



BEER Lab Governance Rules

Governance framework for experimental and behavioral research

Document	GOV-00
Status	Draft for internal approval
Version	0.1
Effective date	Upon approval
Owner	BEER Lab Leadership
Review cycle	At least annually
Applies to	All BEER-supported research

Behavioral & Experimental Economics Research Lab · Tecnológico de Monterrey

1. Purpose

These Governance Rules establish the common institutional framework for research that uses BEER Lab facilities, participant pools, recruitment systems, servers, equipment, staff support, field infrastructure, or institutional identity. The objective is to protect participants, preserve scientific integrity, and manage shared resources in a way that does not impose negative externalities on future research.

2. Scope and experimental modalities

The Rules apply to four modalities: laboratory experiments, online experiments, lab-in-the-field experiments, and field experiments. Classroom demonstrations are outside scope unless the resulting data are retained or used for research, in which case the activity must be treated as human-subjects research from the outset.

Requirement	Lab	Online	Lab-in-field	Field
Ethics clearance	Required	Required	Required	Required
No deception	Required	Required	Required	Required
Pre-launch test	Full session	Bench/device	Context pilot	Operational pilot
Participant history	If BEER pool	If BEER pool	When relevant	When relevant
Show-up payment	Yes	If synchronous	Yes	If convened session
Compensation benchmark	BEER rate	BEER rate	Context-adjusted	Context-adjusted
Staff training	Session lead	As needed	Required	Required
Field manual	Normally no	Normally no	Required	Required
Quality assurance	Basic	Basic	Formal	Formal
Incident log	Required	Required	Required	Required
Version control	Required	Required	Required	Required

3. Core principles

3.1 Participant protection

Participant dignity, autonomy, privacy, safety, and the right to withdraw take precedence over recruitment, scheduling, or data-collection objectives.

3.2 No-deception policy

BEER Lab adopts a no-deception policy. Researchers may not provide false information, present fictitious information as true, or intentionally induce false beliefs about material features of the study. Incomplete disclosure may be used when scientifically necessary and ethically approved, provided that all statements made to participants are true and the omission does not create a materially false representation.

3.3 Voluntary consent

Participation must be voluntary and follow the consent procedure approved by the competent ethics body. Consent procedures must be comprehensible and appropriate to the population and setting.

3.4 Shared-resource stewardship

The participant pool, the reputation of the laboratory, infrastructure, software, equipment, and relationships with communities and partner organizations are shared research assets. No project may use them in a manner that materially reduces their value for other projects or future research.

3.5 Proportionality

Operational requirements should increase with participant risk, sensitivity of data, scale, complexity, vulnerable populations, intensity of intervention, use of third parties, and demands placed on BEER resources.

4. Governance structure

4.1 BEER Lab Leadership

- Sets general policy and approves amendments to these Rules.
- Resolves material exceptions and competing claims on shared resources.
- Approves external collaborations and significant cost-recovery arrangements.
- May impose or lift access restrictions and suspensions.

4.2 Governance Committee

- Advises on rule changes and novel cases.
- Reviews serious incidents and appeals.
- Members must recuse themselves from decisions involving their own projects or other material conflicts of interest.

4.3 Lab Manager

- Administers the participant pool, ORSEE, scheduling, readiness checks, servers, facilities, and operational records.
- May pause or stop a session when participant safety, protocol integrity, or data integrity is materially at risk.
- Does not replace the ethics committee or conduct a second scientific review of the project.

4.4 Principal Investigator

- Every project must identify a PI responsible for ethics coverage, scientific design, funding, staff, implementation, compensation, data security, incident reporting, and closeout.
- Student-led projects require a faculty sponsor who assumes institutional responsibility.

5. Eligibility and access

Access is granted by project, not by individual entitlement. Researchers must comply with BEER training and administrative requirements. Shared credentials are prohibited. When demand exceeds capacity, priority is: (1) BEER-affiliated projects; (2) Tec de Monterrey researchers and graduate students; (3) external collaborations involving Tec researchers; (4) independent academic researchers; and (5) other external organizations compatible with BEER's academic mission.

6. Project lifecycle

Projects move through six operational states: Proposed, Approved, Ready to Recruit, Active, Paused, and Closed. No participant recruitment may begin before a project reaches Ready to Recruit.

1. Project registration and assignment of a BEER Project ID.
2. Verification of ethics coverage, funding, sample/recruitment plan, compensation, and requested resources.
3. Readiness review of the final protocol, instruments, software, randomization, data-security plan, and incident contacts.
4. Recruitment and data collection.
5. Closeout, payment reconciliation, archiving, and participant-history updates.

7. Ethics and protocol correspondence

BEER verifies that a project has appropriate ethics approval, exemption, or determination and that the operational version reasonably corresponds to the authorized protocol. Changes requiring an ethics amendment must be approved before implementation. BEER governance review is operational and methodological; it does not substitute for institutional ethics review.

8. Participant pool governance

- The BEER participant pool is an institutional resource administered by BEER Lab.
- Researchers do not receive unrestricted access to names, emails, or contact lists and may not create parallel contact databases from the pool.
- Invitations must use authorized recruitment channels. Selection among eligible pool members should normally be random.
- Participation history and experiment-class tags are maintained centrally to manage repeat participation and experimental contamination.
- Participants may withdraw from the pool and may request correction of attendance records.

