

INFORMATION LETTER

You can use this form to generate text fragments to include in an information letter to the participants of your research project. This form will ensure that no essential information will be left out.

Points of attention:

-keep your target group in mind: are they experts, non-experts, or people with low literacy levels? Adults, adolescents or children? Avoid technical terms and overlong sentences. Provide the letter in the language in which the research will be carried out (English, Dutch, other?).

-make sure the information fragments are complete (don't leave out essential details), but also compact and to the point. For straightforward research projects, two or three sentences for most boxes (in the **yellow** column of the form below) will probably be sufficient.

INFORMATION LETTER ELEMENT	DETAILS; EXAMPLES OF WHAT TO INCLUDE	FILL IN YOUR TEXT FRAGMENTS HERE, THEN COPY/PASTE INTO A LETTER
(a) Introductory statement	*Pleasant greeting *Name of lead researcher (or contact person) *Invitation to participate	To whom it may concern, Neggers, Margot We would like to formally invite you to participate in our research survey.
(b) General Information	*Name of the research project *Duration *Institutes / organizations that are involved *Source of finance	Title: AI Integration in SMEs: Effects on Employee Performance and Satisfaction Duration: 8 Weeks Institutes: Breda University of Applied Sciences Source of finance: Breda University of Applied Sciences
(c) Goal/Purpose of the Research Project	*What the research is about *Why the participant is being asked to contribute	This research aims to investigate how the integration of third-party AI tools in SMEs affects employee job performance and satisfaction. We are seeking your participation because your experiences and insights as an SME employee can provide valuable data to help us explore these impacts.
(d) Methodology: How will the research be conducted? What will be expected of the participants?	*Brief description of the procedures to which the participants will be subjected *When, where, how, how often	Quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered from the target group, SME employees. This approach was selected to capture both statistical relationships and nuanced employee perspectives. • Quantitative data Collection of quantitative data will be conducted through a survey distributed exclusively to SME employees. The survey will be administered online via

		<p>Prolific to ensure a wide reach and accessibility to respondents. Participants will be asked to answer questions regarding their experiences with AI tools and the impact of these tools on their job performance and satisfaction. The survey will include a combination of Likert scales, multiple-choice questions, and short open-ended text responses.</p> <p>The data collected using this online platform and will be secured and anonymized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data <p>To collect qualitative data, some participants will be invited to participate in one-on-one semi-structured interviews, which will be conducted either in person or via Zoom, based on participant preference. The interviews will focus on gathering in-depth insights about the thoughts of the respondent and their experiences with AI in the workplace through a series of open-ended questions.</p> <p>The interviews will be recorded and transcripts analysed using thematic analysis, along with other complementary techniques. Thematic analysis often follows a six-step process: familiarisation, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.</p> <p>The expected time commitment for the survey is approximately 10-15 minutes, and interviews may last around 30-40 minutes.</p>
(e) Additional Requirements for the participants due to the methodological setup	*Specific requirements due to the test conditions, re: belonging to a particular age category, health status (you need to be X, or you shouldn't be Y), not being pregnant, etc.	<p>Participants must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be 18 years of age or older. • Must currently work or have previously worked in an SME. <p>There are no specific restrictions regarding health status, educational background, or job role for this study.</p>
(f) Possible advantages and	*Advantages: e.g. use of a particular device (Fitbit, smartphone, tablet, ...) for the	By participating, you will contribute to research that can positively influence

