**Information Sheet**

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Information for participants

**Thank you for agreeing to take part in my research!**

This leaflet tells you about my research and provides you with my contact information.

**Who am I and what is my project about?**

I am a PhD researcher in the Department of Media and Communications at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).

I am conducting doctoral research that seeks to understand how people use and think about the internet and digital media, in general and in relation to civic/political engagement. I am specifically focusing on two social categories:

* individuals whose professions revolve around information and media technologies
* individuals involved in formal politics and/or advocacy/pressure/community groups

**Who is funding my research?**

My research is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

**Who will be taking part in the project?**

I am inviting individuals whose professions revolve around information and media technologies and individuals involved in various social and political causes from across London and beyond. I plan to conduct interviews with a wide range of people on the basis of age, ethnicity, background, interests and media use.

**What will happen during the research?**

I will be delighted to arrange two interviews with you. These could be at your work, home or at a convenient location. The second interview will take place 2-4 weeks after the first. Please bring along any of your digital communication devices (e.g., laptop, tablet, mobile phone) to both interviews. I hope you will show me during the interviews how you engage online, while we discuss your use and your views of the internet and digital media. Between the first and second interviews I will ask you to write weekly diaries about how you have engaged civically or politically. The interviews will be audio-recorded and last around one hour each. For part of each interview I would like to video how you use your device and will ask you to wear a subcam mounted on a pair of glasses, which I will provide you with.

**Do you have to take part?**

You are free to leave the research at any point. You are also free not to answer specific questions. I will ask you to confirm that you are willing to take part and to be audio-/video-recorded by signing a consent form which I will provide you with.

**How will you know what happens with the research?**

I will let you know about the progress of my research. You can also contact me at any stage of the research. The results will be reported in academic publications. Research participants will always be kept anonymous.

**Could there be problems for you if you take part?**

No. I will make sure that everything you say to me is kept anonymous and confidential. I will change your name in publications based on this research. No identifiable information will be linked in any way to your name. If you disclose anything that suggests you are at real risk of harm, I will take advice from the appropriate authorities on whether I must disclose this information. I will tell you if I feel I need to do this.

I know that taking part in the research will take a fair amount of time and I want to say thank you for this. As a sign of appreciation, every participant will receive £50 after the second interview.

**How will I store your information?**

All recordings, diaries and interview transcripts will be kept on a secure computer server at the LSE. No information with identifiable details will be shared with anyone. Transcripts and diaries will be anonymized to remove identifiable information. Audio/video recordings will be destroyed by the end of the project. Anonymized/unidentifiable data such as interview transcripts will be archived, and made available for future research, on ReShare – the UK Data Service's online research data repository. All reports and publications of the research will be anonymized.

**The project** has been reviewed and approved by the LSE’s Research Ethics Committee.

Please feel free to contact me at any time if you have any questions or if there is anything that you would like to add or clarify with respect to the interview/s, your diaries or your participation in the research.

**Thank you**

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