

Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form

Title	COVID Frontlines in Australia and New Zealand
Chief Investigator	Professor Larissa Hjorth
Associate Investigator(s)	Professor Ingrid Richardson, Dr Hugh Davies, Dr Ruth De Souza, Professor Mark Andrejevic,

What does my participation involve?

1 Introduction

You are invited to take part in this research project, Frontline workers in Australia and New Zealand. You have been invited because you are a resident in Australia and New Zealand during the COVID-19 crisis. We are interested in hearing about your everyday home and work experiences during this period in relation to masks and other PPE, QR codes, COVID tests, temperature testing, vaccinations and other aspects of how COVID has affected your life.

This Participant Information Sheet/Consent Form tells you about the research project. It explains the processes involved with taking part. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the research.

Please read this information carefully. Ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about. Participation in this research is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to.

If you decide you want to take part in the research project, you will be asked to sign the consent section. By signing it you are telling us that you:

- Understand what you have read
- Consent to take part in the research project

You will be emailed a digital a copy of this Participant Information and Consent Form to keep.

2 What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this project is to understand the lived experiences of people in Australia and New Zealand and to provide evidence-based information on how people have perceived, been affected by and adjusted to the new conditions brought by COVID-19.

3 What does participation in this research involve?

Your participation (if you choose to be involved) in this project will involve two 30 minute (approx) audio-recorded **digital interview or phone interview** with one of the research team over the course of one year.

If you would like to participate, email Dr Hugh Davies (hugh.davies@rmit.edu.au) to indicate your interest and to ask your preferred days and times for the interview, preferred digital platform or phone number.

On the day of each interviews, at the agreed time, your interview will be conducted online or phone by one of the research team. The researcher will provide details about the project and answer any questions you have. They will ask you to email the consent form and discuss if there are any topics you do not want to talk about.

Once you are both ready and have confirmed the software works, the researcher will let you know when they have started audio-recording. Even if you use a video chat program, only the audio of the interview (e.g. what you say) will be recorded.

During the interview, the researcher may ask you questions about:

- Your experiences and understandings of contact tracing in relation to COVID tracing apps, QR codes, pen-and-paper location tracing, etc.
- Your experience of and feelings toward masks and mask requirements at work, home, shopping and elsewhere.
- Everyday experiences and situations that have been impacted by COVID.
- Your thoughts and concerns around privacy, data and trust.
- Your thoughts and perceptions toward COVID testing, temperature monitoring, vaccinations, etc.

The expected length of the interview is 30 minutes.

After the interview, you will be emailed your interview transcript to review. You may like to indicate any identifying information that you do not want included as research data.

4 Other relevant information about the research project

Overall, it is expected that up to 25 participants will be interviewed. Ideally half who have downloaded the app, half that haven't.

5 Do I have to take part in this research project?

Participation in any research project is voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you do not have to. If you are interviewed, you may stop the interview at any time. You may also choose not to answer any questions that you do not wish to. You will have up to one month after the interview to withdraw from the project and all recordings will be deleted.

If you do decide to take part, you will be given this Participant Information and Consent Form to sign and you will be given a copy to keep.

Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the researchers or with RMIT University. This includes your research supervisors. The research team will not inform your supervisors or any other staff if you choose to participate or not.

6 What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We cannot guarantee that you will receive any direct benefit from this project other than the opportunity to talk about your experiences. However, we are hoping that empirical research into this topic will allow for more informed and improved procedures in the future.

7 What are the risks and disadvantages of taking part?

Participation in the study is not expected to have any particular risks for interviewees. You will be able to control the direction of the conversation and you don't need to answer any questions you don't want to. We are keen to learn from your insights about the perceived risks and trust issues or feelings relating to the app. If you become upset or distressed as a result of your participation in the research project, members of the research team will be able to discuss appropriate support for you. A list of organisations that offer practical, social and/or emotional support that you may contact as needed is attached to this form. These include general resources and those specific to different groups of students.

