

## PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

### Regional women's motivations and experiences of establishing and managing online businesses

Dear Participant

#### What is the purpose of this research?

The research purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of the 'triggers', motivations and decision making processes of female entrepreneurs living in regional Australia to establish and operate an online business, so that effective policies and programs can be formulated and enacted to support such businesses and in doing so promote the economic and social wellbeing of regional communities.

#### What does my participation involve?

You are invited to participate in a semi-structured interview about your decision to start an online business and your experiences establishing and operating your online business in regional Australia. This may include why you set up your online business through to experiences developing a website and attracting customers. Participation is entirely voluntary. The discussion will be recorded using a digital voice recorder. The session will take between 45 and 60 minutes at a time and place that is agreed as being the most convenient for the participant.

Interviews will be conducted in person (or in the event of physical distancing requirements can be conducted online via Zoom). With your consent, interviews will be audio recorded to ensure comments are accurately captured. You may review the transcripts made from the recordings if you wish by requesting this from the researcher.

#### What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The sharing of your experiences will assist in understanding women entrepreneurs experiences running an online business in regional Australia. This research project provides an opportunity to voice your online business experiences, challenges and highlights. In addition, the project outcomes will inform local, state and federal policy-makers to develop appropriate support to assist female entrepreneurs in regional areas.

#### What are the possible risks and disadvantages of taking part?

The interviews are unlikely to cause you any discomfort or difficulty. You will be asked to comment about your views on your experiences operating an online business in regional Australia. In the event you are distressed by any question asked you can choose not to answer and you may also choose to end your participation at any time up until the data is analysed.

The time commitment is approximately a 45 to 60 minutes semi-structured interview.

#### Do I have to take part in this research project?

Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time up until the data is analysed.

#### Will my information be confidential?

Your comments will be anonymously grouped with responses from other participants and will be treated confidentially. Reports from the research will not identify you personally. Your name and your comments will not be linked directly to you, however due to a small number of participants there is a minor possibility that identification could occur by peers through the manner of speech or argument. You will only be individually identifiable by voice by the researchers. All records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information which could lead to identification will be released, unless required by law.

#### How will my information be stored?

The audio file, transcript and notes will be stored as computer files and saved on the secure University server for five years (in line with national ethics protocols) only accessible by the researchers. All other versions will be deleted (e.g. from the recording device). Your name and your comments will not be linked directly to you. You will only be

individually identifiable by voice by the researchers. All records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information which could lead to identification will be released, unless required by law.

Signed consent forms will be stored separately so they are not linked with the data and will also be destroyed per the same timeline.

#### What if something goes wrong?

See below for contacts if you have any concerns about your participation in the research project.

#### What happens when the research project ends?

The results of the research will be available to you if you are interested and would like to provide the researcher with a contact email.

#### Will my answers be used in any future projects?

The information gained during the study may be published as part of an extension of, or closely related to project.

#### Who is organising and funding the research?

The research project is being conducted by a researcher at Flinders University.

#### Who has reviewed the research project?

Ethics approval for this project has been granted by the Flinders University Human Research Ethics Committee, as required by Australian government research requirements, specified in the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007; updated 2018). This statement has been developed to protect the interests of people who agree to participate in human research studies.

#### Further information and who to contact

If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact [human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au](mailto:human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au) or 61 8 8201 2543. Should you have any questions about this study, please feel free to contact the researchers listed below. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely

Mrs Heather Prider/ Dr Catherine Mackenzie
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This study has been approved by the Flinders University HREC, project number 5654.
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