

# Participant Information Statement and Consent Form

Smart sex: user and designer perspectives on digitally enabled sex products

The research is being carried out by the following researchers: <b>Dr Jennifer Power, Dr Andrea Waling &amp; Dr Alexandra James</b>		
Role	Name	Organisation
Chief Investigator	Dr Jennifer Power	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Prof Anne Marie Farrell	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Prof Jayne Lucke	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Prof Gary Dowsett	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Co-Investigator	Dr Andrea Waling	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Research Officer	Dr Alexandra James	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
Research Officer	Nicole Shackleton	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
PhD Candidate	Lily Moor	ARCSHS – La Trobe University
<b>Research funder</b>	<b>This research has received funding from the Australian Research Council DP190102027</b>	

## 1. What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a study about the use of smart sex products. We hope to learn more about the way that Australian adults engage with the smart sex products, their reasons for doing so, and the positive or negative experiences associated with their practices.

## 2. Do I have to participate?

Being part of this study is voluntary. If you want to be part of the study we ask that you read the information below carefully and ask us any questions.

You can read the information below and decide at the end if you do not want to participate. If you decide not to participate this won't affect your relationship with La Trobe University or any other listed organisation.

## 3. Who is being asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate because:

- You are aged 18 years and older;
- You have self-identified that you use smart sex products;
- You reside in Australia.

## 4. What will I be asked to do?

If you want to take part in this study, we will ask you to partake in an interview. Interviews may take place either face-to-face, over the phone, or via Zoom. Face-to-face interviews will take place in a safe, public venue which provides sufficient privacy to discuss sensitive topics. It will take approximately one to two hours of your time to be part of this study.

Question topics include background information about yourself, your engagement and experiences with the use of smart sex products, the types of devices used, and the benefits or risks you associate with this practice.

## 5. What are the benefits?

This study will provide a safe and respectful forum for you to reflect on your experiences and perspectives associated with the use or design of smart sex products. You will receive a \$50 gift voucher for your participation in this research.

The expected benefits to society in general are an increase in knowledge and understanding which will provide an informed basis for improving policy, regulatory, and educational responses in this area.

## 6. What are the risks?

With any study there are (1) risks we know about, (2) risks we don't know about and (3) risks we don't expect. If you experience something that you aren't sure about, please contact us immediately so we can discuss the best way to manage your concerns.

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Name/Organisation	Position	Telephone	Email
Dr Jennifer Power	Chief Investigator	03 9479 8721	Jennifer.power@latrobe.edu.au

We have listed the risks we know about below. This will help you decide if you want to be part of the study.

- There is a potential minimal risk of emotional harm in discussing the use of smart sex products.
- There is a some potential risk of emotional distress in discussing the use of smart sex products if you have previously experienced harmful or abusive sexual practices.
- There is some potential risk of experiencing embarrassment or emotional distress in discussing the use of smart sex products; however, we hope that this research will provide a safe forum in which you feel comfortable to share your experiences with the interviewer without any fear of judgement.

To minimise these risks, we will:

- Provide a safe and respectful environment for you to discuss topics with which you are comfortable.
- Inform you that your wellbeing is our priority, and that you may choose not to answer questions with which you may be uncomfortable. On a regular basis, we will check in with you to ask if you are okay.
- Inform you that you may take as many breaks as needed. We will also, at 30 minute interviews, ask if you would like to have a break from the interview.
- Provide option to debrief after the interview, with either the interviewer, or with Chief Investigator Dr Jennifer Power.
- If needed, help you to connect with a support service.

## 7. What will happen to information about me?

We will collect information about you in ways that will not reveal who you are. This means you cannot be identified in any type of publication from this study.

Where applicable, your audio recording will be destroyed after transcription. We will keep your other information, such as your consent form and de-identified transcript, for 5 years after the project is completed. After this time, we will destroy all of your data.

We will collect, store and destroy your data in accordance with La Trobe Universities Research Data Management Policy which can be viewed online using the following link: <https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/view.php?id=106/>.

We will publish information about you in ways that will not identify you in any type of publication from this study.

The personal information you provide will be handled in accordance with applicable privacy laws, any health information collected will be handled in accordance with the Health Records Act 2001 (Vic). Subject to any exceptions in relevant laws, you have the right to access and correct your personal information by contacting the research team.

## 8. Will I hear about the results of the study?

At the conclusion of this study, a short 2-3 page report providing a lay summary of the project will be will be provided on the study's website that you can access ([www.tech-sex.com](http://www.tech-sex.com)).

You can also join the ARCSHS mailing list (<https://us4.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=afcc3338bb6bc28b8bf0e0950&id=83d9e28293>) that provides quarterly updates on all ARCSHS research. Findings from this study will be posted to this list. People can join this list without being identified as a study participant.

