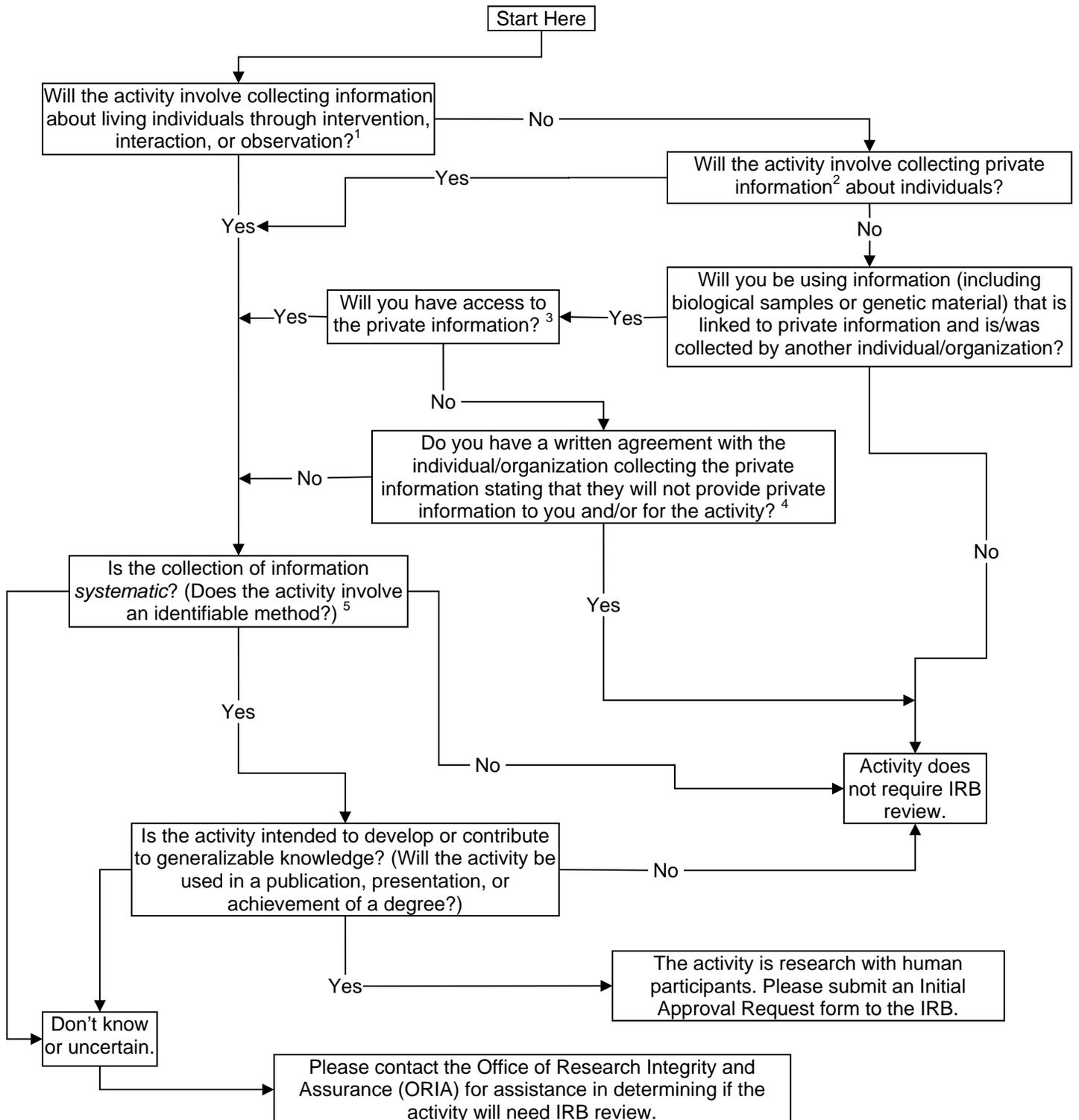


Is your activity covered by Cornell's Human Research Protection Program?

It is often difficult to determine if an activity requires review and approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) without significant discussions with someone who has extensive knowledge about the regulations and institutional policies. To help faculty, students and staff with this decision, a decision tree has been designed to identify whether or not activities and/or projects fall under the purview of Cornell University's Human Research Protection Program (HRPP). If you have any questions or need clarification on an issue, please contact the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA).



¹ Investigator self-experimentation is considered collection of information about living individuals through intervention, interaction, or observation. See IRB Policy #1 (<http://www.irb.cornell.edu/documents/IRB%20Policy%201.pdf>)

² Private information includes, but is not limited to:

- name
- address
- elements of dates related to an individual (e.g., birth date)
- email address
- numbers:
 - telephone
 - fax
 - social security
 - medical record
 - health beneficiary / health insurance
 - certificate or license numbers
 - vehicle
 - account numbers (e.g., credit card)
 - device identification numbers
 - serial numbers
 - any unique identifying numbers, characteristics, or codes (e.g., Global Positioning System (GPS) readings)
- Web URLs
- Internet Protocol (IP) addresses
- biometric identifiers (e.g., voice, fingerprints)
- full face photographs or comparable images
- biological samples or genetic material (e.g., human specimens, cells, cell lines, or data)

³ Will the data you are receiving be coded or de-identified, with no way for you to link data back to individuals? If so, you will not be considered to have access to private information.

⁴ A sample agreement is available from ORIA, if you wish to use one for your activity.

⁵ Common research methods include interviews, surveys, questionnaires, observation, shadowing, case studies, etc. Some methods are clearly systematic, such as surveys and scripted interviews; others are less formally structured but may still qualify as systematic, such as unstructured interviews and case studies. Additionally, some disciplines overlap in methodologies or “borrow” methods from other disciplines. For instance, researchers in linguistics or communication studies may use ethnographic methods to examine people’s spoken or written communication practices. While the University encourages the interdisciplinary use of research methods, researchers must be aware that they are responsible for obtaining the necessary ethical review when using new or unfamiliar methods.

Another way of considering the question is to ask: Is there a written (or formulated or articulated) plan for the activity? Does that plan reflect the norms of an established discipline? If you are still unsure if your activity would be considered systematic, please contact the ORIA office for assistance.