

# Plain Language Statement

School of Computing and Information Systems  
The University of Melbourne



**Project:** *Designing Digital Technologies for Older Adults' Online Social Engagement in Personally Meaningful Activities: Participatory workshops & Interviews*

## Researchers:

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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following 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?

Engaging in personally meaningful activities is associated with greater wellbeing for people in later life. This research aims to understand how digital technologies should be best designed to support older adults' online social engagement in personally meaningful activities. This is the second and third stages of this research project – participatory workshops and interviews.

## What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in a series of workshops that will involve focus group discussions, design activities, and creation of prototypes. The purpose of the workshops is to understand how digital technologies could be better designed to support older adults' engagement in meaningful activities. After completing all the participatory workshops, you will be asked to take part in an individual semi-structured interview to reflect on your design process and what aspects you consider to be meaningful in the online social engagement process.

## What are the possible benefits?

By participating in this research, you will help researchers to develop understandings of how digital technologies could be best designed to meet the social needs of older adults. A prototype application will be generated, which can help facilitate new insights in terms of designing for the online social engagement in later life. At the end of the research process, you will be provided with a \$30 gift card to be used at local supermarket for your contribution to the project. Any

travel costs to the study site will be reimbursed.

### **What are the possible risks?**

There are minimal risks associated with participation. It is possible that you may feel uncomfortable to share your personal experiences with other people. If this is the case, please let the researcher know, and you have rights to choose not to answer any question you would not like to answer. If you are not comfortable with meeting in person, you can choose the online option. For in-person sessions, to minimise the risk of contraction, all participants will be asked to wear a mask during the study. The researcher who facilitates the sessions will perform a rapid antigen test (RAT) every time before the workshop and only attend when the result is negative.

### **Do I have to take part?**

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You are able to withdraw (quit) at any time. You can also ask us to destroy any data that has been collected prior to you withdrawing from the study if you wish.

### **Will I hear about the results of this project?**

All results of this project will be updated on the project website:

<https://people.eng.unimelb.edu.au/wzhao10/2022/meaningful.html>

### **What will happen to information about me?**

The researcher will protect the confidentiality of your data. The data will be stored in a password-protected computer and will only be used for this project. You will be referred to by pseudonyms in any published work. Any references that might allow someone to guess your identity will be removed.

### **Where can I get further information?**

If you would like more information about the project, please contact Mr. Wei Zhao at [wzhao10@student.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:wzhao10@student.unimelb.edu.au).

### **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, Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: [HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au](mailto: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.

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