IRB Education and Communication: Training, Learning, and Staying Informed

Northwestern | RESEARCH

Kim Rowan, MBA, CIP
Senior Education and Communication Analyst
IRB Office

Poll 1!

How do you typically find answers to your IRB questions?

- Search the IRB website (irb.northwestern.edu)
- Ask a colleague
- Contact the IRB Office
- Search email/previous communications
- I'm not sure where to start
- Other - type your answer in the chat!

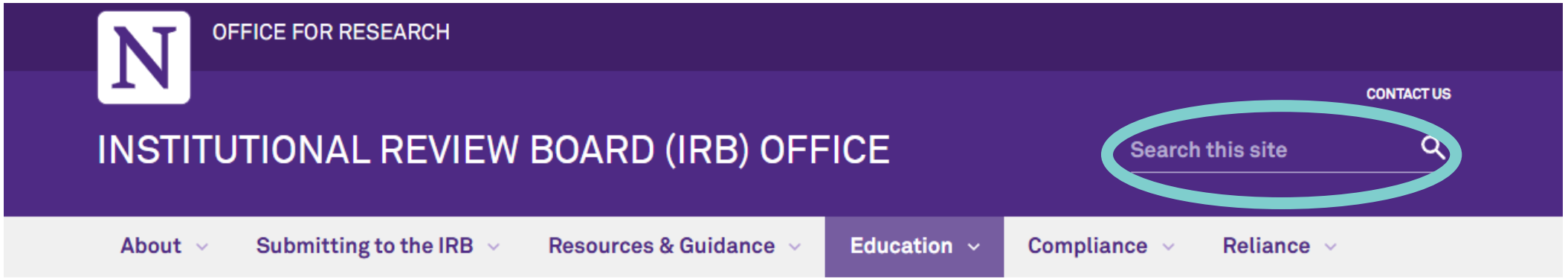


Objectives

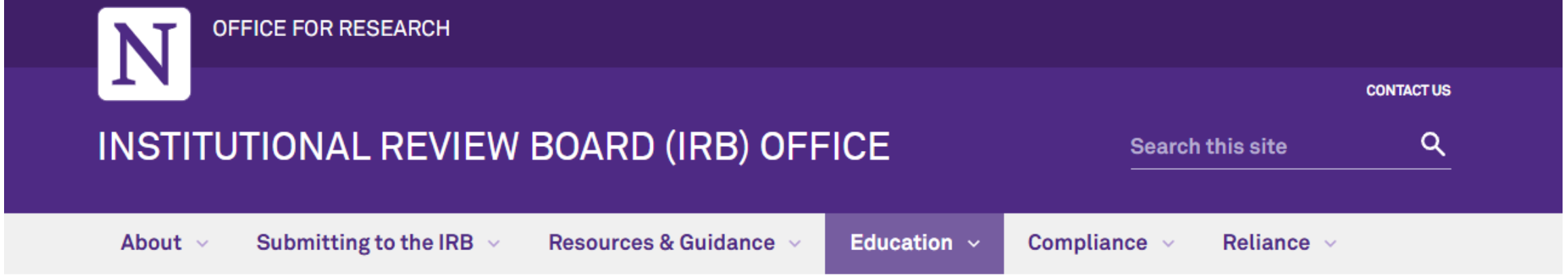
- **Navigate** the Northwestern University IRB website to locate key information and guidance, and to address common IRB questions.
- **Describe** Northwestern University's Human Research Protections Training requirements, including the CITI Program training and renewal process.
- **Explain** how Human Research Protections Training records can integrate from CITI to eIRB+ and how to verify training status.
- **Identify** IRB education resources and opportunities, including IRB Courses, Brown Bags, and Special Event Training.
- **Identify** how to stay informed about IRB requirements, resources, and updates through the IRB website, IRB Bulletin, and other communications from the IRB Office.

Where to Find Help

- **IRB Website!** https://irb.northwestern.edu/
- **6 Top Tabs**



- **Navigation Quick tip**: Start with the top tabs & locate the section that matches your topic or question.
  - If you're unsure where to go, use the search function or contact the IRB Office!



