

Plain Language Statement

Computing and Information Systems

Project: Deliberative Conversational Information Delta



Project Supervisor:

Dr Jey Han Lau (Responsible Researcher)

Tel: +61 3 8344 0447 Email: jeyhan.lau@unimelb.edu.au

Additional Researchers:

Dr. Lea Fermann

Tel: +61 3 9035 9888 Email: : lea.frermann@unimelb.edu.au

Project Primary Researchers(Contact person):

Mr. Ming-Bin Chen

Tel: +61 4 6626 3387 Email: mingbin@unimelb.edu.au

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following pages will provide you with further information about the project so you can decide whether you wish to participate. Please read this information carefully. If you have any questions or would like more details, please feel free to ask. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

What is this research about?

Deliberation involves thoughtful discussion where participants consider multiple viewpoints, arguments, and evidence before making decisions or reaching consensus. Effective deliberation requires clear, informative communication. This research aims to explore how community audience members perceive "informativeness" during public debates, particularly examining which aspects of dialogue are considered most informative. Insights from this study will support the development of automated tools that can enhance the quality and effectiveness of public deliberative conversations. Annotators from Prolific will help identify and rate informativeness in segments taken from various sources, including public debates, community meetings, parliamentary discussions, and other public forums.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will first complete a brief training session and pilot task lasting approximately 10 minutes. Upon successful completion of this initial session, you may be offered additional annotation tasks. In each annotation task, you will be provided with a debate topic, relevant background information, and segments of conversation from sources such as public debates, community meetings, parliamentary discussions, and similar public forums. You will be asked to rate dialogue segments based on their informativeness, assessing aspects such as novelty, relevance, specificity, and the scope of implications.

What are the possible benefits?

Participating in this project will help advance our understanding of how community audiences perceive informative communication. Your annotations will directly contribute to developing advanced automated systems designed to support more informative, constructive, and effective public conversations.

Will I be paid for this work?

Yes, you will be compensated for your participation. Payment will align with Prolific's guidelines and at least meet the minimum wage rate in Australia (\$23.23 AUD per hour). Specific payment amounts will be determined after the pilot phase, based on the average time participants require to complete each task.

What are the possible risks?

No significant risks are anticipated. However, due to the nature of public discussions, you may encounter sensitive, controversial, or emotionally charged content. You are free to withdraw at any point if you feel uncomfortable. Each conversation segment includes context information beforehand, allowing you to opt out of any specific annotation if desired.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without consequence, and no further data will be collected from you upon withdrawal.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

Yes. Annotated data (with no personally identifiable information) and research outcomes will be published publicly through academic journals, conferences, and repositories such as GitHub (<https://github.com/mrknight21>) and Paper Code.

What will happen to information about me?

Your privacy is important to us. Only Prolific internal participant IDs will be accessed by our research team, ensuring no personally identifiable information is collected. Prior to public release, the data will undergo thorough anonymization to ensure participant confidentiality is maintained.

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne (Ethics ID: 27463). For any concerns or complaints about the project that you do not wish to discuss directly with the research team, please contact:

Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity,
University of Melbourne, VIC 3010
Tel: +61 3 8344 1376
Email: research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au

All communications will be treated confidentially. Please mention the research team's name or the Ethics ID number (27463) in any correspondence.