ERGO application form – Ethics form

All mandatory fields are marked (M*). Applications without mandatory fields completed are likely to be rejected by reviewers. Other fields are marked "if applicable". Help text is provided, where appropriate, in italics after each question.

1. APPLICANT DETAILS

1.1 (M*) Applicant name:	Donglin Pu
1.2 Supervisor (if applicable):	Thanassis Tiropanis
1.3 Other researchers/collaborators (if applicable): *Name, address, email, telephone*	

2. STUDY DETAILS

2.1 (M*) Title of study:	Evaluation of a web application for travel experiences sharing and travel planning
2.2 (M*) Type of study (*e.g. Undergraduate, Doctorate, Masters, Staff*):	Undergraduate
2.3 i) (M*) Proposed start date:	08/03/2013
2.3 ii) (M*) Proposed end date:	08/04/2013

2.4 (M*) What are the aims and objectives of this study?
The first objective of the application is to provide a better way to share travel experiences. The second objective is to enhance travel experiences by allowing people to plan their travel routes based on where their friends have been to.

2.5 (M*) Background to study (*a **brief** rationale for conducting the study*):
Currently, travel photos are displayed in albums or simply displayed on a map at the location where they are taken. They are not linked together and it is difficult for the viewers to know the routes the travellers take. Thus, this application displays the routes with photos, statuses and check-ins on a map to the viewers. When people make their travel plan, they usually go to generic travel guide websites such as TripAdvisor. These websites provide views from everyone. There is not a way for people to make their plan based on their friends travel experiences. Therefore, this application provides a way for people to plan their route based on where they friends have been to.

2.6 (M*) Key research question (*Specify hypothesis if applicable*):
Travel experience can be better shared by displaying the routes with photos, statuses and check-ins. People rely more on their friends than generic travel guide websites.

2.7 (M*) Study design (*Give a **brief** outline of basic study design*)
Outline what approach is being used, why certain methods have been chosen.

A web application is developed. It has two main functions: travel routes sharing and travel routes planning. During the evaluation process, participants will be asked to use the application and fill the questionnaire. The answers are used to verify if the objectives are achieved.

3. SAMPLE AND SETTING

3.1 (M*) How are participants to be *approached*? *Give details of what you will do if recruitment is insufficient. If participants will be accessed through a third party (e.g. children accessed via a school) state if you have permission to contact them and **upload any letters of agreement to your submission in ERGO**.*

Questionnaires will be sent on Facebook from my account.

3.2 (M*) Who are the proposed sample and where are they from (e.g. fellow students, club members)? *List inclusion/exclusion criteria if applicable. NB The University does not condone the use of 'blanket emails' for contacting potential participants (i.e. fellow staff and/or students).*

It is usually advised to ensure groups of students/staff have given prior permission to be contacted in this way, or to use of a third party to pass on these requests. This is because there is a potential to take advantage of the access to 'group emails' and the relationship with colleagues and subordinates; we therefore generally do not support this method of approach.

If this is the only way to access a chosen cohort, a reasonable compromise is to obtain explicit approval from the Faculty Ethics Committee (FEC) and also from a senior member of the Faculty in case of complaint.

The proposed sample will be my friends on Facebook and friends or friends. They will be mainly students at University of Southampton. However, it is likely that the friends of my friends may not be from the University of Southampton.

3.3 (M*) Describe the relationship between researcher and sample (*Describe any relationship e.g. teacher, friend, boss, clinician, etc.*)

Friends or friends of friends

3.4 (M*) Describe how you will ensure that fully informed consent is being given: (*include how long participants have to decide whether to take part*)

In the questionnaire, I will ask them if they have read and signed the consent form before taking part.

4. RESEARCH PROCEDURES, INTERVENTIONS AND MEASUREMENTS

4.1 (M*) Give a brief account of the procedure as experienced by the participant
(Make clear who does what, how many times and in what order. Make clear the role of all assistants and collaborators. Make clear total demands made on participants, including time and travel). ***Upload any copies of questionnaires and interview schedules to your submission in ERGO.***

There is one online questionnaire which asks questions about how people share their travel experience and how they make their travel plan. There are multiple choice questions and open questions. This questionnaire will take approximately 10 minutes. At the end of the questionnaire, participants will be asked if they want to take part in the trial in which they will be asked to use this application and some other existing applications. The trial is also done online in the form of questionnaire. This trial will take approximately 20 minutes for each participant.

5. STUDY MANAGEMENT

5.1 (M*) State any potential for psychological or physical discomfort and/or distress?

None.

5.2 (M*) Explain how you intend to alleviate any psychological or physical discomfort and/or distress that may arise? (if applicable)

Not applicable.

5.3 Explain how you will care for any participants in 'special groups' *(i.e. those in a dependent relationship, vulnerable or lacking in mental capacity)* **(if applicable)?**

5.4 Please give details of any payments or incentives being used to recruit participants (if applicable)?

5.5 i) How will participant anonymity and/or data anonymity be maintained (if applicable)?
Two definitions of anonymity exist:
i) Unlinked anonymity - Complete anonymity can only be promised if questionnaires or other requests for information are not targeted to, or received from, individuals using their name or address or any other identifiable characteristics. For example if questionnaires are sent out with no possible identifiers when returned, or if they are picked up by respondents in a public place, then anonymity can be claimed. Research methods using interviews cannot usually claim anonymity – unless using telephone interviews when participants dial in.
ii) Linked anonymity - Using this method, complete anonymity cannot be promised because participants can be identified; their data may be coded so that participants are not identified by researchers, but the information provided to participants should indicate that they could be linked to their data.

Participant anonymity can be maintained if they only participate in the questionnaire and do not participate in the trial because the questionnaire is done through Google Form which does not require users to login.

5.5 ii) How will participant confidentiality be maintained (if applicable)?
Confidentiality is defined as the non-disclosure of research information except to another authorised person. Confidential information can be shared with those who are already party to it, and may also be disclosed where the person providing the information provides explicit consent.

The information collected about the participant from the questionnaire is stored on

my Google Drive. I use secure password and no other people has access to it.

The data collected about the participants from the application is stored on Google App Engine which hosts the application. Only I can access the database for this application.

I will comply with the terms and conditions of Google Drive and Google App Engine and data protection guidelines of the University of Southampton.

5.6 (M*) How will personal data and study results be stored securely during and after the study? *Researchers should be aware of, and compliant with, the Data Protection policy of the University. You must be able to demonstrate this in respect of handling, storage and retention of data.*

Secure passwords are used for my Google Drive account and Google App Engine account so the chance of the account being hacked is small. After the study, data collected from questionnaires will be deleted permanently. Data collected from the application will only be kept in the database if the participants explicitly give permission to. This is reflected in the questionnaire of the trial, in the About Your Data section.

5.7 (M*) Who will have access to these data?

I am the only person who has access to these data.

N.B. – Before you upload this document to your ERGO submission remember to:

1. Complete ALL mandatory sections in this form

2. Upload any letters of agreement referred to in question 3.1 to your ERGO submission

3. Upload any interview schedules and copies of questionnaires referred to in question 4.1