decision on behalf of the research ethics committee.
- k) vice-chairman of the research ethics committee shall perform the functions of the Chairman in his / her absence.

Article 21. Secretary of the Research Ethics Committee

1. The Secretary of the Research Ethics Committee shall provide administrative support, including the preparation of documents for the research ethics committee, and the minutes of meetings and other activities of the research ethics committee.
2. With the assistance of the chairman and vice-chairman of the research ethics committee, prepares documents for the meetings of the research ethics committee.
3. The Secretary of the research ethics committee prepares and distributes the minutes of the meetings of the research ethics committee.

Article 21. Initial and continuous training of members of the Research Ethics Committee

1. Members of the Research Ethics Committee should undergo appropriate initial and continuing education courses relevant to their roles / activities in the Research Ethics Committee. All members must, in addition, undergo training. However, the aim of the training should be to comprise the following issues:
 - a) ethical principles and their application in research;
 - b) research plan and methods;

- c) practical aspects of conducting research.
2. The training course should also address issues in accordance with the requirements of the members of the Research Ethics Committee. Regular meetings or conferences of the Research Ethics Committee should be arranged to share experiences.

Article 22. Confidentiality

1. All members of the Research Ethics Committee shall keep confidentiality concerning any information submitted to the Research Ethics Committee.
2. The expert invited to comment on any research plan should also protect the confidentiality of the information.
3. The content of the research ethics committee discussions and the details of the evaluation process are also confidential.

Article 23. Accountability of the Research Ethics Committee

1. The Research Ethics Committee is accountable to the Rector of the university.
2. The Research Ethics Committee shall ensure to submit relevant information to the university Rector well-structured, regular reports on its activities - ethical reviews, research oversight or other activities on an annual basis, which should not disclose confidential details about the research or its participants.
3. The reports of the Research Ethics Committee, in full format or as an explanatory note containing the main issues, should be published on the university website.

Article 24. Operational procedure of the Research Ethics Committee

1. The performance of the Research Ethics Committee shall be determined by the operational procedure of the Research Ethics Committee.
2. The operational procedure of the Research Ethics Committee shall be developed by the Research Ethics Committee and approved by the Rector of the University.

3. The operational procedure of the Research Ethics Committee shall describe the methods of effective and transparent performance of the Research Ethics Committee.
4. The regulations of the Research Ethics Committee should be published on the university website.

Article 25. Meetings of the Research Ethics Committee

1. Meetings of the Research Ethics Committee are an essential component of its work.
2. At the meetings, the members of the Research Ethics Committee discuss the research plans and make a decision regarding the ethical relevance of the research.
3. The schedule of the sessions should be known in advance and the members of the Research Ethics Committee should have enough time to read the documents before the session.
4. The Research Ethics Committee should define administrative procedures in a way to ensure the availability of documents prepared at all stages of the review.
5. The secretary of the Research Ethics Committee is also responsible for organizing the meetings of the Committee, including the submission of meeting documents and minutes of meeting.

Article 26. Recordkeeping of the Research Ethics Committee documents

1. Secure recordkeeping of documents of the research ethics committee that may contain sensitive information (e.g., personal data or intellectual property information) is provided by the university administration.

Chapter IV. Evaluation of the research project by the Research Ethics Committee

Article 27. Submission of Application

1. The researcher shall submit an application to the Research Ethics Committee in written or electronic form. The Research Ethics Committee shall confirm receipt of the application.
2. The application shall indicate the contact person who will be responsible for liaising with the Research Ethics Committee and answering the committee questions.
3. The Research Ethics Committee shall, prior to evaluation of each submitted research project, verify and prove that the application is relevant to the committee's area of competence. In addition, the Research Ethics Committee should ascertain whether the applicant has submitted all the documents necessary for the ethical evaluation of the research plan. The Research Ethics Committee should also ensure that the applicant or his / her representative is authorized to submit the subject project.
4. If all the requirements for submitting an application are met, the Research Ethics Committee shall notify the applicant concerning the initiation of the application review process. The notice shall include an approximate review schedule and a warning that the schedule may change if additional documentation or information is required.
5. The information provided to the applicant should clearly state that, in case of personal invitation of the applicant to clarify the questions related to the research plan, he / she will not be able to participate in the evaluation procedure.
6. In order to evaluate a research plan, the Research Ethics Committee should allow committee members to report any conflicts of interest related to the consideration of the submitted research plan.

