

Research Ethics Policy

Introduction

This Research Ethics Policy guides and governs all research activities conducted by Spark Street Advisors. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that research is conducted with the highest ethical standards, integrity, and adherence to applicable guidelines. Researchers, staff, and participants involved in research activities must comply with the principles outlined in this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all research conducted by or under the auspices of Spark Street Advisors, regardless of the funding source or type of research (e.g., biomedical, social sciences, humanities).

Ethical Principles

All research activities must adhere to the following ethical principles:

- a. **Respect for Persons:** Researchers must respect the autonomy and dignity of individuals and ensure informed and voluntary participation in research. Special protections must be in place for vulnerable populations.
- b. **Beneficence:** Research should maximize benefits and minimize harm to participants. The potential risks and benefits of research must be carefully considered.
- c. **Justice:** The benefits and burdens of research should be distributed fairly. Researchers must ensure that vulnerable populations are not unfairly targeted and that the benefits of research are accessible to all.
- d. **Integrity:** Researchers must conduct research with honesty, accuracy, and transparency. Fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism are strictly prohibited.
- e. **Privacy and Confidentiality:** Participants' privacy must be protected, and confidential information must be handled with care. Researchers should implement measures to safeguard participants' data.

Compliance with Guidelines

Researchers must comply with applicable national and international guidelines and standards, including but not limited to:

- a. [Declaration of Helsinki](#): Adherence to ethical principles for biomedical research involving human subjects
- b. [Belmont Report](#): Guidelines for the ethical conduct of biomedical and behavioral research involving human subjects based on the principles of respect of persons, beneficence, and justice.
- c. [Good Clinical Practice](#) (GCP): Quality standards for the design, conduct, performance, monitoring, auditing, recording, analyses, and reporting of clinical trials.
- d. **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval:** All human subjects research must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before initiation. We use [National Health Institute decision tool](#) for assessing whether research is considered human subject research.
- e. **Animal Welfare:** Research involving animals must comply with ethical standards for the care and use of laboratory animals.

Emphasizing participant rights, researchers must inform all participants of the aims of the research, anonymity and confidentiality, and data use and storage. Researchers must obtain informed written

consent for publications that can potentially identify an individual. For minors and participants unable to provide informed consent, it must be obtained from their legal guardian.

Responsibilities

- a. Principal Investigators: Responsible for ensuring the ethical conduct of research, obtaining necessary approvals, and providing proper supervision.
- b. Researchers and analysts: Must conduct research in accordance with ethical principles, guidelines, and relevant regulations.
- c. Institutional Review Board (IRB): Responsible for reviewing and approving research involving human subjects, ensuring compliance with ethical standards. While Spark Street does not have its own IRB, where IRB oversight is required, Spark Street partners with an IRB accredited [institution](#).

Training and Education

All researchers and staff involved in research activities must undergo [training on ethics](#). Continuous education on updates and changes to ethical standards is mandatory.

Reporting and Resolution of Ethical Concerns

Any concerns or violations of this policy should be reported to the Principal, Spark Street Advisors for prompt investigation and resolution. Whistleblower protections will be for individuals reporting in good faith.

Review and Revision

This policy will be periodically reviewed and updated as needed to reflect changes in ethical standards, guidelines, and regulations.

Implementation and Enforcement

Failure to comply with this Research Ethics Policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to suspension of research activities, withdrawal of funding, and termination of affiliation with Spark Street Advisors.