

Participant Information Sheet For RTP Group Leaders

UCL Research Ethics Committee Approval ID Number: 1615

Title of Study: Analysis of Digital Research Technical Professional Group Structures

Department: UCL Advanced Research Computing Centre

Name and Contact Details of the Researcher: Jonathan Cooper, j.p.cooper@ucl.ac.uk

You are being invited to take part in our research project. The following information will explain what your participation will involve so you can decide whether or not to take part. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear of if you would like more information before deciding.

What is the project's purpose?

This interview study forms part of the DisCourSE Network+ project (1st April 2025 – 30th September 2028) which is seeking to improve leadership opportunities and training for digital Research Technical Professionals (RTPs). We want to understand how groups of digital RTPs work in different contexts. These interviews with those who already lead such groups will be used to produce reports on the range of career structures and operational models in use. There is no single optimal approach to underpin sustainable digital RTP careers (having a role to move into) and skills development (knowing how to get there). This study will help us understand what factors are important and share what has worked before. It will inform future work in the project and our funding calls.

Why have I been chosen?

Any leader of a group that includes digital RTPs is eligible to take part. RTP is a broad term and includes people such as bioinformaticians, data scientists, data stewards, digital humanities technologists, digital librarians, project managers, research infrastructure developers, research software engineers, and sysadmins. We are interested in groups within universities, companies, public sector organisations, research institutes, or similar. We want to hear about as many kinds of group as possible. If you are unsure whether you qualify, do ask.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide. You may keep a copy of this information sheet. If you decide to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form. You can withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

I will conduct a single interview with you using Microsoft Teams. This will take up to 2 hours. The questions have already been provided to you alongside this document.

Interviews will be recorded and automatically transcribed by Teams, with the data stored securely in UCL's OneDrive subscription until the end of the project at the latest. Only the project team will have access. You will be able to review the transcript for accuracy before it is used. Video and audio data will be deleted as soon as the quality of the transcript is confirmed. Transcripts will be deleted at the end of the project.

Microsoft Copilot may be used to identify and summarise common themes in transcripts, or a similar AI tool under strict privacy agreements with UCL. Your data will not be used to train any AI. Public, secondary data may be analysed alongside interview data, but only data to which you direct us (for instance, public reports about your group, your group's web pages).

What will happen to the results of the research project?

Aggregated summary analysis will be included in our reports and reasonable efforts will be made to ensure this does not identify a specific group or individual. However you may choose to have specific quotes or facts

attributed to you and/or your group if you wish; your explicit approval of the wording of these will be required before publication.

You may withdraw from the study at any point before it ends (30th September 2028). If you withdraw your raw data will be deleted, but already published reports cannot be amended. You can choose to be informed before any publication occurs and will then receive an advance copy. We anticipate publishing in the annual RSE Conference and academic journals.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

If you reveal sensitive data without permission this could cause reputational damage. This is unlikely and the processes described above minimise the risk.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

No immediate benefits are expected but the research aims to improve the national environment for digital RTPs. Indirectly this could improve institutional support and career prospects for your group and its members.

What if something goes wrong?

Please discuss this with the Project Lead, Jonathan Cooper, in the first instance. If you feel that your concerns have not been sufficiently addressed or you wish to raise a complaint, you can contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee – ethics@ucl.ac.uk.

Limits to confidentiality.

Confidentiality will be respected subject to legal constraints and professional guidelines.

Local Data Protection Privacy Notice

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data, and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information can be found in our 'general' privacy notice at <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice>. The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices.

The categories of personal data used will be as follows:

- Name
- Job title or role
- Employer

The lawful basis that will be used to process your personal data is '*public task*'.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. If we can anonymise or pseudonymise the personal data you provide we will undertake this as described above. We will endeavour to minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This project has received funding through the UKRI Digital Research Infrastructure Programme under grant reference UKRI737.

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research study.