



**Huber Social
Human
Research Ethics
Committee
Terms of
Reference**

Version 2
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1. Objectives

The objectives of the Huber Social Human Research Ethics Committee (Huber Social HREC or HREC) are to:

- a. ~~To~~ assess the conduct of proposed human research, in particular that of social impact measurement research, against the ethical principles as outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC)'s National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018) (the "National Statement")¹, the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018 (the "Code")² and the Huber Social Principles for Ethical Research (the "Principles");
- b. Ensure the 'do no harm' principle is upheld in all human research projects reviewed, and that the protection of research participants' welfare and rights is of the utmost priority; and
- c. To facilitate human research, particularly social impact measurement research, that is or will be of benefit to the wider community.

¹ National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (Updated 2018). The National Health and Medical Research Council, the Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Available for download at www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e72

² Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018. National Health and Medical Research Council, Australian Research Council and Universities Australia. Available for download at www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/r41



2. Functions and Responsibilities

The functions of the Huber Social HREC are to:

- a. Review each 'high-risk' human research project submitted as an independent [body](#);
- b. Identify any potential conflicts of interest prior to review;
- c. Assess each project for compliance with the principles of ethical human research as set out in the National Statement, the Code, and Principles, including project methodologies and tools;
- d. Consider the ethical risks and benefits posed to participants of each aspect of the project, with particular attention to projects involving participants from marginalised social groups, including but not limited to:
 - i. Young people under the age of 18
 - ii. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or other Indigenous Peoples
 - iii. People who are subject to cognitive impairment, intellectual disability or mental illness
 - iv. People who are victims of abuse or other physical or mental trauma
 - v. People who are subject to impaired capacity for communication
 - vi. People who are subject to monetary or in-kind inducements to participate in said research;
- e. Promote open and free discussion of ethical assessments among the relevant Huber Social HREC members;
- f. Determine to approve, request more information, or withhold approval of research project, and whether to make recommendations or impose specific conditions attached to this decision;
- g. Communicate review decision in a timely and transparent method;
- h. Monitor ongoing research project measurement activities as necessary through reports, amendments, or other notifications;
- i. Receive and address any complaints or decisions appeals; and
- j. Provide routine updates to Huber Social HREC members on HREC activities, protocol updates, and other relevant information.

For human research projects considered to be 'low-risk,' an internal panel comprised of the Huber Social HREC Chair, Deputy Chair and Secretariat will be convened to carry out the above functions.



3. Scope

The responsibilities and functions of the Huber Social HREC apply to:

- a. Human research projects carried out by Huber Social staff;
- b. Human research projects carried out by Huber Social accredited consultants;
- c. Any client staff or other individuals who provide, conduct or support research activities of the aforementioned Huber Social human research projects; and
- d. Any external institutions seeking ethical approval of a human research project focussed specifically on undertaking social impact measurement (evaluation).

Huber Social HREC will accept another institution's HREC review and decision as sufficient ethical review, so long as the external institution is also an NHMRC registered HREC.



4. Accountability

Huber Social HREC is held accountable in the following aspects:

- a. Huber Social HREC is only accountable for ethical review of the social impact measurement project being proposed, not the intervention or service that is being evaluated. However, Huber Social must be confident that the intervention or service being measured is an ethical undertaking and is being conducted by an ethical and reputable organisation.
- b. Huber Social HREC is accountable to the Project Leads/Primary Researchers of those human research projects submitted for ethical review:
 - i. To offer guidance and support on ethical approval application, including accessibility to all necessary resources;
 - ii. To provide a timely and transparent response when a decision has been made on the project status;
 - iii. To advise on concerns raised and strategies for mitigation, as appropriate; and
 - iv. To receive and address any complaints or requests made by the Project Lead/Primary Researcher with respect to an ethical approval decision.
- c. Huber Social HREC is accountable to the Huber Social CEO and Board:
 - i. To provide regular updates on HREC activities;
 - ii. To notify of any change in HREC membership; and
 - iii. To report any relevant issues or conflicts in a timely manner.
- d. Huber Social HREC is accountable to the HREC members:
 - i. To provide regular updates on HREC activities;
 - ii. To offer opportunities for continued learning and engagement with new ethical review processes; and
 - iii. To receive and address any complaints or requests made by HREC members.



5. Reporting

The Huber Social HREC will report its activities to the following bodies:

- a. The Huber Social HREC will report annually to the NHMRC, through the Australian Health Ethics Committee (AHEC) per HREC registration requirements.
- b. In addition, the Huber Social HREC reports its activity to HREC members on a quarterly basis, and to Huber Social CEO and Board on a yearly basis.
- c. Minutes are taken at each review meeting, and the decisions of each meeting recorded for reference.



