PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Data Anarchy: Building A Social Media Platform Where Users Control Their Data

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others, if you wish.

Thank you for reading this.

1.   What is the purpose of this research project?
This is a student research project exploring practical implementation of a social media platform where data is stored on the user's device, unlike traditional platforms (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc.) where data is primarily stored in the cloud. As part of the project, a basic social media platform has been developed as an Android app. The aim of this research is to determine whether such a platform could be a viable alternative to traditional social media platforms and compare differences relating to key issues such as data privacy.

2.   Why have I been invited to take part?
You have been invited because you have a working Android mobile device, internet connectivity and you have experience using social media.

3.   Do I have to take part?
No, your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary and it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part independently, you will be asked for consent as part of the Google Forms questionnaire linked in section 4. If you decide to take part in an interview, we will discuss the research project with you, and ask you to sign a consent form. If you decide not to take part, you do not have to explain your reasons and it will not affect your legal rights. If you are a Cardiff University student, be assured that involvement in this research project will have no effect on your education or progression through a degree course.

You are free to withdraw your consent to participate in the research project at any time, without giving a reason, even after signing the consent form or giving consent in the Google Form.

4.   What will taking part involve?
You have two options for participating in this research project. You may either get in contact with the lead researcher Tim Lane: lanetn@cardiff.ac.uk to arrange an online interview over a Zoom call. Or you may participate independently by completing a Google Forms questionnaire online. In either case, your email address is required for identification purposes in case you should wish to withdraw consent at any time. The tasks and questions asked in the interview are the same as those in the questionnaire. You will require a working Android device,

If you are participating independently (i.e. not an interviewee), you will complete the Google Forms questionnaire which can be found online at https://forms.gle/JKW46c9NkKkAdYt1A. The questionnaire (including tasks) should take between 30-45 minutes to complete.

If you are taking part as an interviewee, you will need to get in touch with the lead researcher Tim Lane at lanetn@cardiff.ac.uk who will send you a consent form and arrange a virtual Zoom meeting with you to conduct an interview. The interview should take between 30-45 minutes to complete (no more than 1 hour max).

Whether you are taking the questionnaire independently or participating in an interview, the format is as follows:

You will be asked a range of questions about 3 types of social media platform. You then will be asked to install an app to your Android device that has been developed for the project before carrying out 6 tasks using features of the app. These tasks include:
1. Creating a user account
2. Accepting an automated friend request
3. Sending a message
4. Navigating to the data privacy settings
5. Creating a post
6. Commenting on the post created in task 5.

All tasks should take no longer than about 2-3 minutes each and you are welcome to skip any task. Finally, you will be asked to answer questions about your experience using the app and provide feedback.

5. Will I be paid for taking part?
No. You should understand that any data you give will be as a gift and you will not benefit financially in the future by participating.

6. What are the possible benefits of taking part?
There will be no direct advantages or benefits to you from taking part, but your contribution will help us understand the viability of a social media platform alternative where user generated data is stored and controlled on the user's own device, as well as what improvements can be made to such a social media platform.

7. What are the possible risks of taking part?
As the app is a prototype, any data you input into the app or share with other app users is not guaranteed to be secure, therefore we advise against sharing confidential information in the app. You may interact with other app users who are not part of the research team, but we have no control over such interactions via the app or otherwise.

8. Will my taking part in this research project be kept confidential?
All information collected from (or about) you during the research project will be kept confidential and any personal information you provide will be managed in accordance with data protection legislation. Please see 'What will happen to my Personal Data?' (below) for further information.

9.   What will happen to my Personal Data?

Your email address will be kept for identification purposes should you wish to withdraw consent and remove any data you have submitted, but it will not be publicised or shared with anyone other than the lead researcher. If you are an interviewee, you will also be asked to provide your name and signature in the consent form, and the interview shall be audio recorded for transcription purposes only. Your data will be stored in a secure password protected Google Drive.

Cardiff University is the Data Controller and is committed to respecting and protecting your personal data in accordance with your expectations and Data Protection legislation. Further information about Data Protection, including:

-      your rights
-      the legal basis under which Cardiff University processes your personal data for research
-      Cardiff University's Data Protection Policy
-      how to contact the Cardiff University Data Protection Officer
-      how to contact the Information Commissioner's Office

may be found at https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/public-information/policies-and-procedures/data-protection

Your personal data will be kept for the year (2022). After 2022, the research team will anonymise all the personal data it has collected from, or about, you in connection with this research project, with the exception of your consent form (please note that this exception is only applicable if you are participating as an interviewee). Your consent will be retained for 2022 and may be accessed by members of the research team and, where necessary, by members of the University's governance and audit teams or by regulatory authorities. Anonymised information will be kept for a minimum of 2022 but may be published in support of the research project and/or retained indefinitely, where it is likely to have continuing value for research purposes.

It will not be possible to withdraw any anonymised data that has already been published or in some cases, where identifiers are irreversibly removed during the course of a research project, from the point at which it has been anonymised.

10.   What happens to the data at the end of the research project?

The data will be available to the University and exam invigilators. Any personal data will be removed before being shared.

11.   What will happen to the results of the research project?

The results of the research project are likely to be published in a report before the end of the year 2022. It is our intention to publish the results of this research project in academic journals and present findings at conferences. Participants will not be identified in any report, publication or presentation. Any reports, publications or presentations may include verbatim quotes from questionnaire or interview responses provided by participants.

12.   What if there is a problem?

If you wish to complain, or have grounds for concerns about any aspect of the manner in which you have been approached or treated during the course of this research, please contact Tim Lane at lanetn@cardiff.ac.uk or Dr Kathryn Jones at jonesk90@cardiff.ac.uk. If your complaint is not managed to your satisfaction, please contact the School of Computer Science and Informatics School Research Ethics Committee at comsc-ethics@cardiff.ac.uk.

If you are harmed by taking part in this research project, there are no special compensation arrangements. If you are harmed due to someone's negligence, you may have grounds for legal action, but you may have to pay for it.

13.   Who is organising and funding this research project?
The research is organised by Tim Lane and supervised by Dr Kathryn Jones of the School of Computer Science and Informatics in Cardiff University. This project has no external funding.

14.   Who has reviewed this research project?
This research project has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the School of Computer Science and Informatics School Research Ethics Committee.

15.   Further information and contact details
Should you have any questions relating to this research project, you may contact us during normal working hours:

Tim Lane
Student number: 1825285
Undergraduate at Cardiff University School of Computer Science and Informatics
lanetn@cardiff.ac.uk

Thank you for considering to take part in this research project. If you decide to participate, you will be given a copy of the Participant Information Sheet and a signed consent form to keep for your records.