

Plain Language Statement

School of Agriculture, Food and Ecosystem Sciences
Faculty of Science

The University of Melbourne



Project: Reconnecting with Urban Waterways – Community Interviews

Project Supervisor: Dr. Kylie Soanes

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Project Funder: Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

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?

This project aims to understand what is being done to improve the ecological and social value of urban waterways, what the opportunities are to provide human-nature connection, and the impact that current projects have had so far. The goal is to guide future work, creating a menu of actions that we can use to enhance biodiversity and human-nature connection, and helping us reconnect with our urban waterways.

What will I be asked to do?

Should you agree to participate, you will be invited to undertake an interview (~30-60 minutes, in-person or virtual). During the interview, you will be prompted to share your perspectives on actions to improve the ecological and social value of urban waterways. We'll ask your thoughts on what changes you've noticed, how you feel about the change, and what you'd like to see in future.

The interview may be audio-recorded and transcribed by a professional service. You may choose not to be audio recorded if preferred.

We will not ask you any sensitive questions and your responses will be anonymised for data analysis and reporting. If there are small number of participants, it is possible that someone may still be able to identify you based on knowledge of your role and involvement in the project.

What are the possible benefits?

The goal of this study is to support actions to improve the ecological and social value of urban waterways – providing habitat for native biodiversity and enhancing opportunities for human-nature connection. The work will help restore urban landscapes with benefits to human health and well-being.

What are the possible risks?

Potential risks are minimal. However, for some participants, the discussion may provoke an emotional response. If you feel uncomfortable at any time, you are free to take a break, skip questions that you prefer not to answer, or withdraw from the interview at any time. We will also provide details for support services if you feel the need for further assistance after the session.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation is completely voluntary. You are able to withdraw at any time and may request any data already provided be removed from the study.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

All materials generated from this project, including research papers, fact sheets, and streetscape designs will be publicly available through the project website <https://kyliesoanes.com/urbanwaterways/> or by contacting Dr. Kylie Soanes (ksoanes@unimelb.edu.au).

What will happen to information about me?

Full control of the raw data will be guaranteed by the use of personal computers and password protected cloud storage within the virtual space of the University of Melbourne. The physical space of the data, such as a computer or hard drive, will be kept in a locked office on a password-protected computer housed within the network of the University of Melbourne. The researchers and associate investigators will know where the data are stored, but will keep this information confidential. Data is non-identifiable, which means the researchers will delete any individually identifiable information from the database as soon as it is captured. Data will be stored following guidelines for post-publication scholarly work by the University of Melbourne. Data collected here may be used in future research that is closely related to this project (e.g. the project expands to include more participants or geographic areas). The data will be stored for a maximum of 5 years, as per University of Melbourne guidelines, after which it will be deleted.

Who is funding this project?

This project is funded by the Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA).

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project, please contact Dr. Kylie Soanes (ksoanes@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 Project ID #31122. 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 3 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.