

## **INFORMATION SHEET FOR TRAINING EXPERIMENTS**

Thank you for showing interest in the study. Please read this information sheet before you decide whether you wish to take part in the training experiments. It is important that you understand what the training program is, the time commitment required, and what the experiments will involve.

### **What is the rationale of this study?**

People are very good at recognising faces, which are socially important stimuli. However, the mechanisms for face processing are unknown. We do know that people have extensive visual experiences with faces and this experience may lead to their visual expertise with faces. We are interested in whether a similar level of visual expertise can develop for non-faces objects. We are therefore interested in how people develop expertise with novel objects through their visual experiences with these objects. It is important to stress that this study only investigates visual expertise, and does not test your intelligence or personality.

### **What is the training program? What is the time commitment?**

We have developed a computer-based training program in which you will learn novel objects that we call *penguins*. These objects are novel in the sense that (1) they are not objects that you would find in the real-world, and (2) you have no prior experiences with these exact objects. You will learn to identify each object by its unique name over a 2-3 week period. There will be up to 20 learning sessions. Each learning session will be between 1-1.5 hours in length, in which you will carry out different visual learning tasks. You can train in the laboratory or you can train yourself at home using our research equipment. In addition, there will be at least 5 testing sessions to measure how well you are learning the penguins. These testing sessions will involve different visual discrimination tasks, and they will be conducted in the lab. In all sessions, we will measure your accuracy (how accurately you respond to each visual stimulus) and your response times (how quickly you make a correct response).

### **Do I have to take part? What are the risks?**

You do not have to take part in this study. Furthermore, you may leave the study at any point without giving any reasons. If you leave, it will not affect your current or future medical care in anyway whatsoever. There are no physical or psychological risks for taking part in this study. If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign consent forms.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

This study itself will not benefit you. The data you provide us will improve our understanding of how the people acquire visual expertise.

**Personal information and data policy**

All information which is collected about you during the course of the research would be kept strictly confidential. For scientific purposes, the data that we collect during the learning and testing sessions (accuracy and response times) may be made available to other researchers during the course of the study. However, your data will be made anonymous (you will be given an arbitrary research number).

**Will I be trained to use the research equipment? Am I liable for damage to the equipment?**

There will be equipment available that you can take home with you to carry out the learning sessions. You will be trained to use the equipment appropriately. The equipment is only to be used at home for the purpose of training. You are not liable for damage if the equipment was used appropriately. You may be liable for damage if the equipment was misused.

**Concerns and additional information**

If you have any concerns or would like further information, please contact Dr Quoc Vuong or any member of the research team (email: [quoc.vuong@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:quoc.vuong@newcastle.ac.uk); telephone: 0191 222 6183).