disadvantages of participating in this research	<p>duration of the project; access to information / data resulting from the research; contributing to relevant insights for science, or the sector, etc.</p> <p>*Disadvantages: e.g. discomfort during measurement</p> <p>*Or no advantages of disadvantages</p>	<p>workplace policies and help SMEs understand the benefits and challenges of integrating AI tools. You may also gain new perspectives on how AI is shaping the future of work. There are no significant disadvantages, although participation will require some time to complete the survey and possibly an interview.</p>
(g) Risks	<p>*Explain the potential risks (if any), and what will be done to ensure participant safety</p>	<p>There are no physical or psychological risks associated with participation. Your privacy will be protected at all times. All data will be anonymized, meaning your responses will not be linked to your identity. Anonymized data will be securely stored on encrypted platforms such as Github, and only the research team and project supervisors will have access to the data.</p>
(h) Costs and Payment	<p>* Are there costs involved for the participant?</p> <p>*Will travel costs be reimbursed?</p> <p>*Will participants be rewarded for their involvement?</p>	<p>There are no costs involved in participating in the study. Participants who complete the survey via the Prolific platform will receive a financial reward provided by Prolific, using the budget allocated by Breda University of Applied Sciences for the survey. This reward will be automatically processed through the Prolific platform.</p> <p>For the qualitative interviews, there will be no financial compensation provided to participants.</p> <p>We expect to collect most of our quantitative data via Prolific and conduct the majority of qualitative data collection through online interviews using Zoom or other virtual meeting platforms, so no travel will be required. However, if a participant prefers to meet for the interview in person, a member of our research team will travel to the participant's location. As a result, the participant will not incur any travel costs, and no travel reimbursement will be necessary.</p>
(i) Data management, Privacy, Confidentiality	<p>*How will data be processed?</p> <p>*How will privacy be ensured?</p> <p>Give a simple example, e.g. your name will be replaced with a non-traceable code; your exact age will not be used, but be placed in</p>	<p>All data collected during the study will be handled with the strictest confidentiality. Quantitative data from the surveys will be downloaded and cleaned for any incomplete or irrelevant responses.</p>

	<p>an age category; your province instead of your city will be included, etc.</p> <p>*Who will have access to the data?</p> <p>*How long will data be stored?</p> <p>*Include a reference to relevant parts of the data management plan, e.g. as an appendix</p>	<p>Qualitative data from interviews will be transcribed. Both types of data will be organized into structured datasets with anonymized participant information. Survey data will be analyzed statistically, while interviews will be reviewed thematically.</p> <p>To ensure privacy, all personally identifiable information (PII) will be anonymized. Although we do not collect sensitive personal data such as age, gender, or location, participants' responses will still be anonymized. Each participant will be assigned a unique, non-traceable identifier (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2), ensuring that no individual can be identified from the dataset. Additionally, all qualitative responses will be reviewed to ensure that no identifying details are included in the analysis.</p> <p>Only the research team and project supervisors will have access to the anonymized data. No external parties or third-party organizations will have access to the data unless explicitly stated in the consent form.</p> <p>Data will be stored on the team's secure, encrypted Github repository for the duration of the research and 10 years after its completion, after which it will be permanently deleted. This data management approach follows GDPR guidelines, and further details can be found in the project's Data Management Plan.</p>
(j) Voluntary nature of participation	<p>*Participants can decline to participate and withdraw from the research once participation has begun, without any negative consequences, and without needing to provide an explanation</p> <p>*Researcher can also decide to end a participant's involvement</p> <p>*In either case, the participant's data will not be used, and be deleted / destroyed</p>	<p>Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, as outlined in the informed consent form that participants will sign before the study begins. You can withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or negative consequences, and without needing to provide a reason. Upon withdrawal, all data associated with your participation will be deleted and will not be included in the analysis. Additionally, the researcher reserves the right to end a</p>

