

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PEER RESEARCHERS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: HR/DP-21/22-26357

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YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET

CONtributions of social NETworks to Community Thriving (CONNECT)

We would like to invite you to take part in this research project with the Marginalised Communities programme at the ESRC Centre for Society and Mental Health. This project is being funded by the Economic and Social Research Council [reference: ES/S012567/1]. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. You can also ask us any questions using the contact details below if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of the project is to work with communities to understand and map the role of social relationships and connections in Black and other ethnically minoritised communities and how this relates to health and well-being. We particularly want to understand what communities and other local organisations can do to help strengthen networks in your local community to support wider efforts to increase access to skills/employment, help prevent violence, increase feelings of community safety, and reduce food insecurity.

Why have I been invited to take part?

We are seeking peer researchers to become members of our research team. You have been invited to join our team because you:

- Are at least 16 years old;
- Live in one of the areas we are working with (or have done in the past three years); **and**
- You identify as being Black or a member of another racial or ethnic minority group.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part in this project, you will be able to:

- Contribute your lived knowledge, expertise, and viewpoints around your community to help co-produce and guide the research project with a team of professional and peer researchers.
- Receive appropriate and personalised research training to actively take part as a member of the research team, and gain experience conducting research.
- Be involved in different aspects of the research, including further developing research questions, recruiting participants, helping collect data (conducting semi-structured interviews and helping facilitate community mapping workshops), transcribing interviews, analysing primary data, and contributing to research outputs (such as presentations and publications).
- Build your network and make connections with other community members, local organisations, and researchers at King's College London.

What does being a peer researcher involve?

If you choose to be a peer researcher, you will be asked to undergo appropriate training in community research methods, ethics, and maintaining participant confidentiality. You will also be asked to sign a consent form to ensure that you follow these steps before taking part in the research.

Once you are trained, you will be able to participate in research activities relating to the project on an hourly basis. You can attend team meetings and reflect on different ideas related to your community, which will lead to developing and investigating research questions. Some specific tasks may include helping recruit participants from your community to participate in the project, conducting semi-structured interviews and helping facilitate community mapping workshops, transcribing data, analysing data, and sharing your findings with others. You will be supported in all aspects of this research to develop your own research skills.

Do I have to take part?

No, you should only take part if you want to and choosing not to will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read this information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision.

Incentives

To thank you for your time, you will be paid at an hourly rate of £25 per hour, for a maximum of five hours per week, subject to any relevant tax and NI contributions. These payments are paid in arrears at the end of each month and researchers may need to check if the income will affect any welfare benefits payments. More information and guidance will be made available.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no major risks to taking part in this study. However, the topics we will discuss during the interview can be sensitive, and it is possible you will feel uncomfortable, or recall uncomfortable experiences. If this happens, you can choose to pause or end the interview. If the researcher notices any discomfort, they will check in to see how you are doing, and if you would like to continue, pause, or stop the interview. After the interview, you will receive an information sheet signposting you to support services in the area and online.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part, you will develop skills as a Peer Researcher. You will have the opportunity to critically reflect on and interpret the project's findings in order to co-produce key recommendations. You will also have an opportunity to be involved in sharing co-produced work, e.g. at an engagement event, in a publication, speaking at events/conferences etc.

Your participation will help provide a richer understanding around the role of social networks and wellbeing in Black and other racially minoritized communities. We hope that the findings will ultimately help strengthen networks in your local community to support wider efforts to increase access to skills/employment, help prevent violence, increase feelings of community safety, and reduce food insecurity.

You can receive a copy of the report about the findings from this project if you want.

Data handling and confidentiality

As Peer Researchers, you can choose to be fully identified, partially identified or anonymous in any contributions you make e.g. the focus group guide developed, publications, and presentations. You can specify your choice to be identifiable or anonymous within the consent form.

What you and others say will be heard by those taking part as Peer Researchers. I request that you and all who attend do not share the content of the discussions with anyone else. Outside of the event, your information will be confidential. Your personal details will be kept separately from recordings of the contributions you make. Your personal data will remain strictly confidential and will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). All anonymised data collected will be securely held at King's College London, in secure locked cabinets in restricted access offices and/or on the secure password protected servers, only accessible by the core research team. The anonymised data will be retained for 7 years, in line with King's College London Records and Data Retention Schedule. Only if you tell us something which may place you or others at severe risk would I consider breaching confidentiality. If this happens, we can discuss this and if needed, collaboratively speak to a clinician attached to the project. Participation in the project is entirely optional. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. To withdraw, please contact me via my contact details below.

You will need to be trained in data handling and confidentiality. Any data you help collect will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018). If you would like more information about the terms of UK data protection laws please visit:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

What if I change my mind about taking part?

If you want to leave your role as a Peer Researcher, you can do so at any time without giving a reason. You will not be able to withdraw contributions you have already made to the project, or any data that you have already collected. If you like, your contributions and involvement in the research can be made anonymised. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way.

What will happen to the results of the project?

Findings from this research project will be summarised in a report, be shared with others (e.g., local council, voluntary and community sector organisations), and made openly available online through our website and social media channels. Findings may contribute to academic publications and conferences. Other ways of sharing findings may include podcasts or arts-based approaches. **You may receive acknowledgement for your contributions to the research project.**

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact Georgina Gnan and Zara Asif by email (connect@kcl.ac.uk), Telephone or WhatsApp (07775373049). Postal address: Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience, 16 De Crespigny Park, London, SE5 8AF. If this study harms you in any way, please contact the Chair of the Health Faculties RESC (email: rec@kcl.ac.uk).

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part!