

## **Participant Information Sheet for Process Evaluation**

**Researcher:** Janine Maddison, School of Natural and Environmental Sciences

**Title of Study:** Assessing pedagogic benefits of the virtual world to enhance fieldwork.

### **Invitation and Brief Summary**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read this information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form. However, you are free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason and without any penalty or loss of benefits.

### **What is the purpose of the research?**

This research aims to trial the use of digital tools such as using technology in the field to address some of the challenges that learners face in conducting fieldwork within their studies.

The digital intervention has been designed to address these specific challenges and will go through two stages of evaluation. The first is a small-scale 'pilot' evaluation which will consider the process behind the adoption and use of the technology. It will value student voice in this testing phase, to uncover their views and experiences of using the digital approaches and aim to capture ideas that the users of the approach have to improve it. This is the pilot or process evaluation. Data from this evaluation will be used to make changes to the digital approach before a final larger scale impact evaluation which will aim to consider the impact of the technology intervention in addressing the underlying challenge experienced.

### **What does taking part involve?**

- The participant will trial the use of an app on a mobile device alongside the fieldwork task that is scheduled for that fieldwork day. The app collects and collate geo-located qualitative information and responses from the participant with the aim of developing deeper understanding of synoptic real-world learning and significance of the fieldwork task.
- After trialling the app the participant will be asked to complete a short survey which should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.
- The participant is invited to participate in a focus group interview scheduled to last approximately 60 minutes.

### **Key themes to be discussed during focus group**

- Methods to record observations, data and learning during fieldwork.
- Experiences in using the app in the field.
- Reflections on the role and value of the supporting questions used within the app.
- Suggestions on improvements to the app and supporting questions.

### **What information will be collected and who will have access to the information collected?**

Focus Group Interviews will be recorded, the audio will be transcribed and the researcher will take notes. The survey will ask participants to disclose their stage of study, subject of study and gender identity. Participants will be able to opt out of these questions.

Participants will not be asked for information on sensitive information.

Data and metadata storage will follow the requirements and data protection of Newcastle University, which makes use of a secure online cloud storage with regular backups.

We will use your name and email to contact you about the research study. We will use anonymised identifiers [Participant A, B etc] when collating and analysing data collection.

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Individuals at Newcastle University may look at your research data to check the accuracy of the research study. The only individuals at Newcastle University who will have access to information that identifies you will be individuals who need to contact you to query a response or audit the data collection process.

If you agree to take part in the research study, your data will become part of a dataset which can be accessed by other users running other research studies at Newcastle University and in other organisations. These organisations may be other Universities. Your information will only be used by organisations and researchers to conduct research.

If you agree to take part in the research study the data provided will be de-identified and made available as “open data” through a research data repository <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/rdm/sharing>. This means the de-identified study data will be publicly available and may be used for purposes not related to this study. It will not be possible to identify you from the “open data”.

### Who is the sponsor and data controller for this research?

Newcastle University is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. Newcastle University will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that Newcastle University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The lawful basis for carrying out this study under GDPR is Task in the Public Interest, (Article 6,1e) as research is cited as part of the University’s duties.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as Newcastle University need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, all information and data you have provided will be removed from the study. You can find out more about how Newcastle University uses your information at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/data.protection/> and/or by contacting their Data Protection Officer [rec-man@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:rec-man@ncl.ac.uk).

### Who is funding this research?

Newcastle University

### Has this study received ethical approval?

This study has received ethical approval from Newcastle University Ethics Committee on 14/02/2022.  
Ref: 18717/2022

### Who should I contact for further information relating to the research?

Janine Maddison, [j.l.maddison2@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:j.l.maddison2@newcastle.ac.uk)

### Who should I contact in order to file a complaint?

Research Study: Sara Marsham, [sara.marsham@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:sara.marsham@newcastle.ac.uk)

If you wish to raise a complaint on how your personal data is handled, you can contact the Data Protection Officer: [rec-man@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:rec-man@ncl.ac.uk)

If you are not satisfied with their response you can complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO): <https://ico.org.uk/>