

DATING APP CONNECTIONS

Preliminary interview guide

This document lays out a preliminary interview guide which may be adapted depending on respondent's context to focus on certain aspects of their experiences or specific apps used.

First of all, thanks for your time and your interest in this project. Do you have any questions regarding the information from the Participant Information Sheet?

- **I need to inform you that this call is being voice-recorded, but that it will be edited for anonymity. Your participation will be anonymous and confidential. We may use some of your responses to illustrate the experiences of dating apps but any answers will not identify you.**
- **I understand that we may touch upon some sensitive issues. At any point, you have the right to pause the interview or stop it altogether. You do not need to answer any question that you don't want to or feel uncomfortable about.**
- **Do you understand these two things?**

Okay, let's start!

About you and your previous use of dating apps

- Tell me a bit about yourself.
- Tell me a bit about your use of dating apps.
- Ask about age, location, employment, education, marital status
- Before COVID-19,
 - How would you describe your relationship status? What about your social circle?
 - Had you used dating apps? If yes, which ones, how frequently and what were you looking for? If no, why not?
 - How had you decided to use dating apps? How did you feel when you started using them? Did that change over time?
 - What kinds of relationships did you establish through dating apps? (e.g. hookups, long-term partners, work, etc.) Did you meet people offline from the apps?
 - If you stopped using them before COVID, why did you stop?
 - Did you use dating apps in combination with other apps (e.g. whatsapp, snapchat, IG)?
 - Did you link your Twitter or IG? Did you show your face? Why, why not?

Experience of covid

We're particularly interested in the periods of most strict regulations when you could only really leave the house for work (if you were essential) or like shopping and doing one hour of exercise.

- Can you tell me more about your experience of COVID? What was your life like? (e.g. were you living alone, with friends, family; did you stop working; etc.)
- How did you feel about COVID? (e.g. very scared, frightened for sick relatives, burdened with additional work, etc.)
- How did you feel more generally (e.g. lonely, well-supported, etc.)?
- How did you cope with having to stay at home? Did you have any opportunities to socialize? (e.g. family zoom chats, going to work, etc.)
- Did your relationship status change?

App use during COVID

If you started using dating apps during COVID:

- Why did you start using dating apps? How did you hear about the apps and why did you choose a particular app?
- Did you share with people that you were using them? How did you feel about using them?
- How did you come up with the text/images to add to your profile?
- How did you use the apps?

If you continued using apps:

- How did your use of apps change? Do you feel you were spending more or less time? Talking to more or less people?
- Did you change your profile text or images? Do you feel that others did?
- Do you feel there were any changes to the apps or the culture/vibe in them?

In any case of app use:

- What kinds of things were you looking for?
- Did you have a clear idea of what/whom you were interested in? Did this change over time?
- What times or places did you use them? (e.g. at night in bed, during commute, etc.)
- What kinds of people were you talking to? How many? Did you also talk to them on other apps (e.g. whatsapp, Instagram)?
- What did you talk to people about?
- Did you talk about COVID? What did you talk about? Why?
- Did you get any info about COVID through the apps? How? Did you trust it?
- How did it feel to talk to people on apps at the time?
- How did you feel about sharing pictures? What about sexting?
- Are you still in touch with people you met on apps during that time? Did you meet any of them in person? What would you say they are (friends, friends-with-benefits, networks, etc.)?

Relational aspect of dating apps

- Could you tell me about your feelings when you use of dating apps? Why do you feel in that way?
- Do you feel that your experience varies if you use any app in particular? How and why?
- Can you tell me about a particular good experience on a dating app (something or someone that stands out? Are you still in touch with them?
- What about a negative one (someone who was rude or maybe an antivaxxer or something)? How did those make you feel?

If you stopped using apps during COVID:

- Why did you stop?
- How did you stop? Did you tell people you were talking with that you would be stopping? Did you transfer some of those contacts to other platforms?

About devices:

- Would you tell me in which device you use dating apps? (a personal smartphone, your work phone, on a computer, or another. Why? (Depending on the answer)
- How do you feel about using dating apps in only one/several devices? Why?
- Which kind of connection do you use for using dating apps? For instance, having a monthly contract with a mobile company, WIFI in cafes, etc....

App use after COVID

If you continue using apps:

- How do you feel about using apps now? Do you use them more or less now?
- How has what you're looking for changed? Do you meet more people or less?
- How do you feel the feeling/vibe/other people's behavior on the apps changed?
- What happened with the people you were talking to in the apps? Do you feel they've also changed how much they use or what they're looking for?

If you stopped using them:

- How did you stop? Did you tell people you were talking with that you would be stopping? Did you transfer some of those contacts to other platforms?
- Why did you stop?

In any case:

- Do you talk to others about health before meeting? (e.g. condoms, HIV, PrEP, etc.) (may only apply to some participants)
- What have you heard about monkeypox? Did you learn about it from the apps? How?

Conclusion

- In general, how do you feel about dating apps? Has this changed? Do you feel the same for all apps? Do you think others also feel this way?
- What do you think are the being benefits of apps? And their main problems?

- How do you think you'll be using apps in the future?

We are just getting at the end of our interview, so...

- Would you like to say anything else about dating apps and your experiences that I have not asked, and you feel it is important for you?
- Was there anything we talked about that you didn't expect?
- How did you feel throughout the interview?

Thank you very much for your time and your answers, this is really valuable for our research. If you have any questions, please do get in touch!