

Research Policy

Applies to

- All ABA volunteer and paid staff
- ABA members past and present
- All researchers conducting research for or in conjunction with ABA, or utilising ABA data or resources (including access to ABA membership or workforce, past or present)

Definitions

Word or Phrase	Definition
Breastfeeding Information and Research team	the team responsible for processing and managing approval of research requests made under this policy
ABA communication channels	includes, but not limited to, traditional mail, telephone, email, ABA website, ABA social media platforms, print and e-publications
Research Approval number	a number allocated to a research project or survey after it has been approved in accordance with this policy
Research	diligent and systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover or revise facts, theories, applications
Survey	a data collection tool used to gather information about and from individuals
Breastfeeding-related subjects	Lactation, breastfeeding, breastmilk, breastfeeding environments, the Australian Breastfeeding Association paid and volunteer staff, or members (past or present)

Scope

- Small or large research projects or surveys requiring the use of ABA resources or involvement from ABA volunteers, employees or members
- Research into ABA history and/or services.

Objectives

- To support and facilitate high quality, ethical breastfeeding-related research
- To provide a fair and reasonable approvals process for requests for ABA to take part in, collaborate or sponsor and encourage research that is in the interests of, and within the capacity of, the Association
- To enable the results of relevant research to be communicated to members of the association, to other interested persons and organisations, and to the wider community.

Principles

- ABA cooperates with medical and allied health professionals, public health and education authorities, students and governments conducting research into breastfeeding-related subjects, where it is in the interests of the Association or our members (past or present)

- ABA acknowledges and affirms the right of ABA members (past and present) to choose whether to participate in any research request
- ABA acknowledges and affirms its adherence to its obligations under Australian privacy legislation
- Any research communication or request using ABA communication channels must be approved in accordance with this policy, and comply with the Communications and Media Policy
- ABA will promote breastfeeding knowledge and understanding by encouraging all researchers requesting collaboration with ABA on their research project to become an ABA member.

Policy Statement

- All research requests that require the participation or support of ABA or its members or staff (past or present) must be approved in accordance with this policy
- ABA communication channels may not be used to circulate, promote, advertise or elicit participation by ABA members or staff in research requests/surveys unless they have a Research Approval number from the Breastfeeding Information and Research team and that number must be quoted when using ABA communication channels
- ABA may limit the number of large scale research requests or surveys requiring member involvement granted at any one time
- Personal information about ABA members or staff (past or present), including contact details will not be released to researchers without consent, and must be demonstrably integral to the research project
- ABA will not approve any research requests where that research is funded by companies that manufacture, distribute or sell infant formula or artificial baby milk (including “follow-on” or “toddler” formulas)
- Research requests will only be considered if they relate to breastfeeding-related subjects
- For research requiring ethics approval, provisional approval may be given prior to human research ethics approval being given but final approval will only be given once ethics approval has been granted.

Publication

- All researchers whose requests are approved under this policy are encouraged to submit a synopsis/report of their research to *Breastfeeding Review* for consideration of publication
- Research into ABA or the services offered by ABA will only be approved where it is intended to be published in *Breastfeeding Review* or another ABA publication.¹
- Where approval is granted in accordance with this policy:
 - ABA must be appropriately acknowledged in all research publications and presentation

¹ The decision on whether to publish research or the form of publication (eg synopsis, report, scholarly article) remains at the discretion of the editor/s of *Breastfeeding Review* or other ABA publication.

- A copy of the research publication that involved ABA members, staff or resources must be sent to the Breastfeeding Information and Research team.

Request for approval

- Researchers who submit requests for approval in accordance with this policy must submit their requests using the **prescribed form** and pay the **prescribed administration fee**
- Requests for approval in accordance with this policy must set out clearly and concisely the benefits to ABA (or its members) and the extent of ABA's involvement, including any cost to the Association or its members in monetary or other form (for instance, time).

Evaluation

- The Breastfeeding Information and Research Team will evaluate requests by considering the following:
 - Relevance of the research to ABA's Vision, Mission, Strategic Plan and Code of Ethics
 - Extent of involvement of the Association (for instance, the cost in monetary terms or in staff time, in informing members of the project, in the use of members and volunteers in the project, in the distribution of questionnaires or other literature)
 - Whether the help requested is within the current or ongoing capacity of the Association
- Evaluation will take into account the National Health and Medical Research Council's National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 - Updated May 2013
- Possibility of risks to the establishment and maintenance of breastfeeding
- The Association will seek medical and/or legal advice regarding the request in its discretion.
- The Breastfeeding Information and Research Team may approve the request where the research is in the interests of ABA and the extent of involvement of the Association is minimal.
- Where the Breastfeeding Information and Research Team considers that the request will involve a monetary cost to the Association or will involve considerable work by ABA staff or volunteers, it must refer the request to the Board for determination
- Where the Breastfeeding Information and Research Team considers that a request is not in the interests of ABA or its members, or the request does not comply with this policy, then the request will be refused.

Approval

- Approval is given in writing only, and includes a Research Approval Number obtained from the Breastfeeding Information and Research team
- Decisions made by the Breastfeeding Information and Research team or the Board regarding research requests are final
- Applicants may resubmit, with amendments based upon feedback received when the original application was submitted

- ABA retains the right to remove listings/postings that do not meet the agreed criteria, and/or if complaints are received concerning the research project.

Exclusion

- Small scale surveys (in any format including via social media) of group members (past or present) around the **provision of local group services only** are excluded from this policy and may be approved by the local Group Leader.

Approved by

ABA Board

References

- NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 - Updated May 2013
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e72>
- McKenzie and Hanley (2007) Consumer and Community Participation in Health and Medical Research. A practical guide for health and medical research organisations (green book)
<http://www.involvingpeopleinresearch.org.au/index.php/resources/green-book>

Revision history

Revision	Date	Description of modifications
	May 1989	61 7.3(8)– Research Policy A – Use of ABA Members and Resources in Research 61 7.3(9)– Research Policy B – Research into ABA
V2	8 th Mar 2014	Significant revision of content and update into website policy template. Approved board meeting 160.