



Dakota State University,
820 Washington Ave N,
Madison, SD 57042, USA

Date: 27 April 2017

Dear Madame/Sir:

We Ahmed Elnoshokaty, Yi Wang, and Shuyuan Deng are conducting a research project entitled "Recommender for Online Petitions with Psycholinguistic and Social Network Features" as part of a dissertation at Dakota State University.

The purpose of the study is to present the design of a novel recommender system which recommends more relevant requests to users. The recommender leverage social interaction, psycholinguistic, and latent topic features to match and rank petitions and users. It has potential to promote the user experience of online petition platforms, hence promote the civil participation and the impact of the online environmental campaign.

You as a Twitter user interested in climate change are invited to participate in the study by rating the relevance of online petitions to your preference. We realize that your time is valuable and have attempted to keep the requested information as brief and concise as possible. It will take you approximately 5 minutes of your time. You could rate the relevance of online petitions to your preference through carefully reading the petition title. Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

There are no known risks or (some possible risks) to you for participating in this study. The benefits to you are firstly being among the participants who are helping to build a better recommender system for supporting climate change related petitions that faces real threats to our planet. Secondly, completed requests will be compensated 0.5\$ each. As well as a chance to be randomly selected to win any of the first three prizes. 50\$, 25\$, and 10\$.

Your responses are strictly confidential. We will not be asking you for any personal information except for your twitter username. We are collecting your twitter username to study insightful social network features that could help design a better recommendation system for the online communities. We care about the privacy and the



disclosure of personal identity, so in data storage and presentation in the data analysis phase of the study, we are going only to use a user id instead of Twitter usernames.

Your consent is implied by the return of the completed questionnaire. Please keep this for your information. If you have any questions, now or later, you may contact us at the number below. Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research participant in this study, you may contact the DSU Office of Sponsored Programs at 605-256-5100 or irb@dsu.edu.

Sincerely,

Project Director: Ahmed Elnoshokaty

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Phone No.: 605-270-3068

This project has been approved by the DSU Institutional Review Board, Approval No.: 2016-2017- 120