Understanding the ethical parameters of research is critical to ensure we engage with people ethically throughout our projects. Not every project requires formal ethics review, but every student should complete the TCPS tutorial and consider the ethical dimensions of their project. This guide will help clarify when and whether formal ethics review is needed.

**A - Specific Populations**

Do you intend to engage directly with people through conversation, interview, or survey, etc.?  

- Yes  
  - Are they Indigenous?  
    - Yes  
      - You need to apply for ethics!  
    - No  
      - Are they children or vulnerable in some way?  
        - Yes  
          - You need to apply for ethics!  
        - No  
          - Do they work in a health or school setting?  
            - Yes  
              - You need to apply for ethics!  
            - No  
              - Can you access them through a professional (voluntary) association instead, to avoid complicated institutional permissions processes? You are unlikely to be approved to talk with people within these settings in a timely way.  

Do you have to engage with them directly, or are there other ways to get this information via proxies? You are unlikely to be approved to talk with these populations in a timely way.  

- No  
  - You probably don’t need to apply for ethics unless...  

**B - Sensitive Topics**

Do you intend to ask participants about sensitive topics?  

- Yes  
  - Are you asking for personal data like name, address, gender, email address, etc.?  
    - Yes  
      - Is this really required for your project? If so, you will need a plan to protect people’s wellbeing during your study and safely secure their data to protect privacy, which is included in your ethics application  
    - No  
      - Are you talking about sensitive topics, such as health or sexuality?  
        - Yes  
          - Is this really required for your project? If so, you will need a plan to safely secure this data and protect privacy, which is included in your ethics application.  
        - No  
          - You don’t need to apply for ethics!  

- No  
  - You don’t need to apply for ethics!  

**C - Sharing Raw Data**

How are you going to share the raw data you gather?  

- Shared with faculty and team members only, confidentially, as part of the project process?  
  - Yes  
    - You don’t need to apply for ethics!  
  - No  
    - Shared with the public, in a policy document, publication, presentation, or other purpose?  
      - Yes  
        - You need to apply for ethics!  
      - No  
        - You don’t need to apply for ethics!  

Are you creating a media or artistic product (that does not aspire to answer a research question) through an iterative (quality improvement) process that involves different kinds of input, feedback, involvement from people along the way?  

- Yes  
  - You probably don’t need to apply for ethics unless...  

Are you creating a product (or process) of some kind through an iterative (quality improvement) process that involves different kinds of input and feedback from people along the way?  

- Yes  
  - You don’t need to apply for ethics!  

- No  
  - You need to apply for ethics!

Are you guided by an unvarying research question and will you be gathering data from human participants and sharing that data in a public way?  

- Yes  
  - You need to apply for ethics!  

- No  
  - You probably don’t need to apply for ethics unless...