

# Information Sheet for Participants

## ***Project Title***

What Matters? Stage 2 - Understanding Young People's Views in Australia

## ***Overview of the Research***

Right now, Australia's democracy is facing some tough times, and it is important to know what you, the young people, think about big issues in our society and politics. Since 2004, the Whitlam Institute has been running the *What Matters? Writing Competition*, which has been a great way to find out what young Australians think. In our research study we will be looking at the essays sent in by young people to figure out what topics are important to young Australians, to see how their ideas about different things change, and try to understand what this can tell us about young people today.

We have already done some work in the study, and now we are moving on to the next stage. In the first stage, we looked at the competition entries that we received between 2010 and 2018. But the next stage is going to be a bit different. We are planning to look at the more recent entries a bit more closely. This part of the study is all about understanding how the views and priorities of young Australians have changed because of what has been happening around the world and in Australia recently, and how society is changing. By looking at this new information and comparing it with what we found in the first stage, we hope to get a clearer picture of how the views of young Australians are changing over time.

## ***What will you be asked to do?***

We may use parts of your essay from the *What Matters? Writing Competition* in our research reports but we will not name you unless you give us permission. Also, we might ask you to join an interview, but it will be completely up to you if you want to do

the interview or not. If we interview you, we will show you what we found out from the interview and check with you that we got things right before we write anything.

***How much of your time will you need to give?***

Your main involvement will be sending in your essay and you might also be asked to take part in an optional interview.

***What benefits will you and/or the broader community, receive for participating?***

Although you will not get a direct benefit by taking part, you can help us better understand what young Australians like you think and feel. This is helpful because it can guide and improve things for young people in the future.

***Will the study cause me any risks or problems? If so, what will be done to fix it?***

We do not expect that including your *What Matters? Writing Competition* entry in the study will cause you any problems or risks.

***What will we do with the information?***

We will put together all the information into reports and articles, explaining how we did the research, what we found out, and what it all means. We will not use your name in these reports unless we ask you first and you say it is okay. You will be able to see and read any of these reports that come out of the study.

***Keeping Your Identity Safe and Confidential***

If we include specific parts from your entry, we will make sure that your name and information remain confidential. This means that anyone who reads our reports will not know who you are. We will not reveal who you are to others unless you specifically give us permission to use your name. Your privacy is a top priority for us, and we are committed to protecting your identity unless you choose otherwise.

## ***Change your mind?***

Being part of the study is completely up to you and you can choose not to be involved at any time during the project. If you decide that you do not want us to use your essay or interview answers all you need to do is email [whatmatters@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:whatmatters@westernsydney.edu.au) and us know that you do not want quotes from your entry or parts of your interview (if you were interviewed) included. No questions will be asked about why you do not want to take part. If you do not want to contact us yourself, that is alright as well. You can get a parent or carer, a teacher or anyone else you like to let us know that you do not want your submission included in the study. If you decide you do not want to be included in the study or you change your mind after being interviewed, it will not affect your chances of winning the competition. Being part of this study is completely up to you!

## ***Can I tell other people about the study?***

Yes, you are welcome to tell people about this study.

## ***What if I need more information or if I have any complaints?***

If you need more information about our research, you can email us at [whatmatters@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:whatmatters@westernsydney.edu.au).

If you do not like how the research is being done, you can send a complaint yourself or ask your parent or caregiver to send it for you. Your complaint will be looked at by someone from the University and it will be kept confidential. The research team will never be told that you complained. You can send your email to [humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au](mailto:humanethics@westernsydney.edu.au).