

Implied Informed Consent Form (ICF)/Letter of Information (LOI) for Prospective Research with Human Participants (Survey Research) GREB

Study title: *Current State of Biomedical Core Facilities in Canada*

Principal Investigator: Dr. Stephen Archer

Affiliation: Professor of Medicine - Queen's University

Email: stephen.archer@queensu.ca

Researcher Contact: Brooke Ring

Affiliation: PhD Student - Queen's University

Email: ringb@queensu.ca; info@corefacilityresearch.ca

1. Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in this research study because you are a participant This survey is intended for academic, industry or government biomedical researchers who **do not** use an academic, biomedical core facilities; and who are also not core facility staff or hold a upper leadership/management position within an institution, industry or government.. This survey is part of a research project to better understand the business models and impact of biomedical core facilities in Canada. This consent form provides information to help you make an informed decision to participate. The purpose of surveying non-users of biomedical core facilities is to gather data on the barriers to utilizing a core facility, the perceived value of a core facility and opportunities which core facility may accommodate. This study has received ethical approval from the Queen's University General Research Ethics Board (GREB).

Participation is voluntary, and you can decline to participate in any aspect of the research at any time. In this study, you will complete a one-time survey, with an optional survey to be entered into a draw for prize. Participants are to fill out this online survey to the best of their abilities and submit; the survey should take 7-15 minutes to complete. The survey will be anonymous, which means that no personal identifiable information will be collected. However, we will ask you to optionally provide the following demographic information: Full name and email address, if you consent to potentially be contacted for a follow up interview. This demographic information, will not be linked in any way to your survey. As this survey is anonymous, you can stop participating at any point by simply closing the browser window. However, once this survey has been submitted you cannot withdraw your responses as there is no way to identify your responses from others.

2. Risks and benefits

Despite the survey being anonymous, there are minor privacy and social risks to participating in this survey since the study will include information on the professional roles and occupation of participants.

Privacy: Although the survey is anonymous and does not collect direct identifiers, there remains a minimal possibility that individuals could be indirectly identifiable through combinations of demographic or contextual responses, particularly within small or specialized communities. The likelihood of this occurring is low. The severity of harm from a potential breach of anonymity is also low, as the information collected pertains to professional experiences rather than highly sensitive personal data. In the unlikely event that identification were to occur, the risk is largely reversible, as data will not be linked to individuals in any public outputs, and findings will be presented in a manner that prevents attribution to specific participants or institutions. To mitigate this the data will be reported in aggregate form and any potentially identifying information will be removed or generalized during analysis. Data will not be linked to individuals in any public outputs, and findings will be presented in a manner that prevents attribution to specific participants or institutions.

Social: The potential social risk associated with this study is minimal and relates primarily to the possibility that participants may feel discomfort when reflecting on professional challenges, workplace experiences, or perceptions of core facility operations. The likelihood of this occurring is low to moderate, as some questions may prompt critical reflection; however, participation is voluntary and participants may skip any questions they prefer not to answer or withdraw at any time without consequence. The severity of this risk is low, as no direct personal or institutional evaluation is being conducted, and responses are anonymized. Any discomfort experienced is expected to be temporary and fully reversible, with no anticipated long-term impact on participants' professional standing, relationships, or well-being. To mitigate this the participants are not required to answer any questions they are not comfortable answering, the either survey is voluntary. The responses are anonymized and there are no direct personal or institutional evaluation is being conducted.

Benefits: There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this study, participants may choose to be entered into a draw to win a prize. We hope that the results of this study may benefit the role of core facilities and their expertise in the future.

3. Confidentiality

All the information collected during the research study will remain strictly confidential to the extent permitted by the applicable laws. If you decide to participate in this study, the research team will only collect the information needed.

The study data will be stored in a secure RedCap database for a period of 5 years or until the study has been published. After this storage period, the study data will be deleted.

During the study, for data collection, data analysis, monitoring, control, safety, and security, your study file may be accessed by the following organizations:

- Members of the study team, as delegated by the principal investigator.
- Authorized Representatives of Queen's University, its affiliated hospitals or GREB team.

The results of this research study data may be published or shared during scientific meetings however you will/will not be identified during the dissemination of study results or publication. All efforts will be made to protect your privacy, and the likelihood that someone may identify you is small, however it cannot be eliminated.

4. Incentives

If you decide to participate, you will receive an optional incentive in recognition of your time and effort after completing the one-time survey. This incentive is a draw for a \$200 Amazon Gift Card. The draw will occur at the end of the study.

5. Contact information

If you have questions about this study, you can contact:

Brooke Ring at ringb@queensu.ca or phone 613-533-2817.

For ethics concerns, please contact GREB at 1-844-535- 2988 (Toll free in North America) or email researchethics@queensu.ca. Use 1-613-533-2988 if outside North America. If non-English speaking participants wish to contact the Chair for ethics concerns, translation assistance may be necessary, as the REB Chairs communicate in English only.

6. Conflict of interest

Brooke Ring, the PhD student researcher, currently holds the role of President of the Canadian Network for Scientific Platforms (CNSP), non-for-profit, science advocacy groups. The CNSP will be used as a channel to facilitate distribution of this research survey to its membership. This represents a potential perceived conflict of interest, as participants may feel influenced to take part due to the researcher's leadership position within the network.

To mitigate this risk, the CNSP Executive Board has reviewed and approved the distribution of the survey independently, without involvement of the President in the decision-making process. All recruitment materials will clearly state that participation is entirely voluntary, that responses are anonymous, and that there are no consequences for non-participation or withdrawal.

The research is being conducted as part of a PhD program and is supervised by an academic advisor, Dr. Stephen Archer. There are no direct financial benefits associated with participation in the survey. While findings may inform broader discussions on core facility practices, any potential future application of the results, including through external activities, will be managed in accordance with institutional conflict of interest policies.

7. Consent

Consent for the online survey's is implied. Consent will be obtained by the participant completing and submitting the survey.