



Informed Consent: Participant Consent Letter

July 17, 2016

Project Title: Participation in 21st Century Urban Environments – An Exploration of Awareness, Learning, Openness, and Engagement

Dear Participant:

You are invited to participate in this research study about cities, conducted by Principal Investigator (PI), Patricia McKenna who will be the researcher involved in all aspects of the study including analysis of data and preparation of research findings for review, presentation, and publication.

The purpose of this study is to provide an opportunity and a space for you to think about social media and other aware technologies in the city. If you agree to participate in this study you will have the choice of responding in one or more of the following ways:

Survey – Take a brief survey that can be completed in 15 to 30 minutes

Interview – Share your thoughts about your experience of the city in an interview that will take 20 to 40 minutes.

The **aim** of this study is to explore how people experience the city in terms of smartness.

Smartness refers to the availability of immediate information through sources such as smartphones that provide details about the weather; smart meters that tell you about your energy usage; or a visual display showing the number of cyclists using a pathway; or other emerging interactive urban forms. These types of awareness services and spaces, combined with the awareness of people as they move around, interact, and go about their daily practices in the city seem to be changing our understanding of the urban. Therefore, the **focus** of this study is on exploring awareness, learning, openness, and engagement in relation to real-world experiences in the city by involving as many people as possible – city officials, learners, educators, people-on-the-street, visitors to the city, and community leaders/members. The **goal** of the study is to foster meaningful participation in the city by generating insights with the potential to impact many aspects of city life.

This work is expected to shed light on the experience of awareness in the city (e.g., attuning to and sensing the city); possibilities for meaningful engagement, participation, and learning in the city; and the nature and potential of inclusive and open cities (e.g., sharing, collaboration, and partnering through the use of social media and other technologies).



Patricia McKenna will be the only researcher to view the data and to transcribe the recorded data and has completed the training for ethical treatment of research data. All participants' names will be held confidential and anonymized through use of numeric identifiers assigned at registration (e.g., 101, etc.) so that any identifying details such as name and email address are removed. All research information will be stored in-secured password-protected spaces, with only the principal investigator allowed access. Research participants will not be identified through reports, publication, or dissemination of the research. Once all the analyses have been completed and reports and publications that summarize the data have been distributed, all audio recordings will be destroyed. Data are to be retained by the Principal Investigator (PI) for 6 years, in support of the ongoing analysis and publishing of findings.

In any research, there are potential risks and benefits to participants. This study is looking at the technology-infused environment of the city and community spaces. The researcher will not try to influence the actions or attitudes of the participants. Participants may, however, experience a slight increase in stress if you feel that you are being evaluated, even though this research has nothing to do with evaluation. To alleviate these feelings of discomfort, I assure you that my purpose is to gain insights, not to evaluate.

Regarding groups interviews, please be advised that although the researcher will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of groups prevents the researcher from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researcher reminds participants to respect the privacy of your fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the group to others.

Your participation in this research is truly appreciated and it is also entirely voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or withdraw at any time. During the course of the research, I will validate my insights and interpretations with you. You may choose to have particular comments or responses deleted from consideration in the data analysis because you feel they misrepresent your actual beliefs or perceptions.

This study has been reviewed and approved by Veritas Independent Review Board (IRB). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the Investigator's responsibilities, you may contact the Manager of Veritas IRB 24 hours per day and 7 days per week at 514-337-0442 or toll-free at 1-866-384-4221. An IRB is a group of scientific and non-scientific individuals who perform the initial and ongoing ethical review of the research study with the subject's right and welfare in mind. If you have any study-related comments, complaints or concerns, you should first contact the study investigator, Patricia McKenna, at mckennaph@gmail.com or at 250-516-7136. Please call the IRB if you need to speak to a person



independent from the Investigator and the research staff, and/or if the Investigator and research staff could not be reached. Thank you and I look forward to working with you.

Please check all items where you agree, include a comment of understanding, and sign below to designate your consent to participate in this research study:

_____ I am 18 years of age or older and I wish to participate in this research study.

_____ I agree to be audiotaped and understand that recordings will be destroyed when the study is complete

_____ I do not agree to be audiotaped

_____ I have received a copy of this consent agreement

Include a comment to indicate that you understand the study as described:

Participant (Printed name)

Participant (Signature)

Date

Researcher (Printed name)

Researcher (Signature)

Date