Article 28. Role of the Research Ethics Committee prior to the initiation of the research

1. The Research Ethics Committee is obliged, prior to approving the research plan, to judge whether the research plan is acceptable and ethical. In this way, the Research Ethics

Committee ensures that unethical research is avoided, promoting research quality and ethical soundness.

2. The main means of achieving the goal by the Research Ethics Committee is to review the research plan and prepare a written opinion on whether the research is ethically acceptable.
3. The Research Ethics Committee shall, if necessary, consults the researcher regarding the proper research project planning and its stages.
4. The Research Ethics Committee is obliged to evaluate the ethical characteristics of the research plan in two main directions:
 - a) in terms of the ethics of conducting the research, the expected results, the importance of the latter to the society. At the same time, "society" means both local and broad context.
 - b) in terms of protecting the rights, dignity, safety and well-being of future research participants.
5. When evaluating a research plan, the Research Ethics Committee should consider compliance with ethical issues in accordance with the principles recognized by this Standard as well as by the international community.
6. The Research Ethics Committee should approve the scientific quality of the research plan and its compliance with national legislation requirements.

Article 29. Information to be submitted to the Research Ethics Committee

1. The researcher shall submit the following information to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration:
 - a) researcher identity, qualifications and experience;
 - b) funding issues;
 - c) the purpose of the research and the justification of the need, based on the latest scientific evidence;
 - d) methods and procedures, including statistical and other analytical methods;
 - e) extensive summary of research plan written in simple, non-professional language;
 - f) whether or not a research plan has been submitted for consideration and approval of what the outcome of the submission was;



- g) participants, consent and information;
 - h) substantiate the need for human participation in research;
 - i) criteria for inclusion and exclusion as a research participant;
 - j) type of research;
 - k) procedures for selecting and inviting research participants;
 - l) description of the nature and quality of the expected risk associated with participation in the research;
 - m) the nature, scope and duration of the planned intervention, as well as any difficulties or inconveniences associated with participating in the research;
 - n) description of the information offered to the research participants, the delivery time as well as the methods;
 - o) documentation and any visual or other material used to obtain consent or permission (when the person does not have the ability to consent);
 - p) measures / mechanisms to ensure the protection of the privacy and personal data of the research participants;
 - q) how the information obtained during the research process will be used;
2. The researcher's application should also include:
- a) description of the means and equipment necessary for conducting the research;
 - b) details of any remuneration and incentives imposed for participation in the research;
 - c) description of all the circumstances that could lead to a conflict of interest and impede the researchers' independent reasoning;
 - d) information regarding possible future use of the research results, other data obtained during the research process, including commercial use;
 - e) description of all other ethical issues important to researchers;
 - f) details of any compensation for damages incurred as a result of participating in the research.

Article 30. Project Description

1. The applicant's application shall contain sufficient information to enable the Research Ethics Committee to assess the ethics of the research plan. However, the application shall clearly indicate the lead or chief researcher. In case of joint researchers, other researchers should provide all necessary information to the Research Ethics Committee via the lead researcher, who is the main contact with the Research Ethics Committee.
2. The Research Ethics Committee should ensure that all researchers are properly qualified.
3. In order to avoid conduction of unjustified research, the Research Ethics Committee should pay special attention to the scientific substantiation of the submitted research.
4. Research methods and procedures should be described in detail so that the Research Ethics Committee can judge whether there is any danger to the research participants.
5. The research plan should be presented in a comprehensive and simple language to make the research plain and clear to members of the Research Ethics Committee, including those members of the Committee who may not have been thoroughly familiar with all aspects of the research under consideration.
6. The applicant shall substantiate why he / she plans to conduct a research with the involvement of people. However, the Research Ethics Committee should make sure that similar results cannot be obtained in any other way.

