



Toward Inclusive Excellence: Insights from BIPOC First-Generation Students on Institutional Support and Equity Practices in Canadian Higher Education

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Central University Research Ethics Committee Approval Reference: [EDUC_C1A_24_035]

1. Introductory paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Feel free to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

2. Why is this research being conducted?

This research is prompted by the recognition of the unique experiences of BIPOC and first-generation students in Canadian higher education. The study aims to understand the lived experiences of BIPOC first-generation students and explore the relationship between their personal narratives and academic journeys and the role of Canadian universities.

This research aims to explore the perspectives and experiences of BIPOC first-generation students in higher education, with a specific focus on their life stories, including their perceptions of identity, personal growth, and overall experiences within the institution. The study seeks to understand the extent to which these students feel supported by the educational institution. By addressing these questions, the research aims to provide valuable insights from the life experiences of students, contributing to a more inclusive and supportive higher education environment for BIPOC first-generation students.

3. Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited to participate in the study because you meet the specific criteria that align with the research objectives. The study aims to recruit 15 to 20 participants who:

- Are students above the age of 18, enrolled in a four-year undergraduate program at a Canadian U15 institution.
- Identify as a visible minority or Indigenous (as defined by Canadian Census).
- Are first-generation students, meaning their parent/guardian's education level is lower than a four-year university bachelor's degree.

Exclusion criteria include any persons with a personal relationship to the researcher.

In the event of more interest than available participant spots, applicants will be randomly chosen from those who submitted the interest form. The selection process will involve dividing applicants based on the fifteen target institutions, with 1-2 participants chosen from each institution. Applicants will be assigned a number and selected using the Google random number generator tool.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether to take part. You can withdraw yourself from the research, without giving a reason, by advising me of this decision. The deadline by which you can withdraw any information you have contributed to the research is **June 1, 2024 [01/06/24]**. The personal information of all participants and potential participants who withdraw will have their information deleted. If you wish to withdraw a portion of your information, including sections of data obtained from interviews, they may inform me until June 1, 2024.

5. What will happen to me if I take part in the research?

Here is what to expect if you participate in the study:

- You will be asked to consent to providing your contact details and eligibility for participation in the study via a secure online form, prior to becoming a participant of the study.
- The entirety of the study will be conducted remotely, through secure email communication and secure Teams virtual meetings. There is no anticipated in-person research in the scope of this study.
- Prior to your involvement in this study, you will be asked to provide consent to participate in the study through the completion of a signed consent form, communicated via email.
- Your personal time contribution to this project, outside of communication, is expected to be an approximately **hour-long** interview, conducted virtually.
- This interview will cover the following areas of discussion and potential questions:
 - Questions about your field of study and personal goals in higher education.
 - Exploration of how your identity, especially as a BIPOC first-gen student, shapes your experience.
 - Reflection on personal growth, challenges, and influential factors in your academic journey.
 - Discussion on resources, programs, or initiatives that contributed significantly to your success.
 - Looking back, how the university supported your development, and any desired changes in policies or resources.
- Please be mindful that the following topics may arise in discussion, which may be **sensitive**:
 - Topics of race and/or ethnic background
 - Topics of family (parents or guardian) background
- This project will conclude September 30, 2024. Within this time, you will only be expected to participate in a single interview, scheduled within March to April, at your convenience. However, if there is any information which requires clarification, you may be contacted via email before the end of the project.
- With your consent, I would like to record the audio of the virtual interview, to have an accurate record of our conversation.
- During the interview, you can ask to pause or stop the research activities at any time. You may also strike or withdraw information from the record. You may withdraw from the study at any point up to June 1, 2024.

6. What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?

Participating in this study holds no expected disadvantages or risks. To ensure confidentiality, all participants will receive pseudonyms (fake names). Explicit consent is required for inclusion of race, parental education, and educational institution details in the reported data. Those opting not to provide specific information will be labelled generically. Anonymization measures will be applied to protect privacy, including the removal or anonymization of all irrelevant identifying data. Participants may request to keep specific information confidential, ensuring their comfort and privacy throughout the research process.