		participant's involvement if necessary, without any negative consequences for the participant.
(k) Results	<p>*How the results of the research will be published</p> <p>*Allow participant to indicate whether s/he wishes to be informed of the outcomes (e.g. by sharing the published paper or report in part or in whole)</p>	<p>The results of this research will be presented in four individual research papers, each addressing a different subdomain of the research topic. Additionally, a policy paper will be drafted, providing recommendations for SME companies based on the data analysis and research insights. All of these documents will be shared with our client, MKB Digiwerkplaats, who will later disseminate the policy papers and findings to their SME clients. The results of the study will not be officially published in academic journals.</p> <p>The findings will also be shared with the client and stakeholders during a digital conference presentation, where the research papers and policy recommendations will be conveyed through academic research posters. If you are interested in receiving a summary of the research findings or copies of the research papers, you can indicate this during the survey or interview process, and the relevant documents will be shared with you once available.</p>
(l) Complaints	<p>*If a participant has complaints about any aspect of the procedure, s/he can contact <lead investigator> or <contact person> - same person(s) as mentioned in Introductory Statement</p> <p>*For cases in which that does not lead to a satisfactory outcome, include contact info of complaints handling committee</p>	<p>If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of this research, you are encouraged to contact the lead investigator, Margot Neggers, at neggers.m@buas.nl. Should your concerns not be adequately addressed, you may contact the complaints handling committee at Breda University of Applied Sciences for further assistance, at legal@buas.nl.</p>
(m) Research Ethics Review Board	<p>*Indicate if this research has been approved by the BUas Research Ethics Review Board. Include contact info of RERB if more information about this board is required</p>	<p>This study has been approved by the mentors overseeing the ADS&AI programme at Breda University of Applied Sciences as a stand-in for the Research Ethics Review Board. For more information regarding the mentor's approval or for specific questions about the ethics of the study, the BUas Research Ethics Review Board (RERB) can be contacted via email at</p>

		ethicsreviewboard@buas.nl or the lead researcher, Margot Neggers, at neggers.m@buas.nl .
(n) What will the procedure be for the participant to give consent to his/her participation?	*Refer to participant consent form	To confirm your participation in the study, you will be asked to sign a consent form that explains your rights as a participant within our study. This form will be provided before any data collection begins. Your consent will confirm that you have understood the purpose of the study, how your data will be used, and your rights to withdraw.
(o) If the participant requires more information	*Contact info key players: lead researcher and/or contact person; BUas privacy officer; complaints handling committee	neggers.m@buas.nl 235065@buas.nl 231265@buas.nl 211066@buas.nl 231781@buas.nl fg@buas.nl legal@buas.nl
(p) Letter closing		Thank you for considering participation in our study. Your insights and experiences are invaluable to us and will significantly contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this area.

Research Information Letter

Title of the study: AI Integration in SMEs: Effects on Employee Performance and Satisfaction

September 27, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

We would like to formally invite you to participate in our research survey as part of the study titled "*AI Integration in SMEs: Effects on Employee Performance and Satisfaction*," overseen by the lead researcher, Margot Neggers.

Our research aims to investigate how the integration of third-party AI tools in SMEs affects employee job performance and satisfaction. We are seeking your participation because your experiences and insights as an SME employee can provide valuable data to help us explore these impacts.

This project will run for a duration of 8 weeks and is conducted under the supervision of Breda University of Applied Sciences. The research is entirely funded by the university, ensuring its independence and scholarly objectivity.

We will gather both quantitative and qualitative data from SME employees like you. This approach allows us to capture not only statistical trends but also your unique perspective as an employee. As a participant, you will be asked to engage in one or both of the following activities:

- **Quantitative Data:** You will be invited to complete a short online survey, distributed exclusively to SME employees. The survey will be administered online via Prolific, making it easy and accessible for you to participate. You will be asked questions about your experiences with AI tools and how these tools have impacted your job performance and satisfaction. The survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes and will include multiple-choice questions, Likert scales, and a few open-ended responses where you can share more detailed thoughts.
- **Qualitative Data:** In addition to the survey, you may be selected to participate in a one-on-one semi-structured interview. The interview will take around 30-40 minutes and can be conducted either in person or via Zoom, depending on your preference. During the interview, we will explore your thoughts and experiences with AI in the workplace in greater depth, using open-ended questions to guide the conversation. The interviews will be recorded, and the transcripts will be analyzed using thematic analysis, along with other complementary techniques.

Both the survey and interviews will be completely anonymous, and any information you provide will be kept confidential. Your responses will be carefully analyzed to help us identify patterns and insights that will benefit SMEs and employees alike.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and must either be currently employed by or have previously worked in an SME.

