** Participant Information Sheet**

**The title of the research project** : Designing a Collaborative Framework for Feedback Acquisition and Communication to Support Software Maintenance

**Invitation**

You are being invited to take part in this research project conducted by Nada Hany Sherief, a postgraduate researcher, in the Department of Computing and Informatics, Faculty of Science & Technology, Bournemouth University, UK. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

**What is the purpose of the project?**

Our aim is to develop a collaborative feedback framework to systematically support software engineers at runtime (i.e. while the software is already in use). This includes employing previously established feedback structures and devising mechanisms that makes it easy for engineer to interpret the users’ feedback and benefit from it in the software change management tasks during the maintenance phase. Additionally, this engineering framework aims at benefiting from the collective structured feedback and incorporating potential requirements models to link the space of the business to the space of users and their understanding of the system to keep the requirements information up-to-date, and enables automated reasoning and traceability to derive essential information.

A Participatory Design approach will be used in order to explore the participants’ ideas about the facets of the framework. By this, the end product is developed hand in hand with the actual intended audience and thus leads to better results and experiences, as the method can give clear insight into their vocabulary, priorities, and the things they value.

**Why have I been chosen?**

This is an open call that aims to reach those who feel they can contribute to the research by sharing their experience with technology, utilizing our mechanisms and giving us feedback on them.

**Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep (and be asked to sign a participant agreement form). You can withdraw at any time, up to the point where the data are processed and become anonymous, so your identity cannot be determined, without it affecting any benefits that you are entitled to in any way. You do not have to give a reason. Deciding to take part or not will not adversely affect you.

**What would taking part involve?**

As a participant in this project, there will be some activities to undertake. First, you will be asked to attend an introductory session to familiarize you with the project, its aims and the needed background information that will be used during the study, and it includes research results reached so far that will be utilized in the study.

Furthermore, during the design session the participants will be provided with aiding tools such as mock-ups for the acquisition tool components to test how they would utilize the components to provide meaningful feedback without hindering their experience. Also, they will be provided with fictional scenarios about software problems to help them immerse in the task. Finally, they will be asked to give insights by answering sets of questions, to develop this engineering framework in a manner that makes it useful and informative for engineers during the maintenance phase.

**What are the advantages and possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?**

Whilst there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the project, our goal is designing a framework that aligns with the software change process tasks and at the same time gives customers (i.e. end-users) a voice in the continuous runtime evaluation of software. That is, customers’ evaluation feedback would mainly communicate their opinion on the role of the system in meeting their requirements leading to better acceptance of the software. Also, it will provide valuable inputs for engineers that will inform their tasks during the maintenance phase, which can save much time and effort for them.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?**

All the information that we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. You will not be able to be identified in any reports or publications. All data relating to this study will be kept for 5 years on a BU password protected secure network.

**What type of information will be sought from me and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research project’s objectives?**

The data collected are not of a sensitive nature, it covers insights and opinions on the facets that will be explored, that express their vocabulary, priorities and things they value.

The data that form the basis of the analysis in this study will be:

* Participants designs: photos and recordings of participants’ presentations of designs
* Participants design conversations: During the design workshops, a tape recorder was placed at every group and the conversations will be recorded for transcription and analysis.

**Will I be recorded, and how will the recorded media be used?**

Yes. The recording will help the research team to capture the information that will be sought from you during the session. However, you will be given the right to accept or reject recording the interview. No other use will be made of the recording without your written permission, and no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recordings. The audio recordings made during this research will be deleted once transcribed and anonymised. The transcription of the interviews will not include your name or any identifiable information. Instead, each person will be identified by their code (i.e. #usr1, #eng3, etc.).