

Guidance for Documentaries and Ethnographies

Documentaries and ethnographies frequently meet the definition of human subjects research. If your documentary or similar project is intended to produce generalizable knowledge, rather than making an artistic statement or a scholarly contribution that does not generalize beyond the content of the work itself, it is considered research and needs IRB approval. All scholars who are obtaining information about living humans, regardless of whether they believe their projects meet the definition of research, are encouraged to contact the IRB regarding steps to ensure the protection of their participants.