

Disinformation Project

Participant Information Sheet



Project: DataDiaries

This is a pilot study to explore the tactics and assessments audiences make when accessing online information in comparison to the motivations and assumptions behind technical responses to the problem of misinformation, content validation, and provenance.

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of this study is to investigate ways of understanding the way people access and respond to online information without using technical software-based methods (such as cookies or browser plug-ins). The aim of this study is to extend the scope of Project Origin ([link](#)) by helping to bring technical expertise in dialogue with citizen perspectives on the issue of misinformation, thus contributing to the ongoing work within BBC R&D.

Who is doing the research?

The research is being conducted by [Dr Ian Johnson](#), [Rob Anderson](#), and [Dr Vasilis Vlachokryiakos](#) from Newcastle University. The study is funded by the [Centre for Digital Citizens](#) (CDC), a joint project between Newcastle and Northumbria Universities addressing the emerging challenges of digital citizenship. In this study, researchers from the CDC are working in collaboration with BBC R&D.

Why am I being asked to take part?

The aim of this study is to understand the ways people interact with and respond to online news and information throughout the week - and the methods people use for assessing the validity of the information they access. We are focusing on those people who access online news either through social media platforms (e.g., Twitter or Facebook), direct from news websites (like the BBC), or through messaging apps (such as Whatsapp or Messenger). If you access news and online information in any or some of these ways we would like you to take part as we think you will add valuable insights to the study and the wider project.

What will I be asked to do?

The DataDiaries study is comprised of two parts. In the first part, we will ask you to sign up to the DataDiaries platform and respond when prompted to enter details of your news consumption and related questions for a period of two weeks. In the second part of the study, we will invite you to an interview where we will discuss your DataDiaries entries and your feelings about online news and reflections on taking part in the study.

What will happen to my data?

With your consent, we will use the data collected through DataDiaries to prompt facilitated discussions with you and record these interviews. We will not share your data with other participants and we will anonymise it for use in research purposes. After the study, we will store this data safely in accordance with the provisions of the GDPR and the UK Data Protection Act 2018. Any information provided by you in the context of this study will be stored securely and confidentially. We may use transcriptions of recorded data in research publications in the future, however, we will take care to separate all personal details and make sure that your information remains anonymised.

What are the benefits and risks of taking part?

We will compensate you for your time taking part in the study with vouchers to the value of £100 to be distributed in two parts. After the 2-week diary phase of the study, we will issue the first £50. The second instalment will be issued after the interview. We hope you will find it useful to reflect on and think about the questions we ask. We don't anticipate there being any disadvantages or risks in taking part in this research. However, if you feel uncomfortable or want to stop for any reason you can stop taking part in the study at any time and without reason given to us.

Who can I contact with questions or complaints?

If you have any questions about the project, get in touch with Ian Johnson (lan.Johnson2@newcastle.ac.uk). If there are any problems or concerns with the way the study is being conducted contact Vasilis (vasilis.vlachokyriakos1@newcastle.ac.uk). For questions about the CDC and the wider project contact: Effie, CDC Centre Manager (effie.le-moignan@newcastle.ac.uk).