

FIRST EMAIL

SUBJECT: Study materials for a meta-scientific research project

Dear [NAME],

We are a team of researchers asking for your **help with a meta-scientific study** on the content of participant consent forms in psychological research.

We are contacting you about your article [TITLE] ([YEAR], [JOURNAL]). This article is included in a random sample of papers we have drawn from PsycInfo, and we have identified you as the corresponding author of this publication.

What we are asking you for

We would like to kindly ask you to provide us with the **consent form you used [in this study/study X in the paper]** in its original language (and English language, if available). We would also be interested in any **information materials given to participants** you used in this study beyond the consent form (this does not include instructions or stimulus materials, but rather procedural information about the study, participation, or data processing).

We understand that this may be a delicate topic as there is some uncertainty among social scientists as to how to properly formulate consent forms. For this reason, we would like to assure you that **all communication and materials will remain confidential**. Our report will only include summary data from which no included study can be identified.

For your study to be eligible, **(1) personal data** must have been collected, **(2) data collection** for the study must have taken place **within the European Union/European Economic Area (3)** on or after **May 24th, 2016**. From reading your paper, we believe that your study might be eligible, but of course, we would like you to confirm this. If it is not eligible, we would appreciate a short note, but we would no longer ask for sending the consent form.

Due to the timeline of our study, it would be great if you could respond to this email **within 3 weeks**.

What do you get in return

In exchange for your help, we're happy to **donate €10** in your name to one of the following **charities** (your choice):

- Against Malaria Foundation – Funding and distributing anti-malaria nets (<https://www.againstmalaria.com/>)
- Atmosfair – Effective climate protection via CO₂ offsetting (<https://www.atmosfair.de/en/>)
- The charity foundation of Ruhr University Bochum (<https://www.rub-stiftung.de/>)

Who we are

Our team consists of two psychologists, Malte Elson and Annika Külpmann from the [Psychology of Human Technology Interaction](#) lab at Ruhr University Bochum, and two legal scholars, Franziska Boehm and Dara Hallinan from the [Intellectual Property Rights](#) group at Leibniz Institute for Information Infrastructure, Karlsruhe. If you would like to learn more about this study, you can read the preregistration here: [\[Link to preregistration\]](#)

We understand that this is a particularly busy, stressful time, and would highly appreciate your support. Taken together, we're asking for three things:

- 1. Confirmation of eligibility** (Personal data collected in the EEA after May 24th, 2016).
- 2. Sending the consent form** and any further information materials given to participants.
- 3. Selecting a charity** you'd like us to donate your €10 to.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.
Thanks a lot for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Malte Elson, Annika Külpmann, Dara Hallinan, and Franziska Boehm

P.S. In case we should have addressed you with a wrong title, a wrong name, or linked you to a paper you did not (co-)author, we sincerely apologize. We have tried our best to ensure that all information in this email is correct, but it is possible that some errors escaped us. Please feel free to alert us to any such mistake by replying to this email (to malte.elson@rub.de).

REMINDER EMAIL

Dear [NAME],

About three weeks ago I sent you an email about a **meta-scientific study** on the contents of participant consent forms in psychological research. I have not received a response yet, so just in case you have missed it, I am copying the contents of the message below and have also CC'ed the first/senior author for this email:

We are contacting you about your article [TITLE] ([YEAR], [JOURNAL]). This article is included in a random sample of papers we have drawn from PsycInfo, and we have identified you as the corresponding author of this publication.

What we are asking you for

We would like to kindly ask you to provide us with the **consent form you used [in this study/study X in the paper]** in its original language (and English language, if available). We would also be interested in any **information materials given to participants** you used in this study beyond the consent form (this does not include instructions or stimulus materials, but rather procedural information about the study, participation, or data processing).

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For your study to be eligible, **(1) personal data** must have been collected, **(2) data collection** for the study must have taken place **within the European Union/European Economic Area (3)** on or after **May 24th, 2016**. From reading your paper, we believe that your study might be eligible, but of course, we would like you to confirm this. If it is not eligible, we would appreciate a short note, but we would no longer ask for sending the consent form.

Due to the timeline of our study, it would be great if you could respond to this email **within 1 week**.

What do you get in return

In exchange for your help, we're happy to **donate €10** in your name to one of the following **charities** (your choice):

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Malte Elson, Annika Külpmann, Dara Hallinan, and Franziska Boehm

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