By email/email attachment as appropriate.

Dear ….

We are conducting a survey on behalf of a project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council of UK Research and Innovation to investigate the experience of the self-employed during the Covid-19 crisis. The overall project is being conducted by a research team based at the University of Southampton, Cardiff University and the Open University.

Our research has several elements, including the analysis of official statistical surveys, interviews with the self-employed and discussions with an expert panel of other academics, national and regional government officials and officials from business organizations.

We are conducting interviews with a selected group of self-employed individuals to gain a better understanding of how microbusiness owners and freelancers have been impacted by the crisis, were able to access government or other support, and were able or not to continue their self-employed work.

We would like to conduct a telephone or internet video interview with you as part of the research. The interview will last for no more than around 40-50 minutes. The interview, if you are agreeable, will be recorded for ease of transcription of the information you are able to provide. However, your personal information will be treated in the strictest confidence, and any information or comments that you provide, if used, will only be reported anonymously in any research reports or articles produced for the project.

It would be helpful if you are agreeable to be interviewed, or if you have any questions, if you could let us know. Will would, of course, undertake the interview at a time of mutual convenience, but are hoping to do so during November.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Andrew Henley (Cardiff University)

Dr Darja Reuschke (University of Southampton and project principal investigator)

Professor Elizabeth Daniel (The Open University)

Dr Mark Lang (Independent Researcher)