1. **About**
   - News, Events, IRB Information, Contact Us
2. **Submitting to the IRB**
   - eIRB+, Types of Reviews, Initial Studies, RNIs, & other submission types, Study Team Members in eIRB+
3. **Resources & Guidance**
   - Protocol templates, Consent templates, Study Support Resources, Policies & Guidance, checklists & worksheets, SOPs
4. **Education**
   - Human Research Protections Training, Courses, Brown Bags, Special Event Training
5. **Compliance**
   - Post-Approval Monitoring, Directed Reviews, Corrective and Preventive Action (CAPA) Plans, FDA Site Inspections, eIRB+ Compliance Workspace
6. **Reliance**
   - Single IRB Planning, Northwestern Serving as the IRB of Record, Reliance Welcome Packet: IRB of Record Start-Up

Contact Us & Office Hours

- Need additional help? We're here to support you.
- Visit our Contact Us page to:
  - Find IRB Office team and individual contact information.
  - Identify the appropriate team for your question.
  - Access IRB team office hours, offered weekly or monthly.



Poll 2!

How confident are you in understanding the IRB Office's Human Research Protections Training (HRPT) requirements?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not at all confident
- I am not sure or haven't had to look them up



Human Research Protections Training

- Northwestern University requires everyone engaged in human research to complete Human Research Protections (IRB) training.
- Training must be renewed every three years.
- The IRB will withhold approval if any engaged study team member, including the PI, does not have current training.

Recently updated: The Human Research Protections Training page has been reorganized to make information easier to find and more accessible. Training requirements have not changed.

Who Must Complete Training?

- Everyone engaged in human research must complete Human Research Protections (IRB) Training and renew it every three years.
- Engagement generally includes individuals who:
  - Interact with research participants.
  - Obtain informed consent or conduct recruitment.
  - Access identifiable private information or identifiable biological specimens.
- For more information:
  - Guidance on Determining Engagement in Human Research at Northwestern University and Affiliated Institutions (HRP-1913).
  - Human Research Determination Form (HRP-503).

Training Requirements by Institutional Affiliation

Training requirements and processes differ by institutional affiliation.



1. **Northwestern-Affiliated researchers**



2. **Lurie Children's researchers**
3. **External or unaffiliated researchers**

Training Requirements for Northwestern and Affiliated Researchers

Northwestern University Human Research Protections (IRB)
CITI Course ID: 21087

Requirement	Basic	Refresher
Required modules	All 9	All 9
Elective modules	Select 5	Optional
Quiz scores	Average at least 70%	Average at least 70%

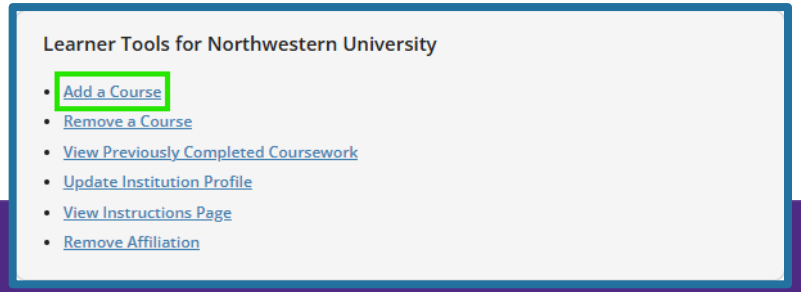
Basic or Refresher?

- **Basic**: No required HRPT course completed within the past three years.
- **Refresher**: Renewing training completed within the past three years.
- **Every 12 years**: Researchers must complete the initial training modules again.
- Important:
  - CITI determines which course is available based on your training history.
  - Existing social-behavioral and biomedical training remains valid until expiration. Researchers enroll in the unified HRPT course when renewing.

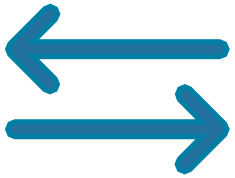
Completing Northwestern CITI Human Research Protections (IRB) Training

- Required course: Human Research Protections (IRB), Course ID 21087
- How to access the course:
  1. Go to CITI - Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative Program.
  2. Select Log in through my organization.
  3. Type Northwestern University.
  4. Select Continue to SSO Login / Instructions.
  5. Log in using your Northwestern University NetID and password.
  6. Locate the Human Research Protections (IRB) course and complete all required modules.
- If the course is not listed:
  - Under Learner Tools for Northwestern University, select Add a Course.
  - Under Question 1, Human Subjects Research, select Human Research Protections (IRB) and follow the prompts.
- Save your CITI completion certificate.





Transferring Previous CITI Training



Previously completed CITI training at another institution?

