



Department of Computer Science

Communications Facility 495

Western Washington University

516 High Street, Bellingham, Washington 98225

(360) 650-2401

<https://cse.wvu.edu/computer-science>

Strength-based Technologies for Individuals with Autism Research Study Participant Consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT

We are asking you to be in a research study. Participation is voluntary. The purpose of this form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to participate. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about anything that is not clear. When we have answered all of your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called “informed consent”.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to better understand the attitudes and experience of individuals with autism in order to identify ways to support their perceived strengths in adult life. Specifically, we seek to develop technologies which are empowering and rely on a collaborative design process which includes and privileges the voices of individuals with autism.

PROCEDURES

To participate in this project, you must be 18 years of age or older. A researcher will discuss this form with you privately on phone or video chat to answer any questions you may have. At that time, you may decline participation or give verbal consent to participate in this research.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to take part in a semi-structured focus group discussion via ZOOM video conference facilitated by one or more members of our research team. Your participation will take approximately 60 minutes to two hours. Focus groups are expected to include 3 to 8 people in addition to the researcher(s). The focus group discussion will be audio and video recorded to capture the accuracy of the information you provide, given your permission. Please be aware that you do not have to participate in this research, and you may stop your participation at any time without penalty. You may also decline participation in any parts of the group discussion if you prefer.

ALTERNATIVE FORMS OF PARTICIPATION

We understand that some may desire to participate in this research while being unable to participate in a focus group. Please contact our research team to request a different way of participating such as a one-on-one interview.

RISKS & BENEFITS

The possible risks associated with participation in this study are minimal. It is possible some discomfort or difficult life experiences could arise due to the nature of the topics of this focus group. Again, you can discontinue your involvement in the focus group at any time. While there is no direct benefit to you as a result of your participation in this study, there is significant opportunity to benefit the greater autistic community through strength-based technology development being



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formalized in the area of human computer interaction. It is also possible that this experience may offer you new insight into your own experience and a sense of belonging with others who are on the autism spectrum.

COMPENSATION

Participants are offered a \$10 Amazon Gift Card upon completion of a focus group session as compensation for your time.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Participation in this focus group indicates agreement to maintain confidentiality of any information about or shared by other participants in this group.

Personal identifiers will be removed from research data. This data may be used in future studies after identifiers are removed. Research data and transcriptions will be stored in a secure location separate from any identifying information. Voice and video recordings will be destroyed after one year. Your responses will remain confidential. The only exception would be if you were to report child or elder abuse or intent to harm yourself or others. If you report this information, Washington State law requires the researcher to report that information to the appropriate agencies or to do what is necessary to obtain help for you and/or keep everyone safe. Please note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed since research documents are not protected from subpoena. The information you provide will be looked at as group data only and will not be traceable to you as an individual.

RIGHT TO REFUSE OR WITHDRAW

Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may change your mind about being in the study and discontinue participation at any time without any negative consequences.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or comments regarding this study, please contact Dr. Shameem Ahmed by e-mail (Shameem.Ahmed@wwu.edu or ahmeds@wwu.edu) or phone (360.650.2624). If you have any questions regarding the rights of research subjects, the Western Washington University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) can be contacted at compliance@wwu.edu or (360) 650-2146.

CONSENT

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. YOUR VERBAL CONSENT WILL INDICATE THAT YOU CONSENT TO YOUR INVOLVEMENT AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT IN THE STUDY DESCRIBED ABOVE. YOU HAVE BEEN EMAILED A DIGITAL COPY OF THIS FORM TO KEEP.