



## Letter of Information

# Pandemic Perceived Publication Pressure in Canada Pre- and Post-COVID-19

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**Purpose of the Study**

We would like to invite you to take part in a study on pressure you experience while publishing in academia. The purpose of this survey is to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has had on publication pressure experienced by graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and principal investigators across Canada. Information gathered during this survey will be written up as a scholarly journal article and potentially presented at conferences.

What we learn from this survey will help us identify how publication pressure differs across groups of researchers. By understanding these subtle differences, our aim is that more targeted supports can be put in place to support researchers.

You are eligible to take part in this study if:

1. Your current position is one of the following:
  - a. A thesis-based Master's or PhD Student
  - b. A postdoctoral fellow
  - c. A principal investigator (early career, mid-career, or senior)
2. You are based at a Canadian institution

**Procedures involved in the Research**

You will be asked to complete one online survey. This survey is **voluntary**, you do not need to participate should you choose not to. You will be provided with a link to complete the survey on LimeSurvey. It should take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. This survey will be open from April 5, 2021 to April 30, 2021. If you wish to participate, please complete the consent module at the beginning of the survey and then fill out the following questions.

**Potential Benefits**

This research will not benefit you directly. You may receive indirect benefit if the findings of this study are used to develop supports for researchers that are implemented at your institution.

By participating in this study, you have the option of entering a draw for one of 10 of \$25 gift certificates using [GiftCertificates.ca](http://GiftCertificates.ca). Draw winners will be able to select from over 70 Canadian brands to redeem their gift certificate. A potential benefit of completing this survey is being entered into this draw.

### **Potential Harms, Risks or Discomforts**

The risks involved in participating in this study are minimal. You may feel uneasy answering certain demographic questions related to the province you live in, gender, race, disability, or citizenship status. You do not need to answer these questions if you are uncomfortable, there will be an option to decline to answer these questions. You may also feel uneasy or embarrassed answering questions about pressure experienced while publishing research. If you do not want to answer these questions, you can exit from the survey.

### **Confidentiality**

You are participating in this research anonymously. No one, including those handling the data, will know that you participated. Key demographic information will be **anonymized** during analysis, with only cohort data being featured in the final manuscript.

All identifiable data (such as provided emails to receive the results of the study) will be kept on a computer protected by an encryption, firewall, and password, where only the research team will have access to it. Anonymized data, which in part or in combination are not able to identify specific individuals, will be stored on a private McMaster University SharePoint account to allow for remote analysis in compliance with COVID-19 work policies. Collected email information will be kept separate from other survey data to ensure the anonymity of respondents. An archive of the data, without identifying information, will be maintained until publication. This will be deleted following publication of findings (within five years). The electronic cohort description data will be kept indefinitely as the data will be published.

### **Participation and Withdrawal**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is your choice to be part of the study or not. If you decide to be part of the study, you can stop (withdraw) from the study at any point before submitting your survey responses. Once you have submitted your responses for this survey, your answers will be put into a database and will not be identifiable to you. This means that once you have submitted your survey, your responses cannot be withdrawn from the study because we will not be able to identify which responses are yours.

### **Information about the Study Results**

We expect to have initial analysis completed by early June 2021. A pre-print publication will be uploaded to bioRxiv in by late June 2021. When our research article is published in a peer-reviewed journal, we will make a summary of the publication available on the Truant Laboratory Website (<https://raytruantlab.ca/>).

### **Questions about the Study**

If you have questions or need more information about the study itself, please contact us at: [truant@mcmaster.ca](mailto:truant@mcmaster.ca), [suartce@mcmaster.ca](mailto:suartce@mcmaster.ca), or [neumak4@mcmaster.ca](mailto:neumak4@mcmaster.ca).

### **Ethics**

This survey is part of a study that has been reviewed by the [Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board \(HiREB\)](#). The HiREB protocol number associated with this survey is 13184. You are free to complete this survey or not. If you have any concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is being conducted, please contact HiREB. The HiREB is responsible for ensuring that participants are informed of the risks associated with the research, and that participants are free to decide if participation is right for them. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please call the Office of the Chair, Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board at 905.521.2100 x 42013.