Topic Guide: Donor Interviews

* Give the participant a copy of the Study Information Sheet if needed;
* discuss and sign the consent form;
* turn on recorder

# Tell us how you became a donor

* What was going on in your life at the time you decided to donate, and how did donating fit in with that?
* Probe for broader sense of family and personal life (single, relationship, any children (or planned to), parents; extended family big or small, close knit or lots of space between people. Work? Social life at work? Friendships
* How did your decision to donate come about? Why did you want to do it?
* Did you discuss the possibility with anyone as part of your decision-making?
* Are/were you aware of the current laws regarding donors being traceable? When/how did you find out about this? Did this influence your decision in any way?

# The donation process

* Talk me through the process of donating? How did you find the process of donating?
* Where did you donate? What was that space like?
* Did anyone come with you?
* Did you speak to a counsellor about the donation? Why/why not? What was that like?
* How time consuming was donating and how did it fit in with your life at the time? Did you take time out from work? Schedule your life around it?
* Did the process of donating impact on your life and relationships? How so?
* Other donors have talked about that donating can feel awkward because it is so intimate. Was that something that you felt?
* How did you manage that? Was there anything that made it more or less easy to manage? (probe for times, places, behaviours of others inc. decisions with known recipients
* I understand there are certain rules around abstaining from sex for donors. What were the rules for you? Did this impact on your own relationship at the time? Did you feel you had to tell your partner? If you kept it a secret, how did that work?

# Talking (or not talking) to others

* Have you told anyone else about your decision to donate? Who?
* Tell me about the process of telling others. What were those conversations like? When and where did you have them? (probe particularly re: partners, parents, own children, siblings and friends, colleagues)
* What were their feelings/responses?(probe who, when, how
* How do people generally view egg/sperm donors? Probe for gender differences.
* Has it affected relationships, and if so how? Is it something that comes up in conversation now and then in your family/circle of friends? With whom? What are such conversations like? Examples?
* How do you think members of your family feel about your decision to donate? Has it ever led to any kind of conflict or tension between you?
* Do you plan to tell anyone else? Why? How and when do you think you will tell them? How do think they might react? Is there something holding you back?
* How do you decide who you should and should not tell and what they should know?

# The consequences of donating – ID release donors

* How much thought have you given to the donation since the process was completed? What specifically? What reminds you of it?
* Do you know whether any children have been born from your donation? Why did you choose to find out or not?
* Who have/will you share this information with, if anyone?
* How do you feel about the donation now? Do you ever think about the child/ren conceived as a consequence of you donating. If so when and how?
* How do other people in your family feel about them (if they know) (talk about different reactions partner/parent).
* How do you see donor offspring in relation to your own family? Explain. Some donors feel a sense of responsibility towards ‘their’ DC children. Is that something you’ve felt or pondered on if that is the case?
* How do you feel about the possibility of being contacted by donor offspring in the future?
* How do you think such a meeting would go?
* Do you think the DC offspring might make a claim to belong in your family in some way, and if so what would that be like for you?
* How do you think you would or should feel about that? What would you like from such a contact, and what do you think the DC young adult what like?
* How do you think other family members would feel about such contact?
* Has any other aspect of your everyday life or relationship been impacted by the donation?

# The consequences of donating – known donors

* What was your relationship with the recipients before you donated, and what is it now?
* Do you have any contact with the people you donated to or any children conceived from your donation? If so how frequent is it, and what is it like? For example, do you meet up? Where? What do you do? Does anyone else come? What is it like for you? Would you ever bring your partner, a parent, your own children?
* (If still in touch), do you talk about the donation at all now? How does it come up?
* Are there any challenges with meeting up/contact? Give examples. Probe for issues around boundaries and how they manage that?
* What does your family feel and think about this family, and their child?
* Do they feel they are ‘part of the family’, and if not, where are the boundaries between ‘your’ family and ‘theirs’?
* What do you call your donor-conceived offspring? Inc. describing their relationship to your own children, and your parents. How you ‘see’ them. How did you decide the vocabulary?
* Do you expect to have an on-going relationship with recipients and/or donor offspring? How might it change in the future? Probe for reasons why expect particular type of relationships. What they hope for, yearn for, fear…
* Do you anticipate any challenges or questions in the future?

# General views on donation

* What do you know about the rules around egg/sperm donation?
* Do you think the current rules regarding donor anonymity are correct? Is there anything you think should change? Probe about whether disclosure should be mandatory, whether they, their children, parents, partners etc. should have any (more) access to information
* Would you consider donating in another way (e.g. to known/unknown recipient? A family member/close friend? At a clinic/informally?)
* Anything you would want to change about the whole process?

# Thank you and winding down

* Is there anything else you think is important about your experiences that I haven’t asked you about?
* Do you have any questions for me?
* Do you mind filling in a very short questionnaire with some basic information about yourself and the circumstances of your donation?
* Check whether participant interested in knowing about project findings and direct them towards the project website for updates.
* Invite them to e-mail with further thoughts if anything comes up after the interview.
* Thank participant for their help.