

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

### **Moving to the big City: Loneliness across the Cardiff Student Cohort**

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others, if you wish.

Thank you for reading this.

#### **1. What is the purpose of this research project?**

Loneliness among young people is rapidly becoming a cause for concern. Latest evidence from UK government indicates that one of the most significant triggers for loneliness is moving away from one's home to attend university. This study seeks to capture a snapshot of the Cardiff student cohort and their feelings of loneliness, to assess the extent of loneliness in Cardiff and understand how this may differ from similarly large cities across the UK. We are seeking a broad sample of participants from different gender identities, backgrounds, and across both UGT and PGT cohorts.

#### **2. Why have I been invited to take part?**

You have been invited because you are a current student at Cardiff University.

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

No, your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part, we will discuss the research project with you and ask you to sign a consent form. If you decide not to take part, you do not have to explain your reasons and it will not affect your legal rights. Participating in this research project will have no effect on your education or progression through a degree course. If you are receiving care, participating in this research project will not affect the care you receive.

You are free to withdraw your consent to participate in the research project at any time, without giving a reason, even after signing the consent form.

#### **4. What will taking part involve?**

Participating in this research project involves completing a short (on the order of 15 minutes) survey including questions on your feelings of loneliness.

#### **5. Will I be paid for taking part?**

No. You should understand that any data you give will be as a gift and you will not benefit financially in the future should this research project lead to the development of a new treatment/method/test/assessment.

#### **6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

There will be no direct advantages or benefits to you from taking part, but your contribution will help us understand how loneliness manifests in the Cardiff University student community and may help us develop interventions and/or policies to curb its effects.

**7. What are the possible risks of taking part?**

The survey may trigger feelings of stress and/or discomfort regarding loneliness. If loneliness is a triggering concept for you we advise you do not take part.

**8. Will my taking part in this research project be kept confidential?**

All information collected from (or about) you during the research project will be kept confidential and any personal information you provide will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please see ‘What will happen to my Personal Data?’ (below) for further information.

**9. What will happen to my Personal Data?**

Cardiff University is the Data Controller and is committed to respecting and protecting your personal data in accordance with your expectations and Data Protection legislation. Further information about Data Protection, including:

- your rights
- the legal basis under which Cardiff University processes your personal data for research
- Cardiff University’s Data Protection Policy
- how to contact the Cardiff University Data Protection Officer
- how to contact the Information Commissioner’s Office

may be found at <https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection>.

Anonymised information will be kept for a minimum period of 5 years after the end of the project or after publication of any findings based upon the data (whichever is later) in accordance with the University Records Retention Schedules but may be published in support of the research project and/or retained indefinitely, where it is likely to have continuing value for research purposes. Note that it will not be possible to withdraw any anonymised data that has already been submitted as it won’t be possible to identify responses. Personal data collected up until the point of participant withdrawal from the research project will be discarded.

**10. What happens to the data at the end of the research project?**

The data will be shared via the institutional repository (ORCA) and the UK Data Service. Any personal data will be removed before any form of sharing takes place.

**11. What will happen to the results of the research project?**

It is our intention to publish the results of this research project in academic journals and present findings at conferences. Participants will not be identified in any report, publication, or presentation.

**12. What if there is a problem?**

If you wish to complain or have grounds for concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during this research, please contact Dr Daniel J. Finnegan. If your complaint is not managed to your satisfaction, please contact the ethics committee, COMSC Ethics [comsc-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:comsc-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk).

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, you may have grounds for legal action, but you may have to pay for it.

**13. Who is organising and funding this research project?**

The research is organised by Dr Daniel J. Finnegan in the School of Computer Science and Informatics in Cardiff University.

**14. Who has reviewed this research project?**

This research project has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the COMSC Research Ethics Committee, Cardiff University.

**15. Further information and contact details**

Should you have any questions relating to this research project, you may contact us during normal working hours:

Dr Daniel J. Finnegan  
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CF24 4AG

**Thank you for considering to take part in this research project. If you decide to participate, you will be given a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and a signed consent form to keep for your records.**