6. Membership

6.1 Composition

Huber Social HREC membership is established in accordance with the NHMRC National Statement. The committee will:

- a. Be comprised of at least eight members;
- b. Have an even mix of male and female members;
- c. Have no more than four internal (Huber Social) members;
- d. Meet the following membership requirements, as stated in the National Statement:
 - i. a chairperson with suitable experience;
 - ii. at least two lay people, one man and one woman, who have no affiliation with Huber Social and do not currently engage in medical, scientific, legal or academic work;
 - iii. at least one person with knowledge of, and current experience in, the professional care, counselling or treatment of people;
 - iv. at least one person who performs a pastoral care role in a community;
 - v. at least one lawyer; and
 - vi. at least two people with current research experience that is relevant to research proposals to be considered at the meetings they attend.
- e. When necessary and deemed appropriate, the Huber Social HREC will be able to consult on ethical review of a project with a non-HREC member, provided they are considered to have the required expertise and have no conflict of interest with the project under review. These external experts will not have a vote in final approval decision.

6.6.2 Member Appointment

6.6.16.2.1 Recruitment requirements

- a. Members must be over the age of 18 years old.
- b. Members must be able to demonstrate a deep understanding of:
 - i. Social and ethical issues in general;
 - ii. Social and ethical issues in specific areas of expertise;
 - iii. Social impact measurement approaches;
 - iv. Social and ethical issues and risks with respect to human research; and
 - v. Huber Social's vision and values
- c. Potential new members must apply to join the HREC using the HREC membership application form. Members will be asked to:
 - i. Detail their motivation for joining the HREC;
 - ii. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest; and



iii. agree to fulfill member responsibilities.

6.6.36.2.2 Member Selection

- a. Applications for new committee members must be reviewed by the Chair and Deputy Chair.
- b. They may use the new member criteria and evaluation matrix outline in the New Member Due Diligence form to assist in their assessment and decision making.

6.6.46.2.3 Member Approval

- a. Appointment of each external Huber Social HREC Member must be approved by the Huber Social [Board](#).
- b. New members are advised via email by the Chair.
- c. Members are appointed for five year terms and may serve no more than two terms with the committee.
- d. Extensions are permissible when necessary (i.e. while recruiting a new member to replace an outgoing member, or if said member has a unique expertise that is essential for the function of the HREC).

6.76.3 Member Responsibilities

Upon acceptance of membership approval, HREC members are obliged to comply with the following responsibilities:

- a. New members must participate in a one-hour induction meeting with the Deputy Chair;
- b. Members must commit to a minimum level of participation in HREC activities:
 - i. Attendance at the Huber Social HREC annual meeting;
 - ii. Participation in at least three (3) review meetings per year; and
 - iii. Review and decision-making on at least three (3) human research projects per year.
- c. HREC members must maintain the currency of their knowledge with respect to the National Standards, the Code, and the Principles.
- d. HREC members are unpaid volunteers and may not receive financial compensation for their services.
- e. If a member is unable to fulfil these responsibilities, they may be eligible for dismissal from the HREC.

6.86.4 Leaving the HREC

- a. Members may leave the HREC at any time, either voluntarily or based on grounds for dismissal.
- b. The justifications for dismissal may include but are not limited to:
 - i. Failure to embody the values of Huber Social (integrity, communication, and adventure);
 - ii. Failure to meet the minimum requirements of participation in committee activities; or
 - iii. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest.
- c. Dismissal of an HREC member will be decided by the Huber Social Board in a simple majority vote.
- d. The HREC member in question will be notified of their dismissal via email and will have the opportunity to discuss this decision with the HREC Chair and Deputy Chair.

6.96.5 Liability Coverage for Members

- a. Huber Social accepts legal responsibility for all decisions and advice received from the Huber Social HREC members.



b. As voluntary contributors to Huber Social research, Huber Social HREC Members are granted coverage under the Public Liability Insurance. Huber Social will provide legal protection in respect to any liabilities that may arise in the course of undertaking work as part of their Huber Social HREC Member duties.

6.6 Huber Social HREC Secretariat

a. To facilitate the function of the Huber Social HREC processes and governance, a Huber Social HREC Secretariat will also be established.

b. Responsibilities will include the management of general correspondence, HREC review meeting scheduling, providing guidance in policies and procedures, and continued development of tools and templates.

c. The secretariat will be comprised of one to two internal Huber Social staff, as needed and available.



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