7. Are there any benefits in taking part?

Participating in this research is a valuable opportunity for personal reflection, potentially leading to a deeper understanding of your growth and success within the institution. Your insights may extend beyond individual benefits, positively influencing your social networks. For those considering post-graduate education, this reflective process can serve as a foundation for continued personal development.

Moreover, your participation contributes to the academic community by providing insights into the practices of Canadian higher education institutions. While the study is non-generalizable, it aims to guide institutional practices by exploring the lived experiences of marginalized students. Your contribution can help reshape policies and practices, fostering a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for students.

8. What information will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?

The information collected for this research will centre around your experiences as an undergraduate student of BIPOC first-generation background in a Canadian university. This data is crucial to understanding potential gaps or disconnects between institutional EDI goals and the realities of students' needs and life experiences.

Types of Data and Usage:

- **Participant Selection Form Data:** Hosted on University of Oxford Nexus365 applications, including OneDrive and Sharepoint, this form collects demographic and eligibility information to ensure participants meet the criteria. Results will be securely stored on the researcher's University of Oxford OneDrive account.
- **Communication Data:** All communication will be conducted via University of Oxford official Outlook email to ensure security and confidentiality.
- **Consent Forms:** Sent and received through the researcher's University of Oxford official Outlook email, signed consent forms will be stored securely on OneDrive.
- **Interview Data:** Virtual interviews via Teams will be conducted with participants. With their consent, interviews will be recorded; audio recording will be separated from the video, and video recordings will be deleted. The final audio recordings will be securely stored on OneDrive. Transcriptions will also be stored on OneDrive.

Data Storage and Duration:

- Location: All data and information will be stored on University of Oxford hosted Nexus365 applications, including OneDrive and Sharepoint.
- Security Measures: These platforms provide robust security measures to safeguard the data.
- Duration: Personal contact information of participant applicants will be retained until the completion of the project, August 30, 2024, unless otherwise requested. Identifiable data, including consent forms, will be stored securely for three-years after the completion of the research. After the three-year period, all research data will be permanently deleted to uphold data security and confidentiality.

9. Will the research be published? Could I be identified from any publications or other research outputs?

The findings from the research will be written up for my master's dissertation. A copy of my dissertation will be deposited both in print and online in the [Oxford University Research Archive](#), where it will be publicly available to facilitate its use in future research.

There is potential for this research to be further shared through academic publication in a peer-reviewed journal, as a conference presentation, as a publicly available report, or a publication on a website.

Participants will not be able to be directly identifiable from any research outputs. To ensure confidentiality, all participants will receive pseudonyms (fake names). Explicit consent is required for inclusion of race, parental education, educational institution details, and quotations used (without identifying information) in the reported data. Those opting not to provide specific information will be labelled generically. Anonymization measures will be applied to protect privacy, including the removal or anonymization of all irrelevant identifying data. Participants may request to keep specific information confidential, ensuring their comfort and privacy throughout the research process.

10. Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data, and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the research. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that is performed in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from the University's Information Compliance web site at <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>.

11. Who has reviewed this research?

This research has received ethics approval from a subcommittee of the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. (Ethics reference: **EDUC_C1A_24_035**).

12. Who do I contact if I have a concern about the research or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please contact Nawreen Hena at nawreen.hena@stcatz.ox.ac.uk or James Robson at james.robson@education.ox.ac.uk, and we will do our best to answer your query. We will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal

complaint, please contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Oxford who will seek to resolve the matter as soon as possible:

The Chair, Education Departmental Research Ethics Committee;
Email: staff.curec@education.ox.ac.uk / student.curec@education.ox.ac.uk (as applicable)
Department of Education
University of Oxford, 15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY

13. Further Information and Contact Details

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

Nawreen Hena
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University of Oxford, 15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX26PY
University email: nawreen.hena@stcatz.ox.ac.uk