

**İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi
Faculty of Computer Engineering and
Informatics**

User Experience Lab

**Research Ethics Agreement
(April 16, 2015)**

Research Ethics Agreement

1. All researchers, interns, technical staff, students, and personnel who work, conduct research, receive training in the laboratory, or have access to research results (even if not directly involved in the research) are required to carry out all their activities in accordance with the Research Ethics Agreement.
2. Researchers must be aware of the standards, principles, and generally accepted user research methods in their field.
3. Researchers must keep up with the current literature related to their area of expertise and improve themselves accordingly.
4. Researchers are obliged to provide services that meet the requirements of the institutions commissioning the research.
5. Researchers must not intentionally mislead or convince institutions (that have commissioned or might commission research) about the suitability of a service.
6. Researchers may not share results obtained from a study with others without the permission of the institution that commissioned the research.
7. When using work, methods, or tools belonging to another person or institution, intellectual property rights must be respected, and the source of the information must be clearly declared to the parties involved. Researchers must investigate usage rights and obtain all necessary permissions.
8. The safety, comfort, and well-being of users are the primary goals.
9. No study may aim to deceive or mislead users.
10. Every researcher is accountable first to the user, then to the commissioning institution and its administrators.
11. Participation in research is based on voluntary consent.
12. Individuals under the age of 18 cannot participate in any study without parental consent.
13. Researchers are obliged to consider special needs and take all necessary precautions to prevent risky or harmful situations when involving elderly, disabled, or underage participants.
14. Individuals who are mentally incapable of understanding the concept of voluntary participation cannot take part in any study.
15. Participants cannot be offered financial incentives, but losses due to participation (e.g., time off work) may be compensated.
16. Research must not include physical or psychological pressure elements, even with participant consent.
17. Techniques requiring participants to be suddenly and unexpectedly stimulated may not be used, even if necessary for the research.
18. Stimuli that may trigger health problems (e.g., epilepsy) should not be used.
19. Techniques that endanger participants or any living beings cannot be used.
20. Techniques that would place participants in inappropriate or distressing situations are not permitted.
21. Faulty, poorly maintained, or unrepaired devices that could endanger participants cannot be used in research.
22. Private life information of participants may not be targeted or revealed without consent.
23. Privately obtained interviews, conversations, or opinions cannot be used as data without permission.
24. Participant data (audio, video, images, etc.) cannot be used for purposes other than research or shared without consent.

25. Such data must be processed to ensure anonymity (e.g., pixelation, masking, voice alteration).
26. The identities of institutions, researchers, and individuals involved in the research must be kept confidential unless otherwise agreed.
27. If participant data is delivered to the commissioning institution, responsible parties must be properly informed.
28. Researchers must not discriminate based on age, gender, sexual orientation, race, nationality, culture, religion, disability, occupation, socioeconomic status, or any characteristic protected by law.
29. Researchers may not make disparaging comments about participants, clients, colleagues, superiors, or trainees in public.
30. Researchers may not take part in any illegal study. If encountered, they must inform their supervisors and relevant authorities.
31. No participant can be asked about their religious beliefs, political views, or race. These cannot be the subject of the research.
32. If not methodologically relevant, questions about age, gender, income, or education level must not be asked.
33. All participants must sign a consent form confirming they voluntarily participate and can withdraw at any time.
34. If a signed consent form is missing or lost, the participant's data must be excluded and deleted.
35. If audio/video is recorded, observation equipment must be shown and the observation room introduced to participants.
36. Participants must be informed about the purpose of the study before it begins.
37. No research-related information may be withheld from participants unless it's necessary for the study's outcome.
38. If information is withheld for methodological reasons, it must be disclosed immediately after data collection.
39. Studies must not include guidance designed to manipulate participant behavior, perceptions, or attitudes. Researchers must identify and prevent unintentional influence.
40. All researchers must act in the interest of the commissioning institution throughout the study.
41. Researchers must minimize research costs without compromising methodological quality.
42. No technique that may damage devices or prototypes may be used unless damage is unavoidable for the study (e.g., crash tests).
43. Even if not within the scope or budget of the study, any identified issues that may harm users or the environment must be reported to the commissioning institution.
44. Similarly, serious usability issues identified outside the study scope must also be reported.
45. Every researcher is responsible for selecting and developing the most appropriate method to achieve the research goals.
46. Researchers must improve themselves and stay up to date within their areas of responsibility.
47. No researcher should promise to conduct research on topics outside their education and experience.
48. Researchers should not make methodological decisions beyond their qualifications.
49. Researchers should not propose designs for areas they are not trained or experienced in.
50. Under Articles 48 and 49, unqualified researchers may only participate under supervision as part of their training.
51. Researchers must notify supervisors if they feel incapable of achieving research goals due to lack of skills or capacity; supervisors must report these limitations to the institution.

52. Reports must transparently describe both successes and limitations of the research.
53. Results must be documented objectively, without hiding positive or negative findings, and without bias toward the evaluated system.
54. If researchers feel influenced by external pressure (explicit or hidden), they must inform supervisors and the institution.
55. No judgment may be presented as data-driven unless it truly is.
56. Judgments must be as objective, consistent, and based on accepted principles as possible.
57. If personal experience or opinion is shared, this must be clearly stated.
58. If the agreement is revised for any reason, all researchers must read and reaffirm their commitment to the updated terms.
59. The agreement must be reviewed and updated in line with evolving research techniques, emerging subjects, and universal developments in research ethics.

The following resources were utilized in the creation of the articles in this agreement:

The "UPA Code of Professional Conduct", declared by UPA in 2005,
and
The UTRLAB Research Ethics Agreement, dated December 8, 2008.

"I hereby state that I have read and understood the Research Ethics Agreement, consisting of 59 articles dated April 15, 2015, and I pledge to comply with all its rules in all my activities."