

Crowd4Access

Experience Sharing Focus Groups

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

We are interested in developing tools and methodologies to support communities in assessing the mobility in their own neighbourhoods. Towards this end, we will have a series of focus groups to learn what are the urban elements (e.g. ramps, tactile pavement, street furniture) that support or decrease mobility for people with different mobility needs. This will be done in small groups of 5 people who will join a teleconference environment to (i) reflect on a urban route they are used to navigate as pedestrians, (ii) share their experience in moving along that route, (iii) identify what are the key urban elements that enable or decrease mobility along that route, and (iv) discuss which urban elements we would like to see appearing in a map of our neighbourhoods to help us identifying how accessible our neighbourhoods are.

Who are the researchers?

This research is being carried out by Bianca Pereira from the Data Science Institute, NUI Galway in collaboration with Venkatesh Gurram Munirathnam from the School of Computing, Dublin City University. This research study has been approved by the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee.

Who can take part?

We are looking for people with different mobility needs, in particular: wheelchair users (motorised or not), users of long cane or guide dogs, people with visual impairment that do not use any physical aid, and users of crutches. All participants are requested to be at least 21 years old, be familiar with moving along any particular route within Galway city, Cork city or Dublin city, and have the ability to communicate through spoken English. Participants in this study are also expected to have access to a device connected to the Internet (computer, tablet or smartphone) or to a phone with ability to make phone calls.

What would be involved?

If you choose to participate, this will involve you, as part of a small focus group, sharing your experience in moving along a familiar route within Galway city, Cork city or Dublin city, and identifying what are the urban elements (e.g. ramps, tactile pavement, street furniture) that make it easier or hard for you to move along that route. The group will then discuss what are the key urban elements that we would like to see featuring in a map of urban neighbourhoods.

The group session will be recorded (audio and video), so that we have a record of what was said. We also request participants to keep all personal discussions confidential, to respect the opinion of others, and to respect the researchers conducting the session.

What will we do with the information?

With your permission, we will record video and audio of these group discussions and then write it up into what is called a transcript. An analysis of these discussions will be included in an academic publication and in communications with the general public. No one will be named or identifiable in any way in the reports of the study.

Who will have access to the recordings and transcripts?

The recordings of the session will be generated by the Zoom teleconference system and made accessible to the members of the research team (according to Zoom's

data protection policies: <https://zoom.us/gdpr>). The recordings and associated transcripts will only be accessible to members of the research team, and will be kept securely, in strict accordance with the NUI Galway data protection policy. Therefore, the original recordings cannot and will not be shared with third parties (e.g. other research groups, health insurance companies, governments, etc.)

Are there any risks involved in taking part?

We foresee no risks to participants as a result of taking part in this study. Focus groups in online settings are time-consuming and can cause fatigue, and discussions in relation to mobility challenges can sometimes cause distress. However, both researchers will be available to support your involvement in this study and make your participation as easy as possible.

What if I wish to withdraw?

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any time you wish, without giving a reason and without penalty. This includes leaving the focus group session at any moment due to tiredness, fatigue, distress or any other personal reasons.

Where will this happen?

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, our priority is to keep all participants safe. Therefore, following HSE guidelines to keep social distancing, the focus group session will take place online through a teleconference platform. You can join the teleconference via computer, tablet or smartphone with an internet connection, or through a free phone call.

When will this happen?

A suitable date will be agreed with participants who register to join the study. The specific link for the teleconference call will be sent to each participant after a date has been agreed.

How long will it take?

The session is expected to take a maximum of 2 hours.

How can I register to participate in this study?

If you would be interested in taking part, you can contact me at any time by email at bianca.pereira@nuigalway.ie or by phone Monday to Friday, between 11am and 4pm at +353 91 495083 . I would be happy to answer any questions you have about the project and, of course, would look forward to talking to you.

Registration is open until 26th June 2020.

Would you like to raise any concern about this research?

You can raise any concerns to the researchers by contacting Bianca Pereira at any time by email at bianca.pereira@nuigalway.ie or by phone Monday to Friday, between 11am and 4pm at +353 91 495083.

Otherwise, if you would like to raise any concern about any aspect of this research, please contact the head of the Data Science Institute, prof. Dr. Mathieu d'Aquin via email at mathieu.daquin@nuigalway.ie. Alternatively, the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee can also be contacted either by phone at +353 91 495312 or by email at ethics@nuigalway.ie.

If you have any concerns that you wish to raise with a neutral party, you can also contact the NUI Galway Research Office by email at vpresearch@nuigalway.ie or phone at +353 91 495312.