

Participant Information Sheet

Beta testing of slime mould biosensor for use by general public (Citizen Scientists)

Thank you for showing an interest in our project. Here is further information regarding the nature of our investigation, along with answers to some questions you may be wishing to ask.

What is the aim of the project?

Our goal is develop easy to use biological sensors (based on slime mould) which the general public can use to do their own (interesting) experiments.

What is Beta testing?

The purpose of Beta testing is to confirm both the hardware and software are easy to use and participants can share their experimental results.

Geographic location of project?

The study will take place globally. Beta testing will begin with participants known to university staff.

Who is funding the research?

The European Commission under Horizon 2020, FET Innovation Launchpad research program <https://ec.europa.eu/>

Why have I been invited to take part?

The university and the project's funder (European Commission) are keen to support public interest in science and technology. Hands on experimentation is a great way to learn and share knowledge.

Can I take part in the study?

For Beta testing we are looking for individuals who fulfil the following criteria:

- Over 18 years of age
- Good general health. In particular, no current medical condition(s) that might affect your immune system, including infection, pregnancy, immunosuppressive therapy (hepatitis, HIV, chemotherapy (incl. neoadjuvant)) and any unknown/undiagnosed conditions. If you have any conditions that you are uncertain as to their relevance, please consult your GP or consultant before consenting to participate (due to potential exposure to slime mould).

- Willing to comply with safety guidance

What if I become pregnant or develop health condition while participating?

We recommend you discontinue participation and either pass the hardware/slime mould to another participant or safely dispose of slime mould.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

As long as you (and those you live with) are in good general health we do not foresee or anticipate any significant risks. Participating in the research is not anticipated to cause you any disadvantages.

How much time does it take to participate?

This really depends on what and how much you want to try. For example, growing slime mould in containers, adding different substances and taking photos to see if slime mould eats the substances is pretty quick (approx. 15 mins per day for a week). Tweaking the open source code to improve data analysis or Graphical User Interface could be time consuming (as challenging). Recording a living symphony with slime mould 'musicians' would be technically difficult.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this project. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to participate. If you do decide to take part you will be able to keep a copy of this information sheet and you should indicate your agreement to the online Consent Form. If you do decide to take part, you are still **free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.**

What will I have to do if I take part?

If you agree to take part you will be asked to try a range of experiments using the hardware and software provided (free of charge). You don't have to share your experimental results but it would be helpful if you were willing to do so.

Please note, the project will not provide the slime mould which you'll need to source from third party (details of suppliers provided).

We guarantee that any information you provide will be handled in a secure manner to ensure that no individual participants' identity can be disclosed to unauthorised third parties outside the research team.

What are the benefits of taking part?

Participants will gain knowledge and experience of working on cutting edge science. This could include: making/using living biosensors and/or practice skills in coding/data analysis. It is hoped that the project will:

- (a) Help to inspire public interest in science and technology
- (b) Assisting in measuring slime mould response to a wide variety of stimuli

The longer term ambition is to recruit enough participants to conduct a large number of measurements with a view to mapping biosensors' response to different stimuli including:

- Response to different foods, drinks, pharmaceuticals, etc
- Response to air and water quality

Participants may be asked to participate in the other activities such as:

- Sonication of living organisms
- Fusion of living and artificial neural networks
- Cryptanalysis

What if something goes wrong?

If you have any complaints about the project in the first instance you can contact any member of the research team via the links provided on the project's website www.physense.eu

What happens to the information?

We will always hold your information securely. To prevent unauthorised disclosure or access to your information, we have implemented strong physical and electronic security safeguards.

We also follow stringent procedures to ensure we work with all personal data in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The project has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty of Environment and Technology Ethics Committee.

If you choose to withdraw from the project (at any time for any reason) **you can request your person details are permanently deleted**. Upon request we'll also delete any experimental measurements you have shared (prior to measurement being combined with other participants' measurements).

What will happen to the results of the research study?

A Report will be written containing our research findings. This Report will be available on the University of the West of England's open access Research Repository, and abstract of the report on the European Commission's website. An electronic copy of the Report will be made available to all research participants upon request. Key findings will also be shared both within and outside the University of the West of England with those involved in public engagement and biosensors.

What do I do next?

If you feel you would like to participate in the project, have any questions, or would like some further information, please see the project's website for additional details www.physense.eu

If you would like any further information about the study please contact the research team via the links provided on the project's website www.physense.eu

If you decide to take part in this project thank you
Please download copy of this information sheet