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# Recommendations



TECHNISCHE  
UNIVERSITÄT  
DARMSTADT

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## Allowances for test subjects

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The Ethics Commission has no reservations in principle against the granting of financial or material allowances for participation in scientific studies. There can be valid reasons for granting allowances. But this is not the standard. Many studies are conducted without allowances for the participants or only grant subject hours.

The participation in scientific studies is considered as work that is connected to a certain amount of time and effort. The allowance for participants serves the purpose to compensate for this time expenditure and for possible stresses caused by participating in a study.

The scope of allowances is supposed to be related to the actual effort and time expenditure needed for participating in the study. Thus, the incentive should not be that high that test subjects are taking part in the study just for this reason. Therefore, the Ethics Commission considers an amount of up to 15 Euro per hour of participation as appropriate. If the test subjects are exposed to severe physical or psychological stress, this amount may be exceeded. The type and the scope of the allowance must be clearly stated in the informed consent sheet.

To incentivise participation in the study, a prize draw can be organized instead of giving out allowances. If you choose to do so, all participants must have the same chance of winning regardless of the individual time expenditure, effort, or stress.

There is, of course, the option to plan studies without any kind of allowance. If there is the intention to offer no incentive in advance, it is also conceivable to express appreciation to the test subjects for participation e.g. in the form of a small gift, which is then presented at the end.

Regardless of whether it is a regular allowance, a prize draw or a present, the Ethics Commission advises against giving out vouchers or products from commercial providers. This could easily be interpreted as advertising for a particular company. From the view of the Ethics Commission, it is more sensible to favour vouchers or products from non-commercial, e.g. public or charitable providers. Examples for such non-commercial, charitable providers include TUShop, Darmstadt-Shop, Staatstheater Darmstadt, buch7.de, or Mensa vouchers.

If you should plan to pay a certain sum of money to the test subjects, this can be done as cash payment or via bank transfer. In this case, please contact the finance department in the university administration to find

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out about the exact rules and terms. And please enquire with the TU data protection officer on the requirements regarding data storage.

If you have any questions concerning allowances, please feel free to contact the Ethics Commission.