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Information Sheet for Volunteer Participants

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Introduction

My name Carla Griggio. I am a tenure-track assistant professor at Aalborg University and am currently doing a study on how people experience cross-app messaging (e.g., using Element/Matrix to chat with a contact that uses Facebook Messenger or WhatsApp). I am going to give you information about the project and invite you to be part of this research. Before you decide, feel free to ask me questions or seek information with others about the research.

Purpose of the research and type of activity

The study is about cross-app messaging, that is, text-based communication between two different apps/platforms. Today, cross-app messaging is rarely possible, but you may have experienced it in situations such as the following: sending a message from iMessage to someone who only uses SMS, creating a group chat among both Instagram and Messenger users; using an aggregating app such as Jabber, Trillian, Beeper or Mio to chat with users of other apps (e.g., WhatsApp, Telegram, Slack, Microsoft Teams); or using a messaging app based on the Matrix.org protocol (e.g., Element, FluffyChat). The interview will be about your personal experiences with these kinds of apps, focusing on your motivations to chat with contacts using different apps than yours, as well as the benefits and the challenges associated with it.

Participant selection

You have been invited to this study because you are representative of a group of users who have relevant experiences to cross-app messaging.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice whether to participate or not. You may change your mind later and stop participating even if you agreed earlier.

Procedures and Protocol

I will first ask you to fill out a form with some demographic information about yourself and some questions about your use of messaging apps. We will also meet online for an interview at the time we agreed on. The interview will be recorded and automatically transcribed. I might ask you for screenshots of your messaging apps or a conversation at some point, which you can anonymize before sending (e.g., by drawing a line over names and avatars) or simply choose not to share them. I might get back to you at a later point in time, if I would like you to elaborate on something. Overall, I will collect the following data:

1. Questionnaire about demographics (age, country of residence, gender, education level, employment status) and messaging experience (which messaging apps you use, how often, with what kind of relationships, and what kind of cross-messaging situations you have experienced).
2. Audio recording of the interview
3. Optional: screenshots of your messaging apps illustrating cross-messaging situations.

Duration

The study takes 30-60 minutes.

Risks and Benefits

I anticipate no risks from participating in the study. If you participate in the study, you will help me understand the benefits and challenges of communicating across different messaging apps and you may gain a deeper understanding of your own communication practices.

Reimbursements

You will not receive money or gifts for your participation in this research.

Confidentiality

The data I will collect from you will be pseudonymized meaning that; your name will be replaced with a number known only to me and the principal investigator. I will not share the recorded interviews with any external party, and they will be securely stored on devices or services owned and approved by Aalborg University. Partial interview transcripts may be shared with colleagues at Aarhus University for the purpose of analyzing and publishing the results from this research.

Sharing the Results

If you are interested you may leave your e-mail address with me or contact me at a later stage to learn about the outcomes of the study. I will publish the results in order for other interested people to learn from our research. No confidential information will be shared.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw

You do not have to take part in this research if you do not wish to do so. You may also stop participating in the research at any time you choose. It is your choice and all of your rights will be respected.

Who to Contact

If you have any questions about the study at a later stage, please contact me at cfg@cs.aau.dk. The study has been registered at Aalborg University's Research Ethics Committee and Personal Data Office.