**Forensic Anthropology Database for the Assessment of Method Accuracy (FADAMA)**

*Agency Permissions Template*

This formal agreement between \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (agency) and employed Forensic Anthropologist(s) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (name) authorizes said Forensic Anthropologist(s) to contribute case report data for case \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(case number) to the FADAMA Database.

**What is FADAMA?**

The Forensic Anthropology Database for the Assessment of Methods Accuracy (FADAMA) is the first forensic anthropological, community-wide, collective resource for studying methods including methods accuracy, precision, and trends. Specifically FADAMA is an online repository (https://www-app.igb.illinois.edu/sofadb/) for estimated and actual biological profile data and methods used in cases analysis. As such, FADAMA records 1) consistency of practitioner-generated estimates of the biological profile with the actual age, sex, stature, and ancestry of this individual once identified and 2) the trends in method use among practitioners. FADAMA was developed and is housed by the Society of Forensic Anthropologists (SOFA). SOFA (www.sofainc.org) is a U.S.-based, non-profit organization comprised of practicing forensic anthropologists throughout the country. SOFA’s purpose is to promote collaboration of forensic anthropologists and seeks to improve the field of practice. The development of FADAMA was initiated based on the need for amassing information on method use in casework and how forensic anthropological estimations of the biological profile compare to the actual biological profile details of the identified decedent (e.g. the accuracy of biological profile estimations).

In January 2019, funding for FADAMA was procured through the National Institute of Justice. The goals of the work align with the NIJ’s ongoing support of the assessment of practitioner and method performance in the field of forensic science. There currently exists no formal, organized space for the forensic anthropology community of practitioners to share our approaches to casework and casework outcomes. While informal peer interaction is ongoing and useful, a significant measure that is missing in order for our discipline to self-assess is data on our casework itself.

**FADAMA Goals**

The purpose for developing a comprehensive and centralized database for this information is to determine avenues for forensic anthropological method development and improvement. To meet this purpose, two main goals are identified. The first goal is to recruit forensic anthropologists with past and/present cases that meet the case criteria, to submit case data to the database. As the case data accumulates, the second goal is to have interested forensic anthropologists/researchers access and analyze the case data to observe trends in biological profile estimations and method preferences.

**Database Access**

The database is accessible to all practicing forensic anthropologists and/or their students and interns. Request for access to FADAMA is reviewed by a FADAMA Board (comprised of SOFA members) in order to assure that the individual requesting access is affiliated with the field of forensic anthropology.

General demographic information from a FADAMA user (education, years of casework, geographic region of employment) is requested for all forensic anthropologists that submit cases. However, it is important to note that all submitted cases are viewed/accessed for download as anonymous submissions to other users.

**Case eligibility**

Cases eligible for entry into FADAMA are restricted to current and past, non-historic, forensic/medicolegal, *presumptively or positively identified* cases where a forensic anthropological analysis was completed. Cases need not have a complete forensic anthropology estimation of the biological profile in order to be submitted (e.g. stature was not estimated), however, more comprehensive cases should ideally be given submission priority.

**Case Information Requested**

For each case submission, the following information is requested (cases with partial information are acceptable for submission).

· Final case report estimates of sex, age, ancestry and stature

· Actual age, sex, stature and ancestry of individual (upon identification)

· Method used for estimating sex, age, ancestry and stature

· Method-specific outcome and results (e.g. Suchey-Brooks Phase III)

***\*\*Specific traceable decedent information (e.g. name, NOK) is not allowed\*\****

In order for FADAMA to achieve its goals the anonymity of submitting offices, scientists, and decedents is crucial. Anonymity encourages the submission of all cases including cases where the estimated biological profile may not have captured the actual decedent’s biological profile. These kinds of discrepancies are important aspects to our field and methods in general, and are not a reflection of the actual practitioners.

**Research on Data**

Case data submitted to the database can be searched (e.g. male cases only) and accessed by any registered FADAMA user for research purposes. Access and analysis of Database case data by practitioners should be aligned with the goals of the FADAMA Database, which is to improve the case practice of forensic anthropologists.

**Time Commitment of Database Users**

The time commitment to submit a case is approximately 5-10 minutes, once a practitioner is familiar with the user-friendly interface. This also of course depends on the scope of the case.

**Responsibilities and Permissions**

Accuracy (errors, typos etc.) of the case data submitted to FADAMA is the responsibility of the individual entering case information into the database.

It is the responsibility of the forensic anthropologist to maintain a record of agency permission to participate / release of information form for the duration of their agencies participation in the Database.

**FDB Sharing**

FADAMA offers users the option to share their case data with the Forensic Data Bank (FDB) hosted by the University of Tennessee Knoxville. The FDB is a completely separate forensic anthropology focused database with different goals. For users electing to share case data with FDB please be aware that the data shared is NOT ANONYMOUS. Information such as case agency, case number, and practitioner data may be required for this share and this information may be shared with users of the FDB. More information about the FDB and its goals can be found [here](https://fac.utk.edu/background/).

* I consent to share this case data with the FDB
* I do not consent to share the case data with the FDB

By signing below, I agree to allow submission of case data from my agency to FADAMA and I understand how and why it will be used:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Agency Representative Date

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Agency / Address

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Forensic Anthropologist Date

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Forensic Anthropologist Date

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Forensic Anthropologist Date