Plain Language Statement

School of Geography / Faculty of Science

Project: The work of digital platform cooperatives

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in this research project. The following 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 and feel free to ask questions about anything you don't understand or want to know more about.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to.

What is this research about?

This research project seeks to examine the work of developing, maintaining and using cooperative digital platforms to organise the sale, purchase and distribution of food. It aims to understand how cooperative digital platforms are created and shaped through these multiple forms of work; and in doing so, identify and evaluate the qualities of cooperative digital platforms which may help to achieve a more progressive and equitable politics for labour in future platform economies.

What are the possible benefits?

Your input as a participant in this project will help gain new insights into cooperative forms of digital platforms and the work involved in bringing them into existence. This is significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, there are gaps in existing research into cooperative forms of digital platforms and the doing of work required to create them and keep them working. Secondly, it is an opportunity to examine what relationships between work and platform may bring about more progressive and equitable politics for people working in platform economies. Thirdly, a more nuanced understanding of this work behind platforms may help to better support and regulate of digital platforms.

Ultimately, this has the potential to positively shape what forms of digitally mediated urban governance emerge in the future.

What will I be asked to do?
Should you agree to participate in this research you will partake in either an hour-long semi-structured interview with the Student Researcher (Adam) and/or general participant observation by the Student Researcher (Adam) of your work practices related to the digital platform. During the semi-structured interview, you will discuss such matters as your work practices, your experience with using the digital platform technologies as part of you work, and how the nature of your work has changed over time.

Subject to your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded and then transcribed for the purposes of the research project. You may also choose to not have the audio of the interview recorded. In this instance, the Student Researcher (Adam) will take handwritten notes of the discussions. All information collected will be de-identified so that you, as a participant, will remain anonymous. Notes taken during the participant observation conducted by the Student Researcher (Adam) will similarly be de-identified.

What are the possible risks?
Unless you request to be identified, information collected through interviews will be de-identified. Unattributed quotes and descriptions based on our interview may be used in project outcomes. Reference made to any off-record topics of conversation in the project outcomes will be generalised to ensure that you will not be personally identifiable. There is a risk, that given the small sample size of this research and the focus on a single case study it may be possible to identify you as a participant from the responses given in the interviews. In order to manage this risk, the following safeguards have been put in place:
- If you mention something identifiable which cannot be de-identified or generalised, we will either seek further permission from you to use it or we will not use it at all.
- You also have the option to review, edit and veto the use of your transcript or parts of the transcript.

Do I have to take part?
Your participation in this project 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, and any data produced in interviews with you will be removed from the records associated with this project.

What will happen to information about me?
All data produced as part of this research will be stored securely either physically at the University of Melbourne and/or digitally in online cloud storage. Data will be kept for five years following the last publication of the research findings resulting from this

research project, before being immediately destroyed. The data from this research project will not be used as part of another, separate project in the future.

Who is funding this project?

This research project is funded by a grant from the Australian Research Council awarded to Adam Moore to assist in their completion of a PhD degree through the University of Melbourne.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

The research findings from this project will be made available to you as a participant upon publication of the PhD thesis through the University of Melbourne. Some or all of the research findings may also be communicated through journal articles and conference papers. Additional working papers, book chapters, or media reports may be generated based on the research findings.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the Student Researcher (Adam) or the Responsible Researcher (David). This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne.

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

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 Manager, Human Research Ethics, Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.