- **Qualifying modules may transfer if they:**
  - Meet Northwestern's HRPT requirements and have matching CITI module IDs.
  - Were completed within two years before adding Northwestern's HRPT course to your CITI account.
- How to transfer:
  1. Log in to CITI through the Northwestern SSO.
  2. If prompted about an existing CITI profile, select Yes.
  3. Add the Northwestern Human Research Protections (IRB) course.
  4. Complete any outstanding required modules.
  5. Save your completion certificate.
- Important: Northwestern's course includes a Northwestern-specific module. At least one module will remain outstanding after transfer.

Northwestern and Affiliated Researchers: Register for eIRB+

- eIRB+ is the Northwestern University IRB Office electronic submission system
- Northwestern and affiliated researchers engaged in human research must register for eIRB+ with their Northwestern University NetID.
- Manage your eIRB+ account:
  - Use the same Northwestern NetID for CITI and eIRB+.
  - Maintain one eIRB+ profile to help prevent issues with CITI training integration and being added to studies.
  - If your role changes, submit an eIRB+ Support Form to update your existing profile.
  - Use the eIRB+ Support Form to report technical issues.
- Researchers must have current training and be IRB-approved on the study before beginning research activities.

How CITI Training Syncs with eIRB+

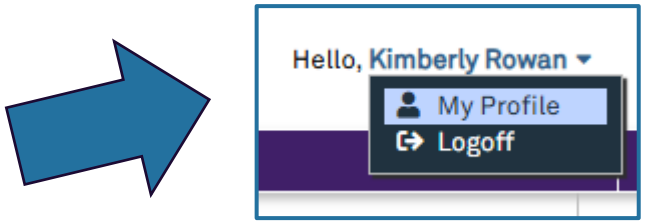


- CITI training records transfer automatically to eIRB+ when you:
  1. Log in to CITI through Northwestern University's SSO.
  2. Complete all required Human Research Protections (IRB) course modules.
  3. Receive a CITI completion certificate.
  4. Use the same active Northwestern NetID for CITI and eIRB+.



- Allow up to 24 hours
  - Your training record should appear in eIRB+ within 24 hours of completing these steps.

Verify Your Training in eIRB+



- Where to check your training status
  - **Individual researchers:** Check your training information in your eIRB+ Profile.
  - **Study coordinators and staff:** Check training status in the eIRB+ Study Team Training tab.
- A current record with a three-year validity period indicates that the Human Research Protections (IRB) training requirement is met.

Troubleshooting:
CITI Training Not Appearing in eIRB+

1. Confirm your NetID in eIRB+ and CITI

- In eIRB+, go to My Profile (select your name in the upper-right corner).
- Compare the NetID displayed in your profile with the NetID used to log in to CITI through Northwestern SSO.

2. Address any NetID issues

- **Multiple NetIDs:** Contact Department of Information Technology to request a NetID merge.
- **Incorrect eIRB+ NetID:** Submit an eIRB+ Support Form select Profile Update.
- Log in to CITI through Northwestern SSO and allow 24 hours for the record to appear.

3. Still having trouble?

- Email irbtraining@northwestern.edu
  - Include:
    - Researcher's first and last name.
    - Current/active Northwestern NetID.
    - A statement that the training record is not syncing and assistance is requested.

Training Requirements for Lurie Children's Researchers

- Training Requirements
  - Northwestern accepts CITI Human Research Protections Training completed under Lurie Children's requirements.
  - Training must be renewed every 3 years.
- Submitting Training
  - Email the IRB Office at irbtraining@northwestern.edu with the training certificate for eIRB+ manual upload
- eIRB+ Access
  - Lurie Children's researchers who are not affiliated with Northwestern should be listed in Lurie's RASCAL system only.
  - If they need access to Northwestern Study Tracker or REDCap, they should register for eIRB+ & add them to the internal study team list in eIRB+.

Training Requirements for Unaffiliated, Community, and External Collaborators

- Training Requirements
  - Training must be completed and renewed every three years.
  - **Affiliated with another institution**: Complete the HRPT required by your primary institution.
  - **Not affiliated with another institution**: Complete one of the approved training options:
    - CIRTification: Community Involvement in Research Training
    - Human Research Protection Foundational Training:
    - Protecting Human Research Participants (PHRP) Online Training:
- Documenting Training
  - An internal study team member uploads the external researcher's certificate to the study application's Supporting Documents section in eIRB+.