Confidentiality

The information you provide in the interviews will be used to inform research around mobile apps during disasters/ crisis. A pseudonym will be used and identifying information, such as references to your places and people, will be removed.

8 What if I withdraw from this research project?

You may stop the interview at any time. You may also choose not to answer any questions that you do not wish to during the interview. You will have up to one month after the interview to withdraw from the project. If you decide to withdraw at this point, all recordings will be deleted.

It will not be possible to remove information pertaining to you from academic publications, such as books, chapters, articles or conference papers, once they are published. You will however not be identifiable in any such publications.

9 What happens when the research project ends?

We are seeking to write academic publications and media report on the topic. The research may also be published as creative outputs or in academic journals, as books chapters or as a book, news media articles, and/or presented at conferences. This may take 12 months or more.

It is anticipated that the results of this research project will be published and/or presented in a variety of forums. In any publication and/or presentation, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified, except with your express permission.

How is the research project being conducted?

10 What will happen to information about me?

By signing the consent form, you consent to the research team collecting and using information from you for the research project. Any information obtained in connection with this research project that can identify you will remain confidential. The audio recording will be professionally transcribed. Audio files and transcripts will be kept on a secure RMIT server for five years.

After data has been de-identified, only the research team will have access to the data. After five years, any identifying data will be destroyed. Members of the research team may choose to keep de-identified transcripts of the interviews for future research.

In accordance with relevant Australian and/or Victorian privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to request access to the information about you that is collected and stored by the research team. You also have the right to request that any information with which you disagree be corrected. Please inform the research team member named at the end of this document if you would like to access your information.

Any information that you provide can be disclosed only if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, (2) specifically allowed by law, (3) you provide the researchers with written permission. Any information obtained for the purpose of this research project that can identify you will be treated as confidential and securely stored.

11 Who is organising and funding the research?

This research project is being led by Professor Larissa Hjorth and colleagues and is funded by Design & Creative Practice (DCP) Research Platform. A list of the researchers is provided at the end of this PIS.

12 Who has reviewed the research project?

All research in Australia involving humans is reviewed by an independent group of people called a Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC). This research project has been approved by the RMIT University HREC.

This project will be carried out according to the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* (2007). This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

13 Further information and who to contact

If you want any further information concerning this project, you can contact the researcher on or any of the following people:

Research contact person

Name	Dr Hugh Davies
Position	Co-investigator
Telephone	
Email	hugh.davies@rmit.edu.au

14 Complaints

Should you have any concerns or questions about this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the researchers listed in this document, then you may contact:

Reviewing HREC name	RMIT University
HREC Secretary	Ms Vivienne Moyle
Telephone	03 9925 2251
Email	human.ethics@rmit.edu.au
Mailing address	Research Ethics Co-ordinator Research Integrity Governance and Systems RMIT University GPO Box 2476 MELBOURNE VIC 3001

Consent Form

Title *COVID Frontlines in Australia and New Zealand*

Chief Investigator Professor Larissa Hjorth

Associate Investigator(s) Dr Hugh Davies, Dr Ruth De Souza, Professor Ingrid Richardson, Professor Mark Andrejevic

Acknowledgement by Participant

I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.

I understand the purposes, processes and risks of the research described in the project.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received.

I freely agree to participate in this research project as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the project without affecting my relationship with RMIT or my supervisors.

I understand that any data that the researcher extracts from the interview, transcript, or audio recording for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics, without my consent.

I understand that I will be referred to by pseudonym at all times within any reports or publications arising from this project.

I understand that I will be emailed a signed copy of this document to keep.

	YES	NO
- I agree to participating in an interview	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
- I agree to allow the interview to be audio-recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Name of Participant (please print) _____
Signature _____ Date _____

Declaration by Researcher*

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project, its procedures and risks and I believe that the participant has understood that explanation.

Name of Researcher* (please print) _____
Signature _____ Date _____

* An appropriately qualified member of the research team must provide the explanation of, and information concerning, the research project.

Note: All parties signing the consent section must date their own signature.