**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

**Generative AI and Skills in SMEs: A Study of Skills Replacement and Augmentation in Digital and Media Firms in Greater Brighton**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others, if you wish.

Thank you for reading this.

1. **What is the purpose of this research project?**

This project aims to understand how skills in digital and creative SMEs are transformed by the use of Generative AI.

1. **Why have I been invited to take part?**

You have been invited to take part because you are working with Generative AI, you work for an SME in the digital and/or creative field or you are involved in discussions about Generative AI in the Greater Brighton IT community.

1. **Do I have to take part?**

No, your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, we will discuss the research project with you and ask you to sign a consent form. If you decide not to take part, you do not have to explain your reasons and it will not affect your legal rights.

You are free to withdraw your consent to participate in the research project at any time, without giving a reason. If you choose to withdraw your consent after you have signed the consent form and/or after you have participated, we will still use the data already collected in a fully anonymised form.

1. **What will taking part involve?**

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to spend about an hour discussing working with Generative AI and its impact on skills with one or more of our researchers. The interview will be online, on Zoom or Teams. There are a few core questions we will ask to focus the discussion but the conversation will also allow for additional issues and topics to be raised and discused. We will ask for your permission to record the conversation and the recording will be used only for analysis of the issues, and will not be shared outside of the research team. Once transcribed, the interview will be fully anonymised and deposited in a data repository in strict observance of the ethical guidance of the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

1. **Will I be paid for taking part?**

No, you will not be paid for taking part in this project. Any information you give will be as a gift and you will not benefit financially now or in the future.

1. **What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There are no direct advantages or benefits to you from taking part. However, you contribution will help us to understand the way in which working with Generative AI may impact on skills and the nature of work.

1. **What are the possible risks of taking part?**

You might find it uncomfortable to talk about certain aspects of your employment. However, you are free not to answer any question as you choose, and can withdraw from the research at any time. Beyond this, we do not see any risks for you in taking part.

1. **Will my taking part in this research project be kept confidential?**

All information collected from (or about) you during the research project will be kept confidential [unless there are legal or exceptional circumstances that may require us to make specific disclosures e.g., in order to protect the safety and wellbeing of yourself or others, or to report a crime]. Any personal information you provide will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please see ‘What will happen to my Personal Data?’ (below) for further information.

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Cardiff University is the Data Controller for this project and is committed to respecting and protecting your Personal Data in accordance with your expectations and Data Protection legislation. Further information about Data Protection, including:

* your rights
* the University’s Data Protection Policy and broad data management principles; and
* how to contact the University’s Data Protection Officer and/or the Information Commissioner’s Office

can be found at <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection>. The University’s overarching Data Protection Notice for research participants is available at <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection/research-participants-data-protection-notice>. If you do not have access to the internet and/or otherwise require this information in another format, please let us know.

In accordance with Data Protection legislation, we are required to inform you of our lawful basis for collecting and processing your Personal Data. The lawful basis we are relying on as part of the research project is [article 6(1)(e) of the UK GDPR, namely that the processing of your Personal Data is necessary for the performance of our public task].

The data generated by this research project will be fully anonymised (preventing direct or indirect identification) and stored in the data repository of the ESRC and the UK Data Service. It may be accessed by members of the research community and, where necessary, by members of the University’s governance and audit teams or by regulatory authorities. It may also be published in support of the research project, where it is likely to have continuing value for research purposes. In all cases it will be used in fully anonymised form.

If you choose to withdraw from the research project, your personal data you have given up until the point of withdrawal will not be used in the research. We will however use any information you may have given us up to the point of withdrawal in an anonymised form. Please note that it will not be possible to withdraw any anonymised data that has already been published or in some cases, where identifiers are irreversibly removed during the course of a research project, from the point at which it has been anonymised.

1. **What happens to the data and results at the end of the research project?**

None of the information you provide or any of the data collected during the research project will be available or shared, neither within the University nor outside it, in its raw state. Only the members of the research team will have access to the raw data.

The information and data will be deposited in a repository in accordance with the ESRC guidance and it may be used for additional research projects and published and/or presented in the public space and the usual academic channels, but only fully anonymised and in such a way that individual interviewees or specific organisations cannot be identified.

It is our intention to publish the results of this research project in academic journals or other similar forums and to present findings at conferences. You will not be identified in any report, publication or presentation arising from this project.

1. **What if there is a problem?**

If you have any concerns about how you have been approached or treated during this research or if you otherwise wish to make a complaint, please contact the project Principle Investigator, Dr Dimitrinka Stoyanova Russell ([StoyanovaRussellD@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:StoyanovaRussellD@cardiff.ac.uk)) in the first instance. If your concern or complaint is not managed to your satisfaction, please contact Chair of the Research Ethics Committee at Cardiff Business School Dr Carmela Bosangit, [BosangitC@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:BosangitC@cardiff.ac.uk).

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, you may have grounds for legal action, but you may have to pay for it.

1. **Who is leading and funding this research project?**

The research is being led by Dr Dimitrinka Stoyanova Russell at Cardiff Business School Cardiff University. There are two other members of the research team: Dr Christopher Russell from Canterbury Christ Church University and Professor Ödül Bozkurt from Sussex University.

The research is funded by The Digital Futures at Work Research Centre (<https://digit-research.org/>)

Cardiff University is committed to protecting the safety, rights and dignity of research participants and insists that all research conducted by its staff and students is underpinned by the highest ethical standards. Further information about Research Ethics and Research Integrity (good research practice) at Cardiff University can be found at <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/research/our-research-environment/integrity-and-ethics>.

1. **Who has reviewed this research project?**

This research project has been reviewed by the Cardiff Business School’s Research Ethics Committee and has been granted a favourable ethical opinion.

1. **Further information and contact details**

Should you have any questions relating to this research project, you may contact the project Principle Investigator using the details below:

Dr Dimitrinka Stoyanova Russell ([StoyanovaRussellD@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:StoyanovaRussellD@cardiff.ac.uk))

Cardiff Business School, C05 Aberconway Building, Colum Drive, Cardiff, CF10 3EU

**Thank you for considering taking part in this research project. If you decide to participate, you will be given a copy of the Participant Information Sheet [and a signed consent form] to keep for your records.**