**"Research is to see what everybody has seen and think what nobody has thought."**

 -Albert Szent-Györgyi[[1]](#footnote-1)

**Conducting Research at the Los Angeles Community College District**

The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) recognizes the important role of research as a method for building knowledge, as a means to understanding various issues, and as an approach to enhancing the services we provide to students. Because of this, we thank you for your interest in conducting research here. Our employees and students, as well external researchers, may be permitted to conduct research at the District providing that their work meets a certain standard of integrity, aligns with District’s mission and vision, and demonstrates a clear benefit to the District. To meet these criteria, the researcher must complete the following steps:

1. Complete Required Human Subjects Research Training
2. Obtain Institutional Approval
3. Submit an IRB Application
4. Maintain Research Protocol

**STEP 1: Complete Required Human Subjects Research Training**

Anyone wishing to conduct research within the District must complete Human Subjects Research Training. The training provides information about issues that may arise in the context of conducting research, with a focus on the protection of human subjects. The training is provided by CITI Program.

Please go the website (<https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/>), register as an affiliate of the “Los Angeles Community College District” organization and create a username and password. Enroll in and complete the training; you are not required to complete the modules in one sitting and your progress will be saved as long as you use your login information. If you are uncertain about whether you need to complete this training, please contact the college research office or LACCD IRB (esc-irb@email.laccd.edu). Once this requirement is completed, you may proceed to step 2.

**STEP 2: Obtain Institutional Approval**

To obtain approval to conduct your investigation, you must complete the research review process conducted by College Institutional Effectiveness Office or the District Research Committee (DRC), if research is proposed across more than one LACCD campus. The purpose of this review process is to ensure that the proposed research meets a certain standard of integrity (e.g., having a clear research question, sound research design, appropriate methodology, etc.), is aligned with the District’s mission and vision, and demonstrates a clear benefit to the District.

Please note that this step, obtaining institutional approval, does not require the District to allow you access to their resources, nor does it negate the rights of subjects to decline participation. Approval from the College or DRC does mean that your proposal is methodologically sound and is likely to yield benefits to the District that outweigh any cost in resources.

The research review process entails determining the level of review that is required for your project and completing an application. There are resources available on the LACCD IRB Page and on the website for the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts/index.html>) to help you make a determination whether an activity is considered research or if the human subject research is eligible for Exemption. If you are unsure, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on your campus or the IRB office (esc-irb@email.laccd.edu). Once you determine the level of review, complete the appropriate application (either “LACCD APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM IRB REVIEW” or “LACCD APPLICATION FOR EXPEDITED AND FULL IRB REVIEW”). Submit the IRB application to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness on your campus and they will do an initial review of the application. If the proposal is approved, the campus will complete the “Institutional Approval” form and you may proceed to step 3.

**STEP 3: Submit an IRB Application**

The IRB application, along with supporting documents, may be submitted electronically to the IRB office (esc-irb@email.laccd.edu). Depending on the level of review required, the application will be reviewed by the full committee or by an IRB representative.

The IRB will be responsible for reviewing proposed research projects that involves the use of human subjects; ensuring that the individuals involved in the project are treated ethically; ensure that all subjects are provided with substantial information about the study and consent to be a subject in the study; and ensuring that all private information will be handled with confidentiality. Specifically, the IRB is charged with evaluating each project’s compliance with ethical standards in regard to issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, and any risk to the participants (i.e., 45 CFR 46 (the Common Rule) and the principles of the Belmont Report).

Once the application is reviewed, the primary investigator will be notified electronically regarding the disposition of their application. The research may only be conducted once IRB approval has been obtained.

**STEP 4: Maintain Research Protocol**

Once your IRB application has been approved, your research protocol is valid for one year. Researchers are responsible for maintaining their research protocol current; this is accomplished by submitting necessary updates and forms to the IRB, such as an Amendment Application if an investigator wants to make changes to the already approved research protocol or an Adverse Event Reporting Form in case an adverse event occurs. If you wish to continue your research after this time frame, you will need to submit the Continuing Review Application to renew the research protocol for another year. Once your research has concluded, researchers are also asked to submit a Final Report Form that delineates information about your study and its findings.

1. Szent-Györgyi, A. (1957). *Bioenergetics* (p. 57). New York, Academic Press, Inc. Retrieved from: <https://www.scribd.com/document/38515778/Albert-Szent-Gyorgyi-Bioenergetics> on October 17, 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)