**Recruiting Human Subjects Through Social Media**

**General Guidelines**

→ Direct messaging on social media accounts is not generally permitted to be used for research recruitment purposes.

→ Researchers are not generally permitted to target specific individuals on social media for research recruitment (i.e. do not tag someone in a post, share a post with a specific individual, etc.). Social media recruitment strategies must be designed in a way that allows individuals to reach out of their own volition; any strategy that may make individuals feel pressured to respond will not be approved.

→ It is the researcher’s responsibility to be aware of, and to conduct recruitment in accordance with, the rules and restrictions of social media sites and groups in which recruitment will occur.

**Sharing Posts on a Personal Account**

→ Researchers are only permitted to recruit via social media after the associated materials and procedures have been reviewed by the IRB or the IRB Office, and the associated application has received approval or exemption.

→ Researchers may post a general recruitment message on their social media account(s) with a link or QR code that directs potential participants directly to the study interaction/intervention (survey), a Google Form requesting more information, or to a Google Form to sign up to participate. Researchers may also include contact information such as an ASU email or a phone number for interested parties to contact about the research project. This helps ensure confidentiality for participants, as well as professional conduct as a researcher representing Appalachian State University.

→ If you direct individuals to contact a lab (or other alias) email, you must list everyone who has access to the lab email account on the Cayuse application.

→ If individuals respond to a recruitment message via comments or direct message on a social media platform, redirect them to appropriate channels (such as the ones listed above) for communication. Do not provide additional information about the study via comments or direct message.

**Posting in Social Media Groups**

→ The research team must ensure they are aware of all needed permissions or restrictions related to recruiting for research in a social media group. The research team is responsible for abiding by all rules of the platforms on which recruitment will occur.

→ It is highly encouraged to reach out to the owner of the group to gain permission to post recruitment materials in a social media group, prior to making such posts.

**Paid Ads**

→ If a researcher intends to use paid ads on social media to recruit for a research study, they must ensure that all materials and procedures are included in the IRB application. Researchers are not permitted to begin using this method of recruitment until the procedures have been approved by the IRB or determined to be exempt.