

UoM Research Participant Information Sheet

Sustainable open source projects

Participant Information Sheet (PIS)

You are being invited to take part in a research to identify common factors amongst longer-lived open source projects. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully before deciding whether to take part and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

About the research

➤ Who will conduct the research?

Yo Yehudi, EngD Student at School of Computer Science, The University of Manchester and Software Developer at the Department of Genetics, University of Cambridge.

➤ What is the purpose of the research?

Research software is often abandoned or shut down, for one reason or another. While some reasons may be straightforward, e.g. a sole maintainer has moved on, or grant funding has ceased - some projects are able to withstand these barriers and may remain active and maintained despite adversity. In this study, we plan to monitor open source projects over the period of a year, measuring common performance indicators, to see if any indicators are common to projects that remain sustainable and active.

➤ Will the outcomes of the research be published?

Given the nature of the study into open projects, most of the data will be drawn from open sources, and these aggregated results will be published openly on a data depository such as Zenodo. Written-up results will be preprinted and published in an open access journal.

Participants are chosen based on the fact that they are involved in the leadership team for an open project.

➤ Who has reviewed the research project?

This project has been reviewed by The University of Manchester School Of Computer Science Division/School Ethics Committee.

What would my involvement be?

➤ What would I be asked to do if I took part?

If you take part, you will be asked to complete a short survey online.

The survey will ask questions about the age of your project, number of participants, funding, role in the project, and your longer term hopes and plans for this project. One of the questions will ask you for a link to your GitHub project or other code repository.

Using the GitHub link, we will gather information (performance indicators) about your repository using metrics from the CHAOSS (Community Health Analytics Open Source Software) guidelines, which you can review at <https://chaoss.community/>. Some of this information gathering will be scripted, and some will be manually gathered by visiting your repository and reading through it if needed.

Approximately six months and again twelve months after the initial survey, we will re-run a similar survey, running both the GitHub analysis as well as a short questionnaire.

After the year-long survey is complete, we will write-up and publish our results. It is possible we might return and do further studies later on, but none are specifically planned at this point in time.

➤ **What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you wish not to take part you can either inform us verbally or email yochannah.yehudi@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet and will be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself. However, it will not be possible to remove your data from the project once it has been anonymised as we will not be able to identify your specific data. This does not affect your data protection rights. If you decide not to take part you do not need to do anything further.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

➤ **What information will you collect about me?**

In order to participate in this research project we will need to collect information that could identify you, called “personal identifiable information”. Specifically we will need to collect:

- Your name and email address, in order to follow up for the six-month and one-year surveys.
- Your responses to the questionnaire, including a link to your GitHub (or other online repository) project and your plans for your project in the future.
- We will gather information about your work on your GitHub repository, and about work contributed by others. This information is already openly available. We will ask you to put a notice in the ReadMe document of your repository so that people understand the research is taking place.

➤ **Under what legal basis are you collecting this information?**

We are collecting and storing this personal identifiable information in accordance with data protection law which protect your rights. These state that we must have a legal basis (specific reason) for collecting your data. For this study, the specific reason is that it is “a public interest task” and “a process necessary for research purposes”.

➤ **What are my rights in relation to the information you will collect about me?**

You have a number of rights under data protection law regarding your personal information. For example you can request a copy of the information we hold about you.

If you would like to know more about your different rights or the way we use your personal information to ensure we follow the law, please consult our [Privacy Notice for Research](#).

➤ **Will my participation in the study be confidential and my personal identifiable information be protected?**

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your personal information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way:

Only the study team at The University of Manchester will have access to your personal information, but they will anonymise it as soon as possible. Your name and any other identifying information will be removed and replaced with a random ID number. Only the research team will have access to the key that links this ID number to your personal information. Your consent form will be retained for 5 years on secure University of Manchester Research Data Storage.

When you agree to take part in a research study, anonymised and aggregated information about you may be provided to researchers running other research studies, or wishing to analyse the results of this study. Your information will only be used by this organisation and researchers to conduct research in accordance with The University of Manchester's Research Privacy Notice.

This information will not identify you and will not be combined with other information in a way that could identify you, unless you consent to sharing identifying information openly.

If you wish for your contact details to be removed from the project database, please email yochannah.yehudi@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected for this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

What if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint that you wish to direct to members of the research team, please contact:

YO YEHUDI – yochannah.yehudi@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk (Research Student performing the study) or

CAROLINE JAY – caroline.jay@manchester.ac.uk (Supervisor)

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance then please contact

The Research Ethics Manager, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, by emailing: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 275 2674.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk or write to The Information Governance Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, M13 9PL at the University and we will guide you through the process of exercising your rights.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information](#) Tel 0303 123 1113

Contact Details

If you have any queries about the study or if you are interested in taking part then please contact the researcher(s)

YO YEHUDI – yochannah.yehudi@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk (Research Student performing the study)