Plain Language Statement

School of Computing and Information Systems,
Faculty of Engineering & Information Technology

Project: Playing the Pandemic: Designing Novel Interactions for a COVID-Normal Society

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following few pages will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research.

Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is this research about?

Learning from experiences playing games during the Pandemic, we want to explore how we can design boardgames or artefacts that can be played by people who aren't in the same place, or used by people who aren't in the same place to maintain their connection to boardgames. We're particularly interested in what games and artefacts can tell us about improving the experience of boardgaming and other hobbies for people who can't be in the same place.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will be asked to join what is known as a "cultural probe" study. We will provide you with an artefact to place in your home for up to two weeks. If you are in Melbourne, we might deliver and collect it in person; if you are outside Melbourne, we can arrange for you to collect it or drop it off to us at The University of Melbourne, or we can send it to you. We will ask you to take photos of it with a camera that we supply and to complete a daily diary where we ask you questions about the artefact and about playing games. We encourage you to be as creative as you like in completing the diary – you can write in it, draw pictures, stick things into it.

About a week after we collect the artefact from you, we will invite you to join an online focus group to discuss your experiences.

If your partner or housemate is also interested in games and would like to participate in the study, we will invite them to participate and give them a diary pack as well.

What are the possible benefits?
We will give you a supermarket gift card of $50 to thank you for your participation, with a second $20 gift card to thank you for attending the focus group. If you are a University of Melbourne student, participating will not affect your grades.

What are the possible risks?
We have not identified any serious risks associated with your participation in the study. If we deliver the kit to your home or work, or collect it from you, our researcher will wear a mask and follow any other COVID guidelines that are currently in place. Any of our researchers who meet with you will have had at least three COVID-19 vaccinations as well as a 2022 Influenza vaccination.

Because we are asking you to use these artefacts in your own home, there is a risk that other members of your household might be visible on video or in still photos. We ask you to ensure that your camera is pointed away from walkways and common areas. We will supply a version of this statement and a consent form for any members of your household or guests who wish to add something to your diary.

Do I have to take part?
No. Participation is completely voluntary. You are able to withdraw at any time. Because the artefacts and focus groups involve connection to other people, we may not be able to remove all of your data, but we will avoid using any direct quotes from you or pictures of your diary and will delete interview records.

Will I hear about the results of this project?
We will publish the results of the project in academic venues, which can be found through the researchers' "Find an Expert" pages at The University of Melbourne. We will also share information through the researchers' social media channels, which we will share with you if you are interested. If you would like to be kept informed about outcomes of the project, please email Sophie Freeman Sophie.freeman@unimelb.edu.au

What will happen to information about me?
Your data will be stored by us at the University on a secure server for at least five years after the final publication from this project. Although we are collecting it for this specific project, we might re-use it in the future for other work. We use codes or pseudonyms in place of your real name, with the caveat that in small communities, 'insiders' can often recognise their friends and peers.

Is there any potential conflict of interest?
We don't identify any conflict of interest for this project.

Who is funding this project?
This research is funded through an internal University of Melbourne research grant of $28,000 awarded to Dr Melissa Rogerson.

Where can I get further information?
If you would like more information about the project, please contact the researchers; Dr Melissa Rogerson Melissa.Rogerson@unimelb.edu.au or Ms Sophie Freeman Sophie.freeman@unimelb.edu.au

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?
This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne, ID 22108. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 8344 1376 or Email: research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team and/or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.