Article 31. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

1. Determining the size and structure of the research group should depend on the research specifications and take into account statistical considerations. It depends on the design of the research, depending on the category of people to be involved in the research.
2. Applicants shall substantiate the inclusion and exclusion criteria proposed by them in order to avoid on one hand unjustified inclusion (for example, conducting research with inconsistent persons, when it can be conducted with persons agreed to the research) and on the other hand unjustified exclusion (for example, sex or age factor).

Article 32. Evaluation of a research project by the Research Ethics Committee

1. When evaluating a research project, the research ethics committee should pay special attention to planning steps to provide information to potential participants.
2. Potential participants should be provided with information in a verbal way, if necessary - with the assistance of an independent translator, accompanied by written information for participants. The latter shall be included in the application documentation. Written information should be presented in clear, simple, easy-to-understand language for non-professionals.
3. If circumstances require the translation of information into another language, the Research Ethics Committee should ensure that researchers have verified the accuracy of the information provided to participants by translating and reconciling the translated material into the original language. A copy of the information leaflet (as well as a copy of the signed consent form) shall be provided to the participant for safekeeping.
4. The information to be provided to the participants should include:
 - a) name of the research;
 - b) introductory paragraph on the invitation to participate in the research;
 - c) objective of the research;
 - d) why he / she was selected to participate in the research;
 - e) whether he / she is obliged to agree;
 - f) what to expect if you agree to participate in the research;
 - h) what to expect if you refuse to participate in the research;
 - i) what to do;
 - j) is he/she obliged to refuse to participate in the research process;
 - k) what happens if you refuse to participate in the research process;
 - l) what are the possible adverse circumstances and risks associated with participating in the research;
 - m) will be informed about the results of the research;
 - n) what are the possible benefits of participating in the research.

Article 33. Possibility of improper influence

1. The Research Ethics Committee should ensure that researchers do not abuse their influence to persuade people to participate in research. Such impacts may be of a financial nature, although they may also be expressed in other ways.
2. The Research Ethics Committee should also consider other causes of adverse effects.

Article 34. Consent procedures and scope

1. Researchers should clearly describe the consent procedures in the application. The Research Ethics Committee should make sure that the consent process is free from undesirable influences.
2. The Research Ethics Committee should ensure that potential participants are given sufficient time to comprehend the information provided to them and to ask questions before deciding whether or not to participate in the research process.
3. It should be clear to the Research Ethics Committee what consent is. However, the consent shall be consistent with the planned research. When there is an intention to use the research records in the future, the researcher should consider the possibility of such research in advance in the consent process.
4. It is not expedient to use so-called blank consent for future use of data.
5. The anonymity of the data should, as far as possible, be ensured as much as it is necessary for the given research.

Article 35. Confidentiality and the right to receive information - data protection

1. The personal information obtained during the research should be considered as confidential and should be properly protected, for which the identification shall be removed from the data as soon as possible.
2. Applicants shall substantiate the need for the possibility of identification, its form and quality, as well as describe the appropriate protection measures. In addition, the application shall indicate the duration of storage of identifiable data.
3. In case of the usage of identifiable data, research participants should be informed regarding the methods of identification and the availability to others. The research participant shall agree to the usage of his / her identifiable data.

Article 36. Right to knowledge - the right to ignorance

1. Research participants have the right to receive or refuse to receive information obtained during the research process.
2. The Research Ethics Committee should ensure that both rights are protected by reflecting appropriate measures in the research plan. In addition, the restrictions established by law on these rights must be taken into account.

Article 37. Conflict of interests' circumstances

1. Financial, personal, academic, political or other interests should not affect the evaluation of research results by the researcher at any stage of the research.
2. In the application, the researcher shall describe all the circumstances causing the conflict of interest.
3. The application submitted to the Research Ethics Committee should contain the detailed description of all types of remuneration and other incentives offered to researchers

and research participants. Such information will enable the Research Ethics Committee to discuss the extent to which intentional remuneration and incentives are acceptable.