External Researchers & IRB Oversight



- Before research activities begin, the Northwestern IRB must determine how the external researcher's activities will be overseen.
- Depending on institutional affiliation and role:
  - Obtain approval from the researcher's home institution or ethics committee.
  - Add the researcher's institution as a site relying on Northwestern's IRB, when appropriate.
  - Establish an Individual Investigator Agreement (IIA), when required.
- eIRB+ Access
  - External researchers should not access eIRB+.
  - A Northwestern internal study team member manages their eIRB+ activities.



- **Important**: A Northwestern NetID does not establish Northwestern affiliation or automatically authorize access to Northwestern's CITI subscription or IRB services.
- See External Researchers and IRB Oversight section on the Training page

Training Key Takeaways

- Remember:
  - Training requirement differs by institutional affiliation
  - Complete the required training and renew every three years.
  - Save your CITI training completion certificate.
    - PIs must maintain training documentation outside eIRB+ for all engaged study personnel.
  - Verify your training status in eIRB+.
- Questions?
  - Contact the IRB Education Team: irbtraining@northwestern.edu
- Resources:
  - Human Research Protections Training





Education Beyond Required Training



- The IRB Office supports ongoing learning through a range of educational opportunities.
  - **IRB Courses**: Structured online learning on IRB processes and human research protections.
  - **IRB Brown Bags**: Presentations featuring experts from across the HRPP and research community.
  - **Special Event Training**: Focused sessions on topics, processes, or identified issues.
  - **Resources and Communications**: Website content, educational materials, and updates to help researchers find information and stay informed.



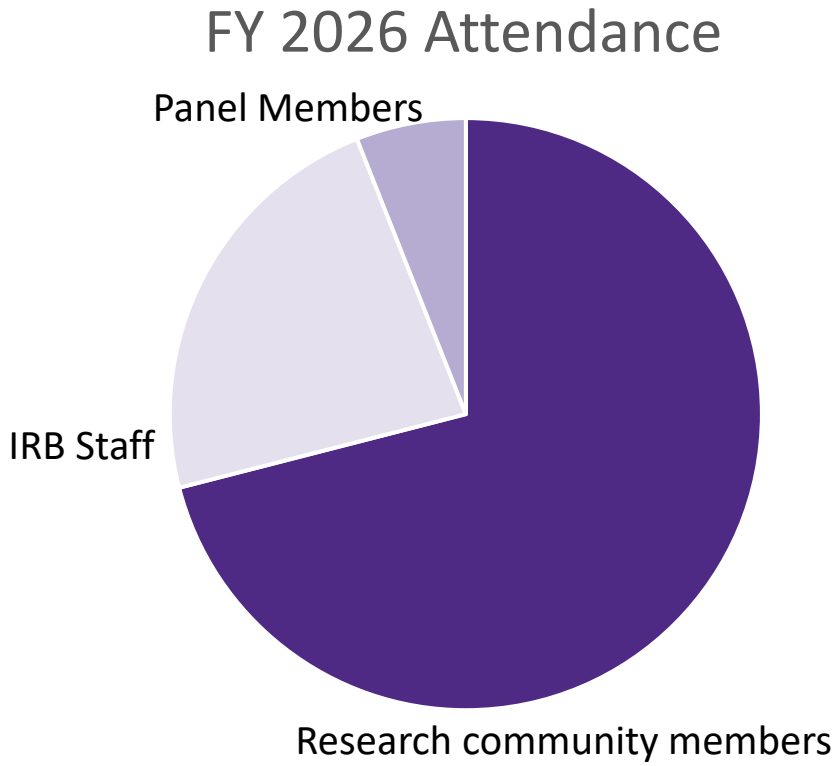
IRB Brown Bags: Learn, Ask, and Connect

- **Learn**: Explore human research protections, research processes, resources, and emerging topics through presentations from IRB and other HRPP offices, research support services, and researchers.
- **Ask**: Engage with presenters during the Q&A and submit questions either during the session or in advance when registering.
- **Connect**: Discover resources, expertise, and services across Northwestern University that support the conduct of human research.
- What to expect
  - Monthly sessions on timely topics.
  - Presentations from subject-matter experts and research professionals.
  - Recordings and slides available on the IRB Brown Bag page.
  - Opportunities to suggest future topics.

IRB Brown Bags

Your Feedback Shapes Future Programming

- We ask attendees to complete a brief evaluation after each Brown Bag.
- Feedback helps us identify interests and inform future topics, including:
  - Clearer explanations of IRB processes and requirements
  - AI, research technology, privacy, and data security
  - Connections between IRB requirements and other research support offices



Poll 3!



