**REPHRAIN Ethics Approval**

*Conducting research to the highest ethical standard - with robust oversight procedures - will be critical to the success of REPHRAIN in addressing its three missions to deliver socio-technical advances for protecting citizens online.*

*REPHRAIN places ethical oversight centrally to its research processes, establishing an independent ethical review process to review all research conducted as part of the Centre (both core and commissioned).*

*The Board operates under the principles set out in UUK's Concordat to Support Research Integrity, and will further adhere to the UKRI/ESRC core principles for ethical research (*[*https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/our-core-principles/*](https://esrc.ukri.org/funding/guidance-for-applicants/research-ethics/our-core-principles/)*)*

*The Ethics process follows two-stages*

* *All researchers need to secure ethical approval from their appropriate institutional research ethics committee before applying to the REPHRAIN Ethics Board.*
* *Where a project does not ordinarily require ethical review at a host institution (e.g., desk research, secondary data analysis), please submit to the REPHRAIN Ethics Board directly.*

**Application (Note: word counts indicate maximum number of words required)**

**Project Name:**  
  
**Project aims and objectives (100 words)**

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**Brief description of methodology (150 words)**

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**Estimated start and end date of project:**

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Has ethical approval been sought and granted by your appropriate institutional research ethics committee? **Y / N**

Name of Ethics Committee: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please attach your accepted application for reference.

**If Yes**, have the following been covered in this approval?  
  
**If No**, please indicate how the following will be covered.

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| Recruitment of participants (including methods of gaining consent) | Y/N/NA |
| Involvement of members of the public as data collectors | Y/N/NA |
| If it is necessary for data on participants to be gathered without their consent | Y/N/NA |
| Any discomfort, inconvenience or danger that could be caused by participation | Y/N |
| Any potential benefits to participation | Y/N |
| Any possible power imbalances in participation | Y/N |
| Potential risks to the researcher/research team | Y/N |
| Rationale for incentives/payments to individuals or partners | Y/N/NA |
| If you have answered No to any of the above please indicate how these will be addressed |  |

**If Yes**, please indicate where the ESRC core principles (see below) for ethical research are addressed (one sentence, page number in application):

**If No,** for systematic reviews please attach your protocol, for all other research please attach your final research proposal for reference.

**If No**, please describe how your project meets the ESRC core principles for ethical research (50 words):

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| 1. research should aim to maximise benefit for individuals and society and minimise risk and harm |
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| 1. the rights and dignity of individuals and groups should be respected |
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| 1. wherever possible, participation should be voluntary and appropriately informed |
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| 1. research should be conducted with integrity and transparency |
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| 1. lines of responsibility and accountability should be clearly defined |
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| 1. independence of research should be maintained and where conflicts of interest cannot be avoided they should be made explicit. |
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**For all:**

Responsible Innovation (see Annex 1) – this section summarises how your project meets the principles of Responsible, Inclusive and Ethical Innovation as described by the REPHRAIN Centre

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| * Outline how diverse societal needs, values and expectations have been actively considered in the conception of the project and which groups have been engaged with as part of the research design process (*Note: These should encompass a combination of industry, policy, and third-sector organisations*) (100 words). * Identify how the project will engage with diverse stakeholder groups across both the research and innovation process in order to maximise alignment of the research and its outcomes with societal needs, values and expectations (*Note: This should include engagement with citizen groups themselves*) (100 words): * Identify how the project engages and incorporates multi-disciplinary perspectives (*Note: Projects should ideally incorporate at least two disciplinary perspectives in their development and conduct*) (50 words): * Identify the primary mechanisms and dissemination routes that will be used to ensure the open and accessible dissemination of research findings and outcomes (*Note: A range of communication outlets and methods should be considered in order to maximise potential reach to diverse stakeholder groups*) (100 words): * Identify whether there is a potential risk of any form of bias, unequal representation or unequal impact of the research in relation to particular societal groups and how this will be mitigated (100 words): |

Protecting Citizens - Summarise how your project supports and\or protects citizens in understanding and managing the value, threats and opportunities of their data (250 words maximum):

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Data Management (see Annex 1) – This section summarises how you will follow basic best practices on security and privacy with regards data (collection, storage, destruction):