By participating, you will contribute to research that can positively influence workplace policies and help SMEs understand the benefits and challenges of integrating AI tools. You may also gain new perspectives on how AI is shaping the future of work. There are no significant disadvantages, although participation will require some time to complete the survey and possibly an interview.

There are no physical or psychological risks associated with participation. Your privacy will be protected at all times. All data will be anonymized, meaning your responses will not be linked to your identity.

There are no costs for you to participate in the study. If you complete the survey via the Prolific platform, you will receive a financial reward, funded by Breda University of Applied Sciences. This reward will be automatically processed through Prolific. For the qualitative interviews, there won't be any financial compensation.

Most of the data collection will happen online—through Prolific for the survey and Zoom or other virtual platforms for the interviews—so you won't need to worry about travel. However, if you prefer to meet in person for the interview, a member of our research team will come to your location, ensuring you won't incur any travel costs or need reimbursement.

All collected data will be handled with strict confidentiality. Quantitative data will be downloaded and cleaned for analysis, while qualitative data will be transcribed. Both types of data will be organized into structured datasets, and all personally identifiable information (PII) will be anonymized. Although we do not collect sensitive personal data such as age, gender, or location, you will be assigned a unique, non-traceable identifier (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2) to ensure that your identity remains protected. We will analyze the survey data statistically, while interview responses will be reviewed using thematic analysis to draw meaningful insights.

Only the research team and project supervisors will have access to the anonymized data. No external parties will have access unless explicitly mentioned in the consent form. Data will be stored securely on the team's encrypted Github repository for the duration of the project and 10 years after its completion, after which it will be permanently deleted. This approach follows GDPR guidelines, and more details can be found in the project's Data Management Plan.

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, as outlined in the informed consent form that participants will sign before the study begins. You may withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty or negative consequences, and without needing to provide a reason. Upon withdrawal, all associated data will be deleted and not included in the analysis. Additionally, the researcher reserves the right to end a participant's involvement if necessary, without any negative consequences for the participant.

The results of this research will be presented in four individual research papers, each addressing different subdomains of the topic. A policy paper with recommendations for SME companies will also be drafted based on data analysis and research insights. These documents will be shared with MKB Digiwerkplaats, who will disseminate the findings to their SME clients. The study results will not be officially published in academic journals.

Findings will also be shared with the client and stakeholders during a digital conference presentation, where the research papers and policy recommendations will be presented using academic research posters. If you would like to receive a summary of the research findings or copies of the research papers, you can indicate your interest during the survey or interview process, and the relevant documents will be shared with you once available.

If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of this research, you are encouraged to contact the lead investigator, Margot Neggers, at neggers.m@buas.nl. Should your concerns not be adequately addressed, you may contact the complaints handling committee at Breda University of Applied Sciences, at legal@buas.nl.

This study has been approved by the mentors overseeing the ADS&AI programme at Breda University of Applied Sciences as a stand-in for the Research Ethics Review Board. For more information regarding the mentor's approval or specific questions about the ethics of the study, you may contact the BUas Research Ethics Review Board (RERB) at **ethicsreviewboard@buas.nl** or the lead researcher, Margot Neggers.

To confirm participation, you will be asked to sign a consent form that explains your rights as a participant. This form will be provided before any data collection begins, ensuring that you understand the purpose of the study, how your data will be used, and your rights to withdraw.

For any additional information, please contact:

- Margot Neggers: **neggers.m@buas.nl**
- Complaints handling committee: **legal@buas.nl**
- BUas privacy officer: **fg@buas.nl**
- Other research team members: **235065@buas.nl**, **231265@buas.nl**, **211066@buas.nl**, **231781@buas.nl**

Thank you for considering participation in our study. Your insights and experiences are invaluable and will contribute significantly to the advancement of knowledge in this area.

Sincerely,

DataScienceAI-2 research team
Margot Neggers
Academy of Games and Media
Breda University of Applied Sciences