

Participant Information Sheet

Title of study: Audit of impact and knowledge exchange opportunities using an online survey tool



**QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST**



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1. Invitation Paragraph

You are invited to take part in a research study by completing an online survey. It is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve before you decide whether to take part. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

2. What is the purpose of the study?

This study is called 'Audit of impact and knowledge exchange opportunities using an online survey tool'. It involves participants completing an online survey. The survey is aimed at understanding the capacities, attitudes, and processes involved in sharing, discussing, or otherwise using the findings of social science research related to social aspects of energy transition.

3. Why have I been chosen?

You have been invited to take part because we have identified you as someone involved in social science research connected to energy transition. We would value your insights on how we improve knowledge exchange between academic and non-academic audiences.

4. Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide if you wish to take part. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to give your consent to the answers you supply being used as part of a dataset for analysis. You can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the study without giving a reason. If you decide to do this before analysis of the data has begun, we will delete any record we have retained from your participation. If you decide to withdraw from the study after analysis has begun, we will delete your email address if you supplied it, but we will not withdraw your responses from the study: responses will be anonymised at that point, and it will be impossible to identify your from any output of the study that is released publicly.

5. What will I have to if I decide to take part?

If you wish to proceed with the survey you can proceed to follow the online links provided here, which will take you to a survey that will take no more than 20 minutes to complete. At the start of the survey, you will be asked to agree with the statements below, thereby giving your consent to take to the survey and allowing us to use the information you provide:

Taking part in the study

- I have read and understood the study information dated [DD/MM/YYYY], or it has been read to me.
- I have been provided with the opportunity to contact researchers with any questions or concerns I may have before completing the study.
- I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer any question, and I can withdraw from the study at any time without having to give a reason.
- I understand that taking part in the study involves completing an online survey.

Use of the information in the study

- I understand that information I provide will be used for analysis, publication of the survey statistics, and as evidence to provide recommendations to improve the Knowledge Exchange process (anonymous and in aggregate form)

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- I am fully aware that my information and answers will be completely anonymous, unless I chose to provide an email address for follow up interviews – this information will not be shared beyond the research team.
- I agree that my responses can be quoted in research outputs.

Future use and reuse of the information by others

- I give permission for the survey responses that I provide to be deposited in QUB Pure (Queen's University Belfast data repository) so it can be used for future research and learning.

6. What are the possible risks or disadvantages of taking part?

We do not anticipate any risks or disadvantages associated with your participation. We will not ask you to personally identify yourself unless you wish to hear about the results of the research.

7. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part in this research, you will contribute to a better understanding of how social science research can be used by non-academic interests working on aspects of energy transition.

8. What if I have concerns about the survey?

If you have any concerns about any aspects of the study, you can contact the MISTRAL Coordinator (Geraint Ellis, Email: g.ellis(at)qub.ac.uk).

Should you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, you can contact the Research Governance Team at Queen's University Belfast (Telephone: 028 9097 2529; Email: researchgovernance(at)qub.ac.uk).

9. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes, your participation will be confidential and will not be associated with you. If you would like to hear about the results of the study, we will ask you to provide an email address, and this will be stored separately and not associated with the answers you provide in the survey.

After the survey closes, the data will be downloaded and deleted from SurveyMonkey – the deleted data is permanently removed from the system within 90 days. Before that, SurveyMonkey has a series of measures to ensure protection of the survey data (please see [here](#)).

Once downloaded, the dataset (without email addresses) from this study will be encrypted and held on the PI's password protected QUB OneDrive account, or a password-protected computer/drive, and will be shared within the research team. The research team in this study includes Early Stage Researchers at the University of St Gallen (Switzerland), IZES gGmbH (Germany), ISCTE (Portugal), and the University of Exeter (United Kingdom). These researchers will not have access to your email address and will not be able to identify you on any basis.

A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but we analyse the data on an aggregate level, and no individual participants will be identifiable.

As noted above, the contact details (your email address, if you choose to provide it) will also be removed from SurveyMonkey and stored on the password protected QUB OneDrive account of the MISTRAL Project Manager, and permanently deleted once the research findings have been communicated (estimated to be not later than May 2021).

10. What will happen to the results of the research?

The findings of the survey will be used to inform how social scientists can better communicate their research to those interests, such the private sector or policymakers. It may also provide insights on how non-academic interests can more effectively access external research. We will disseminate the findings through working papers, a lay-summary, academic partners and a webinar, to which you will be invited if you give us permission to do so.

11. Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is being coordinated by Professor Geraint Ellis (Queen's University Belfast) as part of MISTRAL.

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The research is being conducted as part of a project called MISTRAL (Multi-sectoral approaches to Innovative Skills Training for Renewable energy & social acceptance, see [here](#)). Funded by the EU through the Horizon 2020 MSCA-ITN (Innovative Training Networks), MISTRAL is a four year research and training programme to develop a new generation of researchers who can effectively evaluate the complexity of social acceptance issues facing the deployment of renewable energy infrastructure and propose innovative solutions in a variety of contexts, including research, government, and business.

12. Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Application Number: EPS 20-235).

13. Contact for Further Information

Project information and contact details:

For more information about MISTRAL, please go to our website, or contact us using the project email address:

<https://mistral-itn.eu/>

Email: mistral-itn@qub.ac.uk

MISTRAL Project Coordinator contact details:

Prof. Geraint Ellis
School of Natural and Built Environment
Queen's University, Belfast
David Keir Building, Stranmillis Rd
Belfast, Northern Ireland
BT9 5AG
Email: G.Ellis@qub.ac.uk

This research will be conducted in compliance with current data protection legislation. For more information about how we look after your information, how to access your rights, and who to contact if you have any queries or concerns about data protection please visit the Queen's University Belfast website

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/about/Leadership-and-structure/Registrars-Office/Information-Compliance-Unit/Data-Protection/>

Thank you for your interest in this study and for taking the time to read through this information sheet.

Confidentiality statement

All data will be treated as strictly confidential. All the information you provide will be anonymised. Any personal data you offer will only be seen by the research team and will be kept securely and separately from the questionnaire responses. Your answers will be solely used for the purposes of this study and no individual responses will be attributed to you. Aggregate statistics or comments may be used in presentations or publications, but they will not disclose the identity of the participants. Your data will be held in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw from the study at any time. By progressing with the questionnaire, you agree that you understand the above, that your participation is voluntary and that you are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

If you have any questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Professor Geraint Ellis School of Natural & Built Environment, Queen's University Belfast

email: g.ellis@qub.ac.uk