

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Interview and Digital Ethnography

Project ID: 21876
Project title: *Digital Energy Futures: Forecasting changing residential energy demand*
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You are invited to take part in the *Digital Energy Futures* study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above. You may also ask questions on the day of the research.

What does the research involve? This study aims to better understand household use of current and emerging technologies, and inform planning to meet future electricity demand in Australia. The research will take up to three hours, split over two interviews. The interviews will take place on videoconferencing software, such as Zoom, or via telephone if you prefer. Up to three researchers will be on the calls with you to learn about the ways you and your household use digital and energy technologies.

In the first interview we will ask you questions about your energy and digital technology use and may use some comic strip future scenarios and data visualisations to stimulate discussion and speculation about the future. These materials will be shared with you during the interview on teleconferencing, or mailed to you before the interview, if the interview will be conducted via telephone.

You will then be presented with choices for how you would like to contribute to the second interview. We will discuss these in more detail during the first interview. The options will include creating your own future comic strip; keeping a written, photographic, or video diary; using a camera to record your daily routines, or giving a virtual home tour of digital and energy technologies through videoconferencing on a laptop or smartphone. It will be your choice which of these activities you would like to do. During the second interview we will discuss any of these materials with you to better understand your daily routines and practices.

We will audio record our conversations.

It is your choice whether we take photos and video record some of your digital and energy technology activities and how we use any materials you make and share with us. You can also choose how your images will be used by the research team, and whether you want your identity concealed (via the Consent Form).

Why were you chosen for this research? You have been selected for this research because you live in an area where the electricity infrastructure (poles and wires) are built and maintained by Ausgrid (in NSW) or AusNet Services (in Victoria). Monash University is conducting research to help electricity networks and governing organisations plan electricity networks and services to meet changing consumer needs and technology use.

In a survey conducted by Ausgrid or AusNet Services, you or another member of your household opted in to being contacted by Monash University about this research. Ausgrid and AusNet Services provided household details to our research team to contact you to provide project information and this invitation to take part. If you decide to be involved, we may use your survey and energy use data as part of the analysis. Your in-home data may be used as part of joint analysis activities with Ausgrid or AusNet Services – but only if you agree to this aspect.

Source of funding. Monash University is conducting this 3-year research project and it is externally funded by the Australian Research Council. Two electricity distribution businesses (Ausgrid and Ausnet Services) and a consumer advocacy organisation (Energy Consumers Australia) are research partners contributing time and additional funding.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research. This research is voluntary – you do not have to take part. If you do agree, the consent process involves signing and returning the Consent Form before commencing the research activities. You have the right to withdraw from further participation at any stage. If you withdraw, we will delete data and information about you.

Possible benefits and risks to participants. You may not receive any direct benefit from participating in this research. However, you may find the research interesting, fun or informative. The longer-term benefits of the research are expected to be a contribution towards reliable electricity networks that are more sustainable and affordable.

The risks of participating are low. You may find the time involved to be an inconvenience, or that discussions about household activities and technology cause discomfort or disagreement. If you choose to be identified in research outputs (e.g. have images or video of your home or household members used on a website or in a documentary), members of the public could see these materials. There is low likelihood that people you know will view project materials unless you tell them about the project or its outputs. You may request copies of videos or photographs of you, and have any identifying materials sent to you for your approval/rejection before publication.

Services available if adversely affected. If you have household wellbeing concerns, the following services may assist:

BeyondBlue: www.beyondblue.org.au or 1300 22 4636

Lifeline: www.lifeline.org.au or 13 11 44

Kids Helpline: www.kidshelpline.com.au or 1800 55 1800

Parentline: www.parentline.com.au or 1300 30 1300

Gift card. If decide to participate in the research, your household will receive one \$80 ColesMyer mailed to you at the conclusion of the interview and filming as thanks for your time and contribution. You may keep the gift card even if you choose to withdraw from the research.

Confidentiality. By signing the consent form you consent to the research team collecting and using information for future research analysis, writing and academic presentations. Any information will remain confidential and only be used in a de-identified manner (e.g. using a pseudonym) unless you choose otherwise. You may choose to have your recordings and other data used in public outputs such as on the project website or in a documentary, and whether you are identified in these outputs. Audio recordings will be transcribed by third party professional services. This company will not be provided with full names, contact details or other identifying information.

Storage of data. Anything you tell us, and all recordings, will be securely stored on the password-protected Monash University server and in locked cabinets. Your information will only be used for research purposes and will only be disclosed with your permission, except as required by law. All raw data from the project will be destroyed after five years or when it is no longer required. In accordance with relevant Australian and/or Victorian privacy and other relevant laws, you have the right to request access to the information about you that is collected and stored by the research team. You also have the right to request that any information with which you disagree be corrected.

Use of data for other purposes. Aggregated and de-identified data from this project may be used for other research projects if ethics approval is granted.

Results. Over three years of the project, the results will be available from the project website <https://www.monash.edu/emerging-tech-research-lab/research/energy-futures/digital-energy-futures>

Complaints. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC):

Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee

Room 111, Chancellery Building D,

26 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus

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Thank you,



Associate Professor Yolande Strengers