



## **PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE PATTERNS RESEARCH PROGRAM**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT**

#### **What is this research about?**

This research aims to investigate how young Australians navigate work, education, relationships, and their attitudes to personal and social futures. It analyses how young people build the relationships and access the resources that enable them to manage productive trajectories through education, work and relationship formation, and identifies the factors that support them in their trajectories.

#### **How will this research be conducted?**

This research is part of the Life Patterns longitudinal study of Australian youth based at The University of Melbourne which has been following the lives of a cohort of Australians who completed secondary school in 1991, as well as a second cohort of school leavers, recruited in 2005-06. Both of these groups are still being followed. This year the project has been funded by the Australian Research Council to recruit a third cohort of 4000 Year 11 students from a stratified random sample of 58 schools based on location (State/territory; metropolitan/regional/rural); school sector (Government, Catholic, and Independent); and level of socio-educational disadvantage across Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania and the ACT.

Participants will be invited to complete online survey questionnaires. The time commitment for surveys is about 20 minutes. At a later date, a small group of these students may be asked to express interest in participating in an interview or a half-day workshop with other participants led by our research team. These are both voluntary activities and will not require any resources from schools.

The focus of the questionnaire is on the choices young people are making about study, work, and their priorities in life. No questions will be asked about sensitive information and activities. This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne [ethics ID: 20882]. If participants have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which participants do not wish to discuss with the research team, they should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010 (phone: +61 8344 1376; email: [research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au](mailto: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.

#### **How will the data be kept and used?**

The survey data will be stored in a database under password protection. All databases containing participants' personal information are de-identified and assigned an ID number at the time of their recruitment. Data is only identifiable to the Chief Investigators and Senior Research Officers. Data is only accessible to the Chief Investigators and Senior Research Officers.

The data generated by the project to date has been de-identified and archived according to best practice, so that it will be available in perpetuity to the research team. The de-identified survey data collected from this new cohort will be archived following the same method. De-identified survey data will be deposited at the Australian Data Archive under the Restricted Access category. This means that any data access request needs to be approved by the project's research team (i.e. the Data Owner).

The data collected from participants will be used only for research purposes. No individual or school will be identified in publications arising from the project. Research output will include participant and school reports; research reports; journal articles, books and book chapters, conference papers and keynote addresses; media interviews and articles; and tweets and blogs. They will be made accessible to schools, labour market and health policy communities, and other researchers nationally and internationally via various outlets, including academic journals, publishing houses, and conferences.

### **What are the possible benefits?**

This project is beneficial for schools, students, and the broader society. The research team will be able to provide participating schools with a data report on the sub-sections of the survey that would be of interest. Questions of interest may include how connected students feel to their school, teachers, peers and learning; reflections on how COVID-19 affected aspects of their studies and life in 2020-21; how they feel about continuing to study after Year 12; factors influencing their selection of subjects in their final years of school; and the extent to which COVID-19 has affected their plans for future study. In 2024, the research team would also offer to provide the school with a succinct report on the insights of the longitudinal research about young Australians' transitions.

For students, by participating in this project they will get a chance to reflect on their schooling and life after school. They will be sent regular reports about the group of participants that includes them and have the opportunity to learn about the experiences of other young people. At a later stage in the project, a small group of participants will be invited to attend a workshop to share ideas with other young people from around Australia. All participants will also have access to publications that compare the experiences of their generation with people who left secondary school 15 and 30 years ago. These reports will give them an understanding of their generation and of the things that contribute to resilience and wellbeing.

For the broader society, the research outputs of this project will be informing policy makers and governments about the challenges and opportunities for young Australians and their attitudes to life; information that will help to ensure policies and programs for young people meet their needs.

### **Are there any risks of participating in this research?**

The risks of participating in this research are low. Participation in this project is completely voluntary. Participants are able to withdraw at any time. They can also withdraw any data already collected from or about them. No questions about sensitive information and activities will be asked. If participants find completing the survey stressful, as it may add pressure on participants as they are planning for their transition to post-school life, we are able to advise them on how to seek the support of a counsellor and remind that they are free to leave the study at any stage. The project data is kept in a secure space and will be used for research purposes only.

### **How can I find out more about this project?**

If you would like more information about the project, please contact the research team:

Project Chief Investigator Professor Johanna Wyn (email: [j.wyn@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:j.wyn@unimelb.edu.au))

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