

Participant Information Statement

Research study: Everyday GenAI

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1. What is this study about?

We are conducting a research study about how everyday people are using Generative AI tools (GenAI) in their day-to-day lives. The project aims to understand how people who aren't currently studying or at school learn about these tools, what their motivations are for using them, how their understanding of the technology behind GenAI influences how they use these tools, and how each of these factors impact the trust they have in the outputs these tools create. These insights will be important for how future GenAI policy is developed, as well as how we approach GenAI literacy for the wider community. Taking part in this study is voluntary.

Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

2. Who is running this study?

The study is being carried out by the following researchers:

- Lead Investigator: Dr Agata Stepnik, Media & Communication, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, The University of Sydney
- Associate Investigator: Professor Terry Flew, Media & Communication, Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, The University of Sydney

This study is being funded by the Australian Research Council, Laureate Fellowship (LF230100075).

3. Who can take part in the study?

We are seeking people who are not currently engaged in formal education (high school, TAFE, University, etc) and who:

- Are Australian residents
- Aged 18 years or older

- Have used a GenAI tool at least once per week for at least six months

4. What will the study involve for me?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete two interviews, spaced around 2 weeks apart, that will take about 45 minutes of your time. These interviews will be completely online, using the Zoom videoconferencing app. During these interviews, the researcher will also ask you to share your screen with them so they can observe you using GenAI, and they will ask additional questions about your approach to using these tools during this observation. The researcher will not observe any non-GenAI related activity during their time with you. These interviews will be recorded for transcription purposes only, and the researcher may also take observational notes. You will have the opportunity to review the transcripts and observational notes before they are included for analysis.

The researcher will also ask you to share a copy of your GenAI conversation history, also called a 'log'. Most GenAI tools will anonymise the log by default when you request a copy of it, but the research will also show you how to get a copy of the log, how to check it to make sure it is anonymous, and how to share it securely with the project team.

All data collection will be anonymised. At the start of the study you will be assigned a random number that will match your responses across the two interviews only, without identifying you personally in the collected data. Only the lead researcher Dr. Agata Stepnik and associate researcher Professor Terry Flew will have access to the document matching your assigned number to your name, and this document will be stored on a secure data server. This document will be destroyed at the study's conclusion.

5. Can I withdraw once I have started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part.

Your decision will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at The University of Sydney.

If you take part in an interview and observation you may refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer.

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind, you can withdraw by contacting the lead researcher Dr. Agata Stepnik at agata.stepnik@sydney.edu.au.

If you choose to withdraw, we will stop collecting information from you. If you don't want the information already collected to be in the study results, please tell us at the time you withdraw.

Data that has already been included in published results of this study will not be removable from the publication. Please see section 8 below for further information on how your data will be managed between data collection and publication of study results.

6. Are there any risks or costs?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

However, there is a possibility that you may knowingly or unknowingly share sensitive information about yourself or others during interview questions or direct observation of your GenAI activity that might alert the researcher of potential harms to yourself or to others. Should this occur, the researcher will let you know of this, conclude your participation in the study, and refer you to appropriate support services such as:

- **HealthDirect** [↗](#) – 1800 022 222
- **Lifeline** [↗](#) – 1300 152 854
- **Beyond Blue** [↗](#) – 1300 22 4636
- **1800Respect** [↗](#) – 1800 737 732
- **The Butterfly Foundation** [↗](#) – 1800 33 4673

Any data collected up to that point will not be included in the final research data.

Should the researcher become privy to potentially illegal activity through interview questions or observation of your GenAI activity during the project, they will let you know of this and conclude your participation in the study. Should the activity have the potential to cause harm either to yourself or to others, the activity will also be referred to the relevant authorities. Any data collected to that point will not be included in the final research data.

7. Are there any benefits?

Participants who complete both interviews will be given a Prezzy Smart eGift Card to the value of \$50 AUD. The gift card will be emailed to you at the conclusion of your participation in the study. If you complete both interviews, but then decide to withdraw your data from the study, the gift card is still yours to keep.

Your participation will also be directly contributing to the body of knowledge around how everyday people are using GenAI in their day-to-day lives, and how people come to understand how this technology works in practice and develop their digital literacy skills. As GenAI tools become increasingly more common place in our day to day lives, these insights will be of benefit to individuals like yourself, as well as educators, regulators, and technology operators working to improve the safety and reliability of GenAI tools and technologies for everyone.

8. What will happen to information that is collected?

By providing your consent, you are agreeing to us collecting information from or about you for the purposes of this study.

Any identifiable information you provide us will be stored securely and will only be disclosed with your permission unless we are required by law to release information.

We plan to publish the study findings.

You will not be individually identifiable in these publications.

We will use Zoom AI to transcribe interviews. This will involve sharing your information with Zoom. We will not share this information with anyone else without your consent unless we are required to do so by law. Zoom is owned by Zoom Video Communications Inc. and is located in San Jose, California, USA.

We will store this information and dispose of it securely following the University's Recordkeeping Policy. For more details about how your information will be handled please see the University's [privacy webpage](#).

Between data collection and publication of study results, your data will be managed following the principles set out below:

1. Data collected from interview/media go-along transcripts and from donated GenAI logs will be deidentified before they are included for analysis, and this data will only be available to the project team identified in this document.
2. Deidentification will include removal or redaction of any content that could identify you as the individual contributor of this data, or that could identify any other person. This includes your name as well as any other names that you might mention, or other unique information relating to yourself or others that you might mention such as age, location, occupation or similar that are captured within transcripts or donated GenAI logs. A random alias or descriptor will be attributed to any deidentified quotes used to illustrate study results in publications, e.g. "Participant 1".
3. Analysis of collected data will not begin for a minimum of 4 weeks, i.e. 4 weeks after GenAI logs have been received, or after you have been notified that transcripts of your participation are available for you to review. This is to provide you with a minimum of 4 weeks after data has been collected to let us know if you would like your data to be withdrawn from the study. If the request to withdraw your data is made after 4 weeks but before study results have been accepted for publication, your data will be withdrawn from the study and you will be notified of this outcome. If a request is made after results have been accepted for publication, you will be notified of this outcome.
4. Although entirely optional, we strongly encourage all study participants to review transcripts of their participation. We will let you know as soon as these transcripts are

available. These transcripts will include tracked changes, so you can confirm which data has been redacted or removed.

9. Will I be told the results of the study?

You have the right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study. You can receive a summary of the project outcomes if you wish by stating your preference on the consent form or by contacting the research team directly. The project also has a dedicated web site which can be accessed at <http://mediated-trust.sydney.edu.au/everdaygenai/>

10. What if I would like more information?

When you have read this information, the following researcher will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have:

- Dr. Agata Stepnik
Post-doctoral Research Associate in Digital Communication
agata.stepnik@sydney.edu.au

11. What if I have a complaint or any concerns?

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of The University of Sydney [ethics reference: [2026/HE000164](#) according to the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the University:

Human Ethics Manager
human.ethics@sydney.edu.au
+61 2 8627 8176

This information sheet is for you to keep