



ETHICAL COMPLIANCE UNDERTAKING

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Manuscript Title: _____

To ensure objectivity and transparency in research and to ensure that accepted principles of ethical and professional conduct have been followed, authors should include information regarding sources of funding, potential conflicts of interest (financial or non-financial), informed consent if the research involved human participants, and a statement on welfare of animals if the research involved animals.

Authors should include the following statements (if applicable) in a separate section entitled "Compliance with Ethical Standards" before the References when submitting a manuscript:

- Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest
- Research involving Human Participants and/or Animals
- Informed consent

The corresponding author should be prepared to collect documentation of compliance with ethical standards and send if requested during peer review or after publication.

1. Disclosure of Potential Conflict of Interest: Funding etc. ✔ ✘

Authors must disclose all relationships or interests that could have direct or potential influence or impart bias on the work. Although an author may not feel there is any conflict, disclosure of relationships and interests provides a more complete and transparent process, leading to an accurate and objective assessment of the work. Awareness of a real or perceived conflicts of interest is a perspective to which the readers are entitled. This is not meant to imply that a financial relationship with an organization that sponsored the research or compensation received for consultancy work is inappropriate.

2. Research involving human participants and/ or animals

When reporting studies that involve human participants, authors should include a statement that the studies have been approved by the appropriate institutional and/or national research ethics committee and have been performed in accordance with the ethical standards as laid down in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. If doubt exists whether the research was conducted in accordance with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration or comparable standards, the authors must explain the reasons for their approach, and demonstrate that the independent ethics committee or institutional review board explicitly approved the doubtful aspects of the study.

Ethical Statement About Humans: "All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards." ✔ ✘

Ethical Statement About Animals: "All applicable international, national, and/or institutional guidelines for the care and use of animals were followed." ✔ ✘

3. Informed consent:

All individuals have individual rights that are not to be infringed. Individual participants in studies have, for example, the right to decide what happens to the (identifiable) personal data gathered, to what they have said during a study or an interview, as well as to any photograph that was taken. Hence it is important that all participants gave their informed consent in writing prior to inclusion in the study. Identifying details (names, dates of birth, identity numbers and other information) of the participants that were studied should not be published in written descriptions, photographs, and genetic profiles unless the information is essential for scientific purposes and the participant (or parent or guardian if the participant is incapable) gave written informed consent for publication. Complete anonymity is difficult to achieve in some cases, and informed consent should be obtained if there is any doubt. For example, masking the eye region in photographs of participants is inadequate protection of anonymity. If identifying characteristics are altered to protect anonymity, such as in genetic profiles, authors should provide assurance that alterations do not distort scientific meaning.

"Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study." ✔ ✘

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name of Corresponding Author & Institutional Affiliation: _____

Date: _____ Ethical Committee Approval Number (if Available) _____

Name & Signature of Departmental/Institutional Head Certifying the Undertaking _____