

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: A survey of social network service users to identify the occurrence and nature of heterophily

Researcher: Peter West

Ethics number: ERGO/FoPSE/9496

Please read this information carefully before deciding to take part in this research. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

We are a group of three students at the University of Southampton who wish to identify the usage of social networks for interacting with others for finding out information about diverse things. This relationship with others is known as *heterophily*. We are proposing an alternative design for social networks, which will be based on this concept.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been approached as you are a potential user of online social networks.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you agree to take part you will fill out an anonymous questionnaire online at <http://bit.ly/1kHYUCS>. This should take no longer than 10 minutes. You will not be contacted for any follow up research and no personally identifiable information will be requested. You should not volunteer such information in your answers. After completing the questionnaire, you will be provided with a link where the results will be published.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

In participating, you will be helping the research community understand how people use social networks, in turn providing better designed social networks for the general public.

Are there any risks involved?

There are no risks in taking part. This is an anonymous questionnaire which you may access in your own time however you wish.

Will my participation be confidential?

At no point will you be asked for any personally identifiable information. All information is stored anonymously and securely.

What happens if I change my mind?

You may withdraw at any point *before* submitting the questionnaire. After you've submitted your response, we cannot remove it as we have no way to identify who submitted each response.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you should contact one of the researchers named here:

Peter West (pw9g09@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

Noura N Alomar (nna2e13@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

Steed Crazyq (yqz1g13@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

If you are still unsatisfied with any answer you have received you may contact the team supervisor:

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Dr David Millard (dem@ecs.soton.ac.uk)

If you are still dissatisfied you may contact a representative of the independent overseeing body:

Dr Martina Prude, Head of Research Governance (02380 595058,
mad4@soton.ac.uk)

Where can I get more information?

If you have any queries or questions, you should contact one of the researchers named here:

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