New-to-Xlab Researchers:

Experiment Requirements

It is widely known by researchers that the manner in which an experiment is conducted is of paramount importance. The Xlab asks that researchers to review the Xlab guidelines relating to the expected design choices. The following are requirements the Xlab expects researchers to practice.

Incentives: Paying subjects for their participation is the norm in experimental economics. Human subjects are paid under federal guidelines that are enforced by Institutional Review Boards. Earnings depend partly on subjects' decisions and partly on chance. The amount paid depends on the experiment run, the decisions made by the subject, and the decision made by the other subjects in the experiment. When using the Xlab's subject pool, researchers should not abandon the practice of paying performance-based monetary incentives.

Clear instructions: Experimental instructions tell subjects what they need to know. We strongly encourage researchers to read instructions out loud at the beginning of a session to establish public knowledge. This is also scientifically very useful, because a clear instructional script will enable precise replication. Alternative methods are acceptable as long as they are replicable; for example, display the instructions on a series of screens and have subjects click through the screens as you read the instructions.

Anonymity: Participation in experiments is voluntary. Any information about human subjects (e.g., personal, earnings in a session, decision data) will be kept strictly confidential. Subjects will be paid immediately following the end of a session. In addition, unless otherwise stated explicitly, researchers will in principle be designed to make it as difficult as possible for subjects to know precisely who they are playing with. There may be exceptions, such as with group decision making experiments.

Deception: As of 1 January 2011, the Xlab has been deception-free environment.

- Deception occurs when an investigator gives false information to subjects or intentionally misleads them about some key aspect of the research. (This is sometimes referred to as "active deception.")
- Incomplete disclosure occurs when an investigator withholds information about the specific purpose, nature, or other aspect of the research. Withholding information may or may not be considered deception.
- Please refer to the CPHS Guidelines on Deception and Incomplete Disclosure in Research for more information.