



Good Sex Work Research Checklist

Do you want to do research with Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition, or another sex worker group? Here are the criteria that we look at when deciding whether or not to get involved with research/ers.

How to use the tool

- Go through the criteria and see what we think makes an *undesirable* and *great* project.
- For each criterion, use a highlighter or pen to check whether *your* project falls more on the ‘undesirable’ side or on the ‘great’ side. Use the NOTES column to jot down details.
- Once you get to the end, tally your checkmarks or highlights:
 - More ‘Undesirable’ checkmarks? Address the undesirable aspects, and then use the tool again.
 - More ‘Great’ checkmarks? [Contact us!](#)

Criterion	Sign of an <i>undesirable</i> project 	Sign of a <i>great</i> project 	NOTES Where's <i>your</i> project at?
Introduction/overview of the project	The project description seems vague or unclear, or feels unsatisfying. It does not indicate the kinds of questions to be asked, or the kinds of information participants have to provide.	Sex workers and/or sex worker groups respectfully approached. The project description is clear about the goals, questions, funding, and kinds of information participants will have to provide.	

Criterion	Sign of an <i>undesirable</i> project 	Sign of a <i>great</i> project 	NOTES Where's <i>your</i> project at?
Outline of benefits to participants	No indication of how the study will benefit the participants and/or sex workers living in our city.	The benefits are clearly outlined, and these are real benefits to participants and/or to our sex work communities. Benefits will be more than just "contributing to knowledge."	
Outline of risks to participants	<p>No risks are identified, or an overly basic and/or poorly thought-out list of potential risks to study participants.</p> <p>Remember that studies that solicit personal health information, personal experiences of stigma, exclusion, and/or violence can leave participants feeling emotionally rough, triggered, isolated, and/or very alone. If studies don't acknowledge and account for these risks, they are bad studies.</p>	<p>Any anticipated risks to participants and/or sex work communities, however small, are outlined and the benefits of the project justify the risks to participants.</p> <p>Remember that risks increase the more personal the questions are. The researcher acknowledges this and indicates how they will help to address any risks that arise. (This could mean giving questions in advance, having peers do the interviews, providing a list of local sex work-friendly support services, having a support worker or elder close by if needed, etc.)</p>	
Protection of privacy/anonymity	No indication of how participant privacy/anonymity will be protected.	The project makes clear that participant privacy or anonymity will be protected, and how.	

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Accessibility of findings, and timeline	No indication of how participants and/or communities will be able to access the findings once the project is over. Limited or no information about timelines.	Clear indication of how and when results will be accessible to participants and/or communities. Research can seem to proceed at a very slow pace, but the researcher is upfront about timelines.	
Project funding	The project is funded by an organization with a clear anti-sex work policy, or that has been involved with anti-sex work(er) actions in the past.	The project is funded by an organization with a pro-sex work policy, or with a history of involvement in actions that support sex worker communities.	
Project team	The project is undertaken or supervised by a researcher(s) who has been involved in anti-sex work legal cases, activism, or research.	The project team includes a sex worker research partner or consultant who liaises with sex worker communities.	
Appropriateness of questions	The project asks for deeply personal information about health, children or dependent family members, sexual practices, experiences of violence, etc., without demonstrating how this information is essential to the project.	If the project requires the sharing of personal information, it is made clear why and how the sharing of such information is necessary and how participants will be supported during and after such sharing.	
Remuneration (may be excused for projects led by students without funds)	The project offers no form of remuneration (cash, a gift card, or a donation, for example) in exchange for participants' time and the sharing of experiences and/or expertise.	The project offers appropriate remuneration for people's time.	

Criterion	Sign of an <i>undesirable</i> project 	Sign of a <i>great</i> project 	NOTES Where's <i>your</i> project at?
Ethics submission without prior consultation	The project has already moved ahead with an ethics submission (and possibly approval), even though it is a poor study or project (i.e. it has none or only a few of the criteria for a great study).	The project has yet to apply for ethics, and the researcher is working with sex worker communities to help shape the study, OR the project has ethics approval, but with the ability for the researcher to collaborate with sex worker communities to help shape/finalize the project.	

This resource was developed by SWWAC: Sex Workers of Winnipeg Action Coalition

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For the original DOC file or if you have any questions or feedback, contact SWWAC via sexworkwinnipeg.com/get-involved.

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