

**COMMUNITY REPORTING THRESHOLDS: Sharing concerns with agencies concerning violent extremist activity and involvement in foreign conflict**

**Information for Participants (Community Members/Representatives)**

**What is the Community Reporting Thresholds project?**

Taking the step to report someone close of known or suspected involvement in violent extremism (including planned or actual involvement in overseas conflicts) can be a significant personal, religious, political and/or cultural challenge on many levels. Yet voluntary community reporting is a critical element in the prevention of terrorist and other violent extremist acts or planning and has previously enabled significant community harms to be prevented.

This Project seeks the input of community members/representatives who may have knowledge of mechanisms and procedures for reporting suspicious activity in relation to involvement of someone in violent extremism in this country or overseas. The Project will consider the following issues:

* The reasons community members, leaders and influencers might feel motivated to share concerns with agencies about those suspected of involvement in extremism and/or violent overseas conflict
* What they would want to know or be reassured about before deciding to share their concerns
* What factors might encourage or discourage people to share their concerns
* Expectations, if any, about the kind of support people might need or want at various stages of the reporting process, including after they make a report
* Expectations, if any, about the outcomes of the reporting process
* Concerns and fears, if any, about the reporting process and its impacts (personal, family, community)
* Views on what agencies who listen to community members’ concerns during reporting need to know from a community point of view when dealing with members of the public on these issues
* Strategies for improving existing approaches to community reporting
* Strategies for strengthening public awareness and knowledge about the process of coming forward with information to agencies

**How will my contribution to the Project help?**

Taking part in this interview will give you the chance to share your views and experiences on this important topic and have them heard.

**Who is running the Project?**

The Project is being run by the University of Huddersfield, working with Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia. The researchers involved are Professor Paul Thomas, Dr. Shamim Miah, Kris Christmann and two female student researchers (University of Huddersfield), and Professor Michele Grossman (Victoria University).

**University of Huddersfield contact details:**

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All the researchers have worked on projects like this before.

**Who is funding the Project?**

This research is being funded by the Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats (CREST) — an independent Centre commissioned by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and which is funded in part by the UK security and intelligence agencies.

However, the research team are independent academic researchers and the Project is independently designed and directed by our academic research team. The anonymity and privacy of community participants will be fully protected at all times – please see below.

**What does the Project involve?**

Members of the Project team will conduct one-on-one interviews with community members/representatives and professional practitioners who may have general or specific knowledge of suspicious reporting activity processes and mechanisms. **We are interested specifically in discussing your views as a community member/representative** about issues related to sharing information about family/close friends (‘intimates) who may become involved in or support violent extremist activities (including planned or actual travel to overseas conflicts).

You will be presented with a choice of hypothetical scenarios and some questions based on these scenarios to consider in detail during your interview through discussion with the researchers. This will allow you to answer questions and share views and information in a way that avoids identifying or talking about specific individuals, cases, incidents or information that you may not be comfortable disclosing. However, you may also wish to share information about your own experience of reporting if relevant, and the choice to do so is entirely up to you. All interviews will be digitally recorded and anonymity is discussed below. Interviews are likely to last between an hour to an hour and a half or so. Please let us know if you’d prefer to be interviewed by a female researcher.

**Who can participate?**

Any community members or representatives are welcome to participate. We are particularly interested in talking to young people/young adults aged between 16 and 30 years old. If you are under 18 years old, we will need signed consent to participate from both yourself and your parent/guardian. All community participants will receive a £15 Amazon gift voucher in recognition of the time given for the interview. You cannot be identified through redeeming this voucher.

**Can I speak freely and will my contribution be anonymous?**

You will not be identified in any way in the final Project report that the researchers write or in any academic articles or presentations made by the researchers relating to this research. Your comments and feedback will be anonymous.

All the feedback involved in this project will be kept anonymous, subject to legal limitations. That means whatever you tell the researchers will be kept in strict confidence, except in the unlikely event that you communicate information that cannot, by law, be kept confidential.

**When wouldn’t my contribution be kept anonymous?**

Instances of this could include, for example, a participant who reports inappropriate contact between an adult and a child, or describes a situation involving the possibility of significant harm or serious risk to self or others, including risks or harms that may be subject to criminal proceedings. In such cases the researchers are required by law to pass on this information to the appropriate authorities.

**How will my anonymity be maintained?**

The interview will be recorded to help researchers accurately understand your views. Recordings of interviews will be kept locked securely at the University of Huddersfield and no one else will have access to the recordings of the interviews except the researchers and the transcriber. Once interviews have been transcribed, the voice recordings will be destroyed. No information that identifies you will be on the transcript. Transcriptions will be kept securely on a password protected, encrypted IT system and only the researchers will have access to these.

**What happens if I change my mind about being involved?**

If you participate in the Project, you are free to pull out at any point within two weeks of the interview taking place, either during or after the interview, and nothing negative will happen if you choose to do this. If you decide to withdraw from the Project for any reason, all information, voice recordings, transcripts and records relating to your participation will be immediately destroyed.

**What if I’m under 18 years of age?**

If you are aged 16 or 17 years old, we will need a signed consent form from you **and** your parent/guardian that confirms they have read this Information sheet and that they will allow your participation.

**What happens if I get upset and need to talk to someone because of my involvement in the project?**

It is not likely that you will feel any distress or upset as a result of participating in this project. However, if you do, the researchers will offer you an on-site briefing, and also give you a referral to the Samaritans, Tel: 116 123 (from any number in the UK); or email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) . Their services are free and confidential for you.

**What happens if I have concerns about how the project is run?**

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this project at any time, you may contact the Chair of the University of Huddersfield School of Education and Professional Development Research Integrity and Ethics Committee: [sepdresearch@hud.ac.uk](mailto:sepdresearch@hud.ac.uk) (with the subject as ethics).

You can also contact the Chair of the CREST (University of Lancaster) Research Ethics Committee: https://crestresearch.ac.uk/contact/

**How can I participate?**

Contact the Project team by phoning or emailing the Project Officers Dr. Shamim Miah: [s.miah@hud.ac.uk](mailto:s.miah@hud.ac.uk) / 01484 478153 or Kris Christmann: [k.christmann@hud.ac.uk](mailto:k.christmann@hud.ac.uk) / 01484 473222.

**What if I have questions before I agree to participate?**

Please feel free to contact the Chief Investigator, Professor Paul Thomas, at any time to discuss your questions or concerns about participating on email: [d.p.thomas@hud.ac.uk](mailto:d.p.thomas@hud.ac.uk); Tel: 01484 478267/07808 736418.