## 9. What if I change my mind?

If you participate in an interview, you can choose to no longer be part of the study at any time until four weeks following the collection of your data. You can let us know by:

1. Completing the 'Withdrawal of Consent Form' (provided at the end of this document);
2. Calling us; or

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### 3. Emailing us

When you withdraw any information about you will be withdrawn from the research study.

Your decision to withdraw at any point will **not** affect your relationship with La Trobe University or any other organisation listed.

### 10. Who can I contact for questions or want more information?

If you would like to speak to us, please use the contact details below:

Name/Organisation	Position	Telephone	Email
Dr Jennifer Power	Chief Investigator	03 9479 8721	Jennifer.power@latrobe.edu.au

### 11. What if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint about any part of this study, please contact:

Ethics Reference Number	Position	Telephone	Email
HEC20492	Senior Research Ethics Officer	+61 3 9479 1443	<a href="mailto:humanethics@latrobe.edu.au">humanethics@latrobe.edu.au</a>

### 12. Support Services:

If this research has brought up upsetting memories or emotions, please contact the following organisations for support:

- **Lifeline:** Crisis Support ([www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)) – Ph: 13 11 14
- **1800 RESPECT:** National sexual assault and domestic family violence counselling service – 1800 737 732
- **BeyondBlue:** Mental Wellbeing ([www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au)) – Ph: 1300 224 636
- **Men’s Line:** Men’s counselling service ([www.mensline.org.au](http://www.mensline.org.au)) – Ph: 1300 78 99 78
- **Women’s Information and Referral Exchange:** Generalist information, support and referral service ([www.wire.org.au](http://www.wire.org.au)) – Ph: 1300 134 130
- **Melbourne Sexual Health Clinic:** Free sexual health testing and treatment ([www.mshc.org.au](http://www.mshc.org.au)) – Ph: 03 9341 6200
- **Sydney Sexual Health Centre:** Offers testing, treatment and management for STI’s and HVI ([www.sshc.org.au](http://www.sshc.org.au))
- **NSW Sexual Health Infolink:** Telephone and internet based information and referral service ([www.shil.nsw.gov.au](http://www.shil.nsw.gov.au)) – Ph: 1800 451 624
- **SA Regional Counselling:** Telephone and online information and counselling service- ([saregionalaccess.org.au](http://saregionalaccess.org.au)) - Ph: 1300 032 186 (South Australia)
- **QLife:** Anonymous and free LGBTI peer support and referral via phone and webchat. Note, as a result of the CONVID-19 pandemic, webchat is available from 3pm to midnight and phone services available 6pm – 10pm daily (<https://www qlife.org.au/>)
- **Switchboard Victoria:** Provides peer driven support services for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQ+) people, their families, allies and communities. (<http://www.switchboard.org.au/>) –Ph: 1800 184 527
- **The Gender Centre:** The Gender Centre Inc. is the peak state-wide multidisciplinary center of excellence providing a broad range of specialised services that enables the exploration of gender identity and assistance with the alleviation of gender dysphoria (<https://gendercentre.org.au/>) –Ph 9569-2366
- **Aboriginal Counselling Services:** Counselling services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people-Ph 0410 539 905 (<https://www.aboriginalcounsellingservices.com.au/>) (All states and territories, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples)

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### Consent Form – Declaration by Participant

I (the participant) have read (or, where appropriate, have had read to me) and understood the participant information statement, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study.

I know I can withdraw at any time until four weeks following the collection of my data.

I agree information provided by me or with my permission during the project may be included in journals, books, media articles and other publications on the condition that I cannot be identified.

I agree to have my interview audio and/or video recorded

Name	Email (optional)	Postal address (optional)

### Participant Signature

I have received a signed copy of the Participant Information Statement and Consent Form to keep

Participant's printed name	
Participant's signature	
Date	

### Declaration by Researcher

I have given a verbal explanation of the study, what it involves, and the risks and I believe the participant has understood;

I am a person qualified to explain the study, the risks and answer questions

Researcher's printed name	
Researcher's signature	
Date	

\* All parties must sign and date their own signature

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products

## Withdrawal of Consent

I wish to withdraw my consent to participate in this study. I understand withdrawal will not affect my relationship with La Trobe University of any other organisation or professionals listed in the Participant Information Statement.

### I understand my information will be withdrawn as outlined below:

- ✓ Any identifiable information about me will be withdrawn from the study
- ✓ The researchers will withdraw my contact details so I cannot be contacted by them in the future studies unless I have given separate consent for my details to be kept in a participant registry.
- ✓ The researchers cannot withdraw my information once it has been analysed, and/or collected as part of a focus group

I would like my already collected and unanalysed data

- Destroyed and not used for any analysis  
 Used for analysis

## Participant Signature

Participant's printed name	
Participant's signature	
Date	

## Please forward this form to:

CI Name	Dr Jennifer Power
Email	Jennifer.power@latrobe.edu.au
Phone	03 9479 8721
Postal Address	Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society La Trobe University Building NR6 Bundoora Victoria 3086 Australia