What would make IRB Brown Bags more engaging or useful?

- More opportunities for questions and discussion
- Interactive elements (e.g., polls and audience participation)
- Real-world scenarios and case discussions
- Opportunities to hear from researchers and other HRPP offices
- Current format works well for me
- Other – type your answer in the chat!

Poll 4!

What topic would you most like to see in a future IRB Brown Bag?



- Type your answer in the chat!

Email IRB Education at any time with suggestions or feedback!

irbtraining@northwestern.edu

IRB Courses



- The IRB Office offers optional IRB Courses through MyHR Learn
  - **Navigating Human Research Ethics & Regulatory Review**: An overview of human research protections, IRB processes, and conducting research at Northwestern.
  - **Researcher Onboarding**: Introduces key IRB resources and other research support office requirements and information for investigators transitioning to Northwestern.
    - Teams are encouraged to reach out to the IRB Office early when an investigator is transitioning to Northwestern to discuss plans for their ongoing research
  - **Researcher Offboarding**: Helps investigators transition their research responsibilities when leaving Northwestern.

Special Event Training

- Special Event Training
  - Targeted sessions addressing specific research topics, processes, or emerging issues.
  - Responds to identified educational needs and provides opportunities for focused learning and discussion.



- October 2025 – October 2026 Trainings
  - **24** Live Trainings, over **550** attendees total

- Interested in training for your team?
  - Submit a Training Presentation Request or contact the IRB Education Team at irbtraining@northwestern.edu to discuss!

- Examples of Topics and Audiences:
  - **Introductory IRB education**: Graduate and undergraduate students, medical students, faculty, and postdoctoral fellows.
  - **IRB submissions and study conduct**: IRB submission process, minimal risk research, informed consent, and maintaining compliance throughout the study lifecycle.
  - **Discipline-specific topics**: Human research considerations in language research, journalism, biotechnology, and clinical research.
  - **Specialized education**: Researcher onboarding and orientation; HIPAA, privacy, and clinical research; consent compliance and verification.

IRB Communications



- The IRB Office website is an important resource for the research community, providing information and resources throughout the research process.
- The website receives more than 30,000 views each month.
- Frequently visited pages include eIRB+, Human Research Protections Training, Protocol Templates & Forms, and eIRB+ off-campus access.
- The IRB Listserv shares important updates, educational opportunities, upcoming Brown Bags, and other IRB Office announcements.
- The Listserv now reaches more than 7,300 subscribers.

IRB Bulletin: Monthly News and Updates

- The monthly IRB Bulletin keeps the research community informed about:
  - IRB Office news and announcements.
  - Educational content and upcoming learning opportunities.
  - Updates to IRB website pages, documents, tools, and resources.
  - Staff highlights and other relevant information.



- Keeping information current
  - IRB Office website content and documents are reviewed and updated as needed, including for regulatory and accessibility considerations.
  - Updates are communicated to the research community through the monthly Bulletin.
- Stay informed
  - Subscribe to the IRB Listserv.
  - Access past IRB Bulletins.

Connecting With & Supporting the Research Community



- **Outreach and Engagement**: Participate in university events as well as department, school, and research-group meetings. Connect with researchers through conversations, questions, and collaboration with other HRPP offices and research support services.
- **Identifying Needs**: Welcome questions, concerns, and suggestions. Review Brown Bag evaluations, periodic research community surveys, participation data, and trends in IRB review to identify areas where additional education or resources may be useful.
- **Education and Resources**: Use what we learn to inform educational offerings and improvements to resources.
- **Communication**: Share information, updates, and educational opportunities through the IRB website, IRB Bulletin, Listserv, and other communications.

Poll 5!

What is one thing that would make it easier for you to understand or navigate IRB requirements or resources?

- Type your answer in the chat!



Email IRB Education at any time with suggestions or feedback!

irbtraining@northwestern.edu

Where to Find Education and Support

- Explore resources and connect with the IRB Office
  - IRB Website: Guidance, forms, policies, and educational pages.
  - IRB Bulletin: Monthly news, educational opportunities, and updates.
  - Events: Upcoming IRB education events.
  - Human Research Protections Training: Requirements, CITI instructions, and troubleshooting.
  - IRB Courses: Optional courses and learning modules.
  - IRB Brown Bag: Upcoming sessions, recordings, and presentation slides.
  - Special Event Training: Focused training opportunities.
  - Contact Us: Contact information and office hours.

Thank You