9. Compensation

Compensation must be reasonable, transparent, timely, and consistent with the BEER Compensation Schedule. A participant who arrives on time for a scheduled in-person or synchronous session but cannot participate because of overbooking, cancellation, or project failure must receive the applicable show-up compensation. Field-study compensation is context-specific and should distinguish research-participation compensation from benefits or transfers that form part of the intervention.

10. Operational readiness and version control

- The recruitment version must be final enough to test end-to-end.
- Programmed studies require a full test using the same version intended for data collection.
- Changes to treatments, randomization, incentives, instructions, eligibility, outcomes, or timing after launch must be documented and may require a new version and ethics amendment.
- BEER maintains a traceable version identifier for the data-collection build.

11. Modality-specific requirements

11.1 Laboratory

Laboratory studies require standardized session scripts, check-in and seating procedures, timing control, payment reconciliation, and a record of technical or procedural failures.

11.2 Online

Online studies must specify whether they are asynchronous, synchronous individual, or synchronous interactive. They must include reasonable protections against duplicate participation and automated responses. Analytical exclusion does not automatically eliminate a participant's right to compensation for work performed.

11.3 Lab-in-the-field

Lab-in-the-field studies combine laboratory and field standards. They require a field-session protocol covering site authorization, recruitment, privacy, staffing, devices, connectivity, participant IDs, payment, equipment transport, and incident response.

11.4 Field

Field experiments require a field research plan that addresses implementing partners, sampling, treatment assignment, spillovers, staff training, piloting, treatment fidelity, quality assurance, device and data security, and adverse-event escalation.

12. Data protection and research integrity

- Collect only personally identifiable information (PII) that is necessary.
- Separate direct identifiers from analytical data as early as practical.
- Use role-based access and encryption appropriate to the risk.
- Preserve final protocols, instruments, experimental code, randomization code, raw data, documentation, deviation logs, and relevant analysis code.
- Prospective registration is the default expectation for randomized field and lab-in-the-field evaluations when appropriate; preregistration is strongly encouraged for laboratory and online experiments.

13. Incident reporting

Adverse participant events, confidentiality breaches, lost devices, randomization errors, incorrect treatment delivery, material payment failures, serious software failures, consent errors, and unauthorized data access must be reported under SOP-10. Good-faith reporting is protected; deliberate concealment of a material incident is a serious violation.

14. Resource allocation and scheduling

Reservations do not create indefinite rights over laboratory time, participant-pool capacity, servers, staff, or equipment. BEER may limit weekly hours, future reservations, concurrent recruitment, or the number of active projects per PI when necessary for equitable access.

15. Violations and sanctions

Violations are handled proportionately. Level I operational issues normally require correction or warning. Level II repeated or material violations may lead to temporary suspension of recruitment or access. Level III serious violations—including deliberate deception, unauthorized use of PII, research without required ethics coverage, manipulation of operational records, or intentional concealment of serious incidents—may lead to immediate suspension and referral to appropriate institutional authorities.

16. Appeals

Material suspensions or restrictions may be appealed to the Governance Committee. Individuals who made the original decision or have a conflict of interest must recuse themselves.

17. Project closeout and acknowledgment

A project may be marked Closed only after recruitment has ended, participant payments and attendance are reconciled, incidents are resolved or transferred to the appropriate authority, the operational archive is complete, and participant-history records have been updated. Publications and research products that substantially use BEER resources should acknowledge BEER Lab using the standard wording established by the Lab. Use of BEER resources does not imply authorship.

18. Document hierarchy

These Governance Rules state stable principles. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) define workflows. The Compensation Schedule, Participant No-Show Policy, Experiment Classification Taxonomy, and Lab Fees and Cost-Recovery Schedule contain parameters that may be updated without amending these Rules, subject to approval by the BEER Lab Leadership.

Appendix A. BEER Minimum Must-Dos

- BEER Project ID
- Ethics clearance
- No-deception compliance
- Funding confirmed
- Recruitment or sampling plan
- Compensation plan
- Final instruments and instructions
- Tested experimental build
- Verified randomization when applicable
- Data-security plan
- Incident protocol and contacts
- Ready-to-Recruit approval
- For lab-in-the-field/field: field manual, trained staff, realistic pilot, quality-assurance plan, partner agreement when applicable, device/security plan, spillover assessment, and treatment-implementation monitoring.

Appendix B. Benchmark sources consulted

The framework draws on public practices of leading experimental and behavioral laboratories and field-research organizations, including Berkeley Xlab, Columbia CELSS, MIT Sloan Behavioral Research Lab, Vienna VCEE, Zurich Laboratory for Experimental and Behavioral Economics, Amsterdam CREED, TUM experimentUM, Aarhus COBE Lab, Nottingham CeDEX, J-PAL, Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA), and the World Bank DIME research standards. These sources provide benchmarks; BEER's rules remain governed by Tec de Monterrey policy and applicable Mexican law and ethics requirements.