



Letter of Information and Consent to Participate in Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Sharon Ferguson, Dr. Alison Olechowski and her research group from the University of Toronto. Your team's Slack data will generate new insights that will be shared via academic and practitioner publications. Participating in this study will also provide your team with personalized feedback on your communication patterns. You should read the information below before deciding whether or not to participate.

WHAT YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO DO

You are being asked to consent to your **public channel Slack messages (messages that are currently visible to all Slack workspace members)** being anonymized, analyzed, and aggregated to measure, display and provide feedback on different elements of team collaboration (like Shared Understanding or Psychological Safety). **Private, direct message data will not be used.** These final aggregated values will be visible to anyone on the workspace who chooses to use the app, and will be saved for further analysis by researchers. **Your name or identity will never be connected to these aggregated values.** Providing consent will allow messages sent by you, in public channels, from the beginning of your membership on this workspace until the app is deleted from the workspace or you revoke consent, to be used in these anonymous and aggregated analyses. As we will be anonymizing all messages immediately, there is no opportunity to withdraw already analyzed data after consenting; however, you may revoke consent at any time, meaning your messages will not be used in any future analysis. The team member interacting with the app will also be asked to provide some basic information about your team, such as size, working configuration, and tenure. Please contact Sharon Ferguson at the email below should you have any concerns about the study prior to consenting.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

This research will directly benefit your team by providing personalized feedback on your communication practices, and visualizations that prompt reflections on collaborative practices. This study will also allow the field to learn more about how different elements of teamwork vary by team characteristics, and help to improve automated measures of these constructs.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Because researchers will never have access to the content of your Slack messages, we minimize legal and emotional risks involved with this content being leaked. However, receiving feedback on your team's collaboration practices (i.e., "Shared Understanding fell below normal levels last week – it might be a good time to check in with your team to make sure you're all working towards the same goal") may create feelings of discomfort. Feedback will be provided for



reflection purposes, along with tips to improve collaboration. Feedback will never be connected to the actions of a single individual.

YOUR IDENTITY AND ORGANIZATION WILL BE ANONYMOUS

Slack messages are analyzed with an anonymous User ID before being aggregated; they are never connected to your identity. Results will be reported in aggregate and any publications will not identify the name of the organization without permission. Any team characteristics (team, size, industry) that produce a small enough sample size that may be identifiable will not be published.

HOW YOUR INFORMATION WILL BE PROTECTED AND STORED

The application uses a number of technologies and platforms to store and analyze data, none of which will have access to the content of your Slack messages. The application is powered by AWS, [which does not access any uploaded content](#) and is compliant with a number of security certifications. Certain analyses may be conducted using the [Receptiviti API](#), [Huggingface API](#), or the [Together AI API](#). Any data passed through these APIs are not stored after processing and are not accessible by the API owner, unless required by law. Your data will not be used to train or improve AI models. You are encouraged to review the hyperlinked privacy policies of these platforms if interested.

The final anonymized and aggregated values (and some high-level characteristics of the team such as size and tenure, provided by the team member who interacts with the application) will be downloaded by the researchers and stored for two years in an online cloud server which only the investigator will know and be able to unlock.

INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATION

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Participation in research is completely voluntary and you can choose not to participate. If you choose not to participate in this study, messages sent by you in public channels will not be used in any analysis. By consenting to participate, you are not waiving any of your legal rights as a research participant.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this study, or would like to receive a copy of the results when the study is complete, please contact the researchers:



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For further questions regarding your rights as a research participant, please contact the Research Oversight and Compliance Office - Human Research Ethics Program at 416-946-3273 or ethics.review@utoronto.ca