4. The Research Ethics Committee should ensure that any remuneration and incentives offered to research participants are adequate to the burden and inconvenience associated with the research process, but not too high to cause participants to agree to a risk that would otherwise be unacceptable to them.
5. Reimbursement of costs and financial losses associated with participation in the research shall not be considered as an adverse effect if it is not a significant part of the research participant's income or the only source of income.
6. Researchers should describe in detail any remuneration or incentives given to research participants in exchange for conducting research.
7. Information on any remuneration or incentives allows the Research Ethics Committee to determine whether such remuneration or incentives are permissible.

Article 38. Role of the Research Ethics Committee in the research process

1. The Research Ethics Committee should monitor compliance with approved research ethics standards during the implementation of approved research projects.
2. The Research Ethics Committee should monitor the progress of the research by reviewing the research reports. The obligation to submit them regularly (at least once a year) bears on the researcher.

Article 39. Awareness of research ethics committee

1. Within the research process, the Research Ethics Committee should liaise with research projects approved by it, which is usually done by reviewing regular reports provided by a team of researchers.

2. The purpose of the reports' accountability is to determine whether it is necessary to amend the research plan or to terminate the research, taking into account the latest data. The review of the reports also determines whether it is necessary to acquire additional consent from the research participants (or to obtain permission from their representatives), as well as whether it is necessary to update the consent form for new participants.
3. In case any unforeseen occurrences arise during the research process or in case of the accumulation of new data obtained through other research in the same industry field, the Research Ethics Committee shall decide whether the research design require any amendments or the research shall be terminated.
4. Applicants shall notify the Research Ethics Committee of any amendments brought to the research plan, as well as of the untimely termination of the research and the reasons of that. The Research Ethics Committee should also be notified upon completion of the research on time.

Article 40. New information and protection of research participants

1. Upon receipt of unforeseen circumstances in the research process or any new upcoming scientific information, the Research Ethics Committee may revise the conclusion given before that.
2. In case the amendments has been brought to a research plan and / or to the conclusion of the research ethics committee, the research participants should be informed appropriately as soon as possible.
3. In this case, at any stage of the research, it is necessary to respect the right of refusal in participation in the research. The meaning and explicitness of the information provided to the participants is especially important when the research ethics committee cancels the positive conclusion previously issued by it.

Article 41. Roles of research ethics committee upon accomplishment of research

1. Upon completion of the research, the research ethics committee shall determine how the researcher has fulfilled the obligations set out in the research plan to the research participants and / or the groups or communities involved in the research.
2. One of the most important responsibilities is to make the research results accessible to the research participants in a way that is understandable and clear to them. In addition, the researcher is obliged to provide the information obtained during the research to the research participants.
3. It is the ethical obligation of the researcher to ensure that research-based findings are made available to the public through the publication of impartial and adequate publications.
4. Improper concealment of research results is unscientific and unethical.

Article 42. Accesibility of research results

1. Upon completion of the research, the researcher should submit a report or a summary of the results to the research ethics committee. At the same time, the researcher shall confirm that the results of the research, as indicated in the application, will be published in a scientific journal or chooses an appropriate way to communicate the one to the public.
2. The results of research should be made available in a comprehensible form to all research participants who wish to be familiarized with them. In the above mentioned information the interests of the researcher himself / herself should also be taken into account, although, it should not be used to justify the refusal to the research participants in their legitimated rights to be familiarized with research results.
3. It is important to publish the results of the research, even if these results confirm the research hypothesis ("positive"), reject the research hypothesis ("negative"), if it does not bring the conclusion.
4. Upon completion of the research, a research report or summary should be submitted to



the Research Ethics Committee. In case the research is finished before the deadline, a report should also be submitted, indicating the reasons for early accomplishment.

5. The results of the research should be provided to the interested parties within a reasonable timeframe and the results of the research should be made available to the participants upon request.

Chapter V. Final Provisions

Article 43. Amendments in & additions to the standard

1. This Standard shall enter into force on 1 May 2021.
2. The standard of research ethics is approved by the university Representative Council upon the submission of the university Research and Development Department.
3. Adoption, abolishment, amendment and addition of the research ethics standard shall be carried out in accordance with the procedure established by the first paragraph of this article.