Plain Language Statement

Melbourne School of Engineering
Department of Computing and Information Systems

Project: Social Engagement of Older Adults Through Online Games

Dr Jenny Waycott (Responsible Researcher)
Tel: +61 3 8344 8964, Email: jwaycott@unimelb.edu.au
Mrs Romina Carrasco (PhD student)   Email: rcarrasco@student.unimelb.edu.au

---

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following few pages will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research.

Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is this research about?

The aim of this study is to investigate how older adults are using online games for socializing. We want to identify the motivations, experiences and effects of playing online games with other people.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in an interview and a game session observation.

We would conduct an interview to learn about you, your use of technology, and experiences playing online games with other people.

Then, we would ask you to play a game you usually play with other people online. While playing, you would be asked to explain aloud what you are doing. If you do not feel comfortable talking while playing, we can talk about the game afterwards. During the observation the student researcher will observe you while playing without interrupting your gameplay. We will take notes, photographs and video record the session. You would play a game as you usually do and would not be required to do any special task during the game. You do not need to worry about how well you are playing the game, we are not observing your skills in relation to the game, but how technology can facilitate the activity.

Next, you will be part of an interview to reflect on your game session. We would use notes and audio recordings to record the interviews both before and after playing the game.

This session will be at your normal place of play, exploring a game you already know and using the devices and systems you are comfortable with. If you prefer to meet in another place or via a videoconference technology, such as Skype, these requests can be arranged.

We estimate that the time required for the observation will be 15-20 minutes and for the interview 60-70 minutes. The total time required would therefore be approximately 90 minutes. However, the time would be flexible giving opportunities for breaks or suiting your requests.

What are the possible benefits?

Because we want to learn from your experience using online games this will be an opportunity to talk about your possible frustrations and successes with the actual systems. You will assist us in designing better ways to promote social engagement for older people through online games.

What are the possible risks?

This study would not introduce any risk as it is going to be developed under the typical settings that you are used to play. However, you will be asked to explain what you are doing while playing and this may interfere in your normal behaviour. If you prefer, the researcher can ask questions regarding the actions you performed in the game after you finish playing. In addition, having a researcher observing, taking photographs and video recording while you play may not feel comfortable. Please tell the researcher to not make these recordings if you do not feel comfortable. Similarly, during the interviews you may choose to not answer a question if you feel uncomfortable. The questions regarding the use of the game and its devices aim to find ways to improve the technology and are not concerned with how well you played the game.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You are able to withdraw (quit) at any time. *If you withdraw at any stage, the data collected will not be used in the study.*

Will I hear about the results of this project?

It is possible that we disseminate the results through academic publications or conferences or conversational articles. Additionally, the findings will be part of my thesis written report that will be available online through the library of the university when my studies conclude. If you will like to have a summary of the findings please mark your interest in the consent form.

What will happen to information about me?

We aim to protect your privacy and confidentiality the fullest possible by anonymizing the collected data and keeping your contact details in a separate computer file that will be password-protected. Photographs will also protect your identity securing that your face is not visible. The data will be kept securely in the Department of Computing and Information Systems / Melbourne School of Engineering / Microsoft Research Centre for Social Natural User Interfaces for 5 years from the date of publication, and may be destroyed after this time. The student researcher will be responsible of managing and protecting the data collected in this study and there will be no access to the unprocessed data from people outside of this research.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the researchers;
Jenny Waycott, Mail: jwaycott@unimelb.edu.au, Phone: +61 383 448 964, or
Romina Carrasco, Mail: rcarrasco@student.unimelb.edu.au, Phone: +61 413 976 433.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Office for Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.

unimelb.edu.au