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| **Assessment of Existing Data:** Where research draws on existing datasets (darknet platform data, social media data, surveys, polls, data from participatory design activities, network traces) have these been reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with the acceptable use and ethics requirements of the original data collection? **Y/N**  Please confirm your research data will be accurate, complete, authentic and reliable, compliant with GDPR and DPA. **Y/N**  Have you provided a detailed account of data sources (accounting for the need to protect anonymity) and management needs in your proposal? **Y/N**    How does your project observe the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) principles to ensure data management procedures are sound? (100 words)  Please confirm that you are able to meet the requirement of REPHRAIN to [record/report](https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/document/data-level.aspx) on data volume, types, formats, documentation standards, metadata, methodologies and source and reliability of third-party data. **Y/N**  Please confirm that you agree to your data files being checked, verified and placed on Bristol’s Research Data Storage Facility (RDSF) no longer than 12 months from grant end, if not earlier. **Y/N**  Do you agree to comply with and support REPHRAIN’s quality assurance of data process (see Annex 1)? **Y/N**  **Backup and Security of Data:** All research data generated through REPHRAIN will be safely stored on university infrastructure. Please provide assurance regarding the provisions for long-term, secure storage of research data (back-up, access controls etc.), sufficient for REPHRAIN’s research activities, at your institution (100 words).  Does your project involve handling sensitive, controlled or restricted data? **Y/N/NA**  If yes, what security measures have you included? (100 words)  **Consent, Anonymisation and Strategies to Enable Further Re-use of Data:** It is no longer advisable to guarantee anonymity (for more information, see [here](https://ico.org.uk/media/1061/anonymisation-code.pdf)). Please note that by signing this form you agree that, where applicable, you will remove any personal information from data and that all reasonable steps will be taken to protect the anonymity of the participants involved in this project.  What mechanisms have you put in place to ensure that consent is, in all cases, freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous, in compliance with GDPR requirements? (100 words)  **Management and Curation of Data:** How will data documentation (e.g., notes on procedural and methodological information) to be produced by the respective researchers (e.g., PDRAs), adhere to the [UK Data Service (UKDS) advice](https://www.ukdataservice.ac.uk/manage-data/format.aspx) on transcribing and organising data? (100 words)  As PI for the project \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I take responsibility for ensuring that the REPHRAIN policy on data sharing and archiving (see Annex 1) is adhered to. **Y/N** |

**Document Checklist**

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|  | **Documents attached (tick)** | **N/A (tick)** |
| **Approved institutional ethics application** |  |  |
| **Review protocol** |  |  |
| **Final proposal** |  |  |

**REPHRAIN Ethics Board outcome**

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| **Approval given** |
| Y / N |
| **Date** |
| dd/mm/yy |
| **If No, reasons and points to address:** |
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**Annex 1**

**1.1 What does Responsible Innovation mean in the context of the Centre?**

A fundamental aspect of the REPHRAIN Centre is its aim to actively promote, encourage and embed Responsible Innovation practices across the wider research community and its institutions. Privacy, technology and online harm represent an area of research that is subject to multiple tensions and competing viewpoints. As such, it is vital that research in this area upholds values consistent with responsible, ethical and inclusive innovation.

In line with the Responsible Research and Innovation approach taken by the European Commission (<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation>), all core and commissioned research undertaken through the Centre is expected to actively consider and anticipate the potential implications of the research and its outcomes, including how these may relate to current societal expectations of research and innovation. In particular, emphasis should be placed on addressing the potential for any differential impacts of research or its outcomes on different publics and ensuring that research and innovation is designed to be as inclusive as possible.

**1.2 Data Management** - REPHRAIN follows best practices on security and privacy with regards to data and operates under ESRC’s [Research Data Policy](https://esrc.ukri.org/files/about-us/policies-and-standards/esrc-research-data-policy/).

**1.2.1 Responsibilities:** All staff have responsibilities under GDPR/DPA, for which they must undertake mandatory training as determined by their institution. The relevant project PIs will direct the overall data management process, with respective researchers responsible for ensuring metadata production, cross-checks, back-up and other quality control activities. Additional training needs (e.g. research data policy, data protection policy and information security policy) should be identified to the REPHRAIN Centre Manager.

**1.2.2. Quality Assurance of Data:** While some projects will use physical instrumentation, others deploy desk-based and/or social survey techniques for data collection – REPHRAIN emphasises the value of quality control during data collection and handling. Data collected/extracted/imported will be checked for inconsistencies, inaccuracies and omissions by another team member. A robust data cleansing approach will be put in place (i.e., import, standardise, normalise and de-duplicate) for both qualitative and quantitative analysis. Raw (i.e., unprocessed) data will be retained for reference purposes under appropriate safeguards. As multiple universities are involved, REPHRAIN will also facilitate peer review of data as it is produced.

**1.2.3 REPHRAIN’s preparation of data for sharing and archiving policy** Relevant sections of the data will be made available for sharing via the [UKDA](https://www.data-archive.ac.uk/), subject to ensuring that measures to protect the privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and consent of participants are in place. (1) A spreadsheet will be created at project end containing metadata to enable other users to understand and access the data (e.g., guide to what data exists, cataloguing, classification, research methods, analysis process, context, copyright, IP, acronyms, data access controls, ethical sensitivities); (2) Any SPSS datafiles will be deposited as .por files and accompanied by documentation (e.g., syntax, interview schedule, sampling methodology, consent form PDF template) and data sheets will be shared as CSV files;(3) Digital recordings of stakeholder meetings will not be deposited in the UKDA (reducing participant identification). Instead, the materials developed will be published as datasets with a DOI which will be linked to the Centre website.All articles, reports and publications will state clearly that, where possible, data are available for use by others (e.g., citation of the DOI), generating further interest.