

Letter of Information: *Boats, Borders and Asylum*

Dr Heather Johnson, Queen's University Belfast

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I invite your participation in a research project that seeks to understand global patterns of refugee experience and government policy change, and the ways in which they intersect. The study has a particular focus on asylum migration by boat, and seeks to compare and understand the Pacific and Mediterranean. Four cases are being examined: Canada, Australia, Spain, and Greece.

Four research questions are guiding the project:

1. How is migration over water different from other forms of asylum migration?
2. How do migrants understand their journeys, and how do they understand state and global policies? What do they do to overcome the barriers they face?
3. What innovations are occurring in border policy and practice, and what are their implications for the rights of migrants within the global asylum regime?
4. Why does the irregular arrival of migrants by boat play so significantly into state policy change? How has irregular migration in the maritime space driven state-to-state cooperation, and with what impacts?

The empirical research will focus on interviews and site observations, and will include the gathering of images and video – produced by both myself as the researcher, and by participants themselves – towards a creative engagement with the core issues revealed in the study, with the goal of expanding the research's public impact.

This study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) in the United Kingdom. It will inform several academic articles and a book manuscript. It will also inform a country report for each case and a final summative report, all of which will be disseminated to all participants. A project website, which will invite participants to connect with one another, is also under development. Finally, an exhibition of the visual and artistic content will be prepared for Spring 2020.

Interviews: Interviews will be approximately one hour long. The questions I will ask concern your views on the refugee experience, government policy, and the domestic and international environment for refugee support and protection.

Observations: In each site, I will be focused on the material and social environment and interactions between individuals. I will be taking notes and, with full consent, taking pictures and video. I will not record any information or image that can identify any individual without the direct and explicit consent of that individual. Upon request, you are free to review the visual material to ensure confidentiality of staff and clients.

Visual Material: Participants are welcome to contribute towards the production of the visual and creative dimensions of this project. The shape of this contribution will be determined through discussion with myself, and cameras are available for loan to facilitate these contributions. All participants engaged in the production of visual material will retain ownership of their raw images, and credited with co-authorship and contribution in any exhibition or display of the material.

Confidentiality: All material will be treated with complete confidentiality. You will be asked whether you wish to remain anonymous, and I will use false names in any notes. I will ensure that my research materials are kept safe and secure.

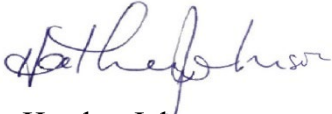
Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline to answer any question, and to end the interview at any time. You may also ask me to remove your interview from the study. To ensure accuracy, I will be recording my interviews. If you don't wish to be recorded, we will rely on handwritten notes which you will have the opportunity to review.

There is no financial compensation involved in participation with this study. If you are interested in seeing the results of this research, I will be happy to provide you with a copy of any report or analysis, in addition to the country reports. You will also be invited to a local stakeholders meeting in early 2020.

This study has been reviewed and approved through the Queen's University Belfast ethics review procedures. If you have questions or concerns about being part of this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at h.johnson@qub.ac.uk.

Thank you in advance for your interest and support.

Sincere Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Heather Johnson', written in a cursive style.

Dr Heather Johnson

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Consent: *Boats, Borders and Asylum*

I hereby consent to participation in the project Boats, Borders, and Asylum, being conducted by Dr Heather Johnson (h.johnson@qub.ac.uk).

1. *Observations*

I consent to observations, according to the agreed parameters, in the following organization:

I **do / do not** consent to the taking of **photographs / video** during the observation, and understand that no images will be gathered that will identify individuals without consent.

Initials: _____

2. *Anonymity*

☐ I wish to remain anonymous.

☐ I consent to the use of my name.

3. *Recording*

I consent to the digital recording of this interview, and understand that it and all related transcripts will be kept securely. I understand that redacted transcripts will be stored in the UK Data Archive, as per ESRC requirements, at the completion of the project.

Initials: _____

4. *Visual Material*

I consent to the use of the images and videos that I have taken and contributed to the project. I also understand that recordings will be stored in the UK Data Archive, as per ESRC requirements, at the completion of the project.

☐ I consent to the use of visual material in **research outputs only**.

☐ I consent to the use of visual material in public exhibitions and displays.

☐ I consent to the storage of my visual material in the UK Data Archive.

I **do / do not** wish to be credited in any production that uses the visual material that I have gathered. In credits, I wish the following name to be used: _____

Initials: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____