Plain Language Statement
Faculty of Fine Arts and Music

Project: Creativity, the Arts and COVID-19: Thriving in Unexpected Situations (CACTUS): Survey

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Introduction
Thank you for your interest in participating in this research project. The following few pages will provide you with further information about the project, so that you can decide if you would like to take part in this research.

Please take the time to read this information carefully. You may ask questions about anything you don’t understand or want to know more about.

Your participation is voluntary. If you don’t wish to take part, you don’t have to. If you begin participating, you can also stop at any time.

What is this research about?
This project is an investigation into how creativity can help people navigate times of crisis, in this case the COVID-19 pandemic. The research team is collecting information about this topic by conducting a survey and by doing brief one-on-one interviews. The information in this Plain Language Statement relates to the survey aspect of the project. If you would like to find out more about participating in an interview, please contact any member of the research team named above. You can participate in the survey, an interview, both or neither—it is entirely up to you.

What will I be asked to do?
Should you agree, you will be asked to complete an online questionnaire to answer questions about yourself and the creative activities that you are engaging in during the current COVID-19 pandemic. The survey will take approximately 20–25 minutes to complete.
**What are the possible benefits?**
Your participation in this study will assist researchers in understanding how creative activities can help people cope in times of crisis. This can also help researchers understand and advocate for the value of creativity and the arts to society.

As a participant, you may also benefit from the opportunity to reflect on your own engagement in creative activities and why you choose to do them.

Participants have the chance to win a $200 Coles/Myer gift card. The winner will be randomly selected and announced on 30 July 2020.

**What are the possible risks?**
The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many people a great deal of distress. As well as asking about your engagement in creative activities, the survey asks some questions about your current mental health. If you feel psychological stress or discomfort as a result of participating in this study, please feel free to contact:
1) Beyond Blue, an organisation which offers support services for depression and anxiety. The line is free and open 24 hours / 7 days a week. Phone: 1300 22 4636; or,
2) Lifeline, which provides all Australians with access to 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services. Phone: 13 11 14; or,
3) If you are outside Australia, please consult the list of mental health resources available on the CheckPoint website: [https://checkpointorg.com/global/](https://checkpointorg.com/global/)

**Do I have to take part?**
No. Participation is completely voluntary. You are able to withdraw at any time. Simply closing your browser will end your involvement in the survey. By submitting your survey responses, we understand that you are consenting to participate in the project. And, because the survey responses are de-identified, once you submit your survey responses it will not be possible to withdraw them.

**Will I hear about the results of this project?**
The findings of this research will be disseminated as academic publications (e.g. journal articles). If you would like to receive a report on the results of this research, you are welcome to contact Frederic Kiernan at [kiernanf@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kiernanf@unimelb.edu.au).

**What will happen to information about me?**
The information collected from the questionnaire will be anonymous, and therefore your answers will not be personally identifiable. The data will be stored in password-protected digital files, available only to the named researchers, to protect the confidentiality of data that you provide. As there are legal limits to data confidentiality, it is possible for this data to be subject to subpoena, freedom of information request or mandated reporting by some professions.
After analysis of the data is complete, the data will be transferred to a secure databank for storage in perpetuity on a secure University of Melbourne supported digital platform. This will allow researchers to access your data for the purposes of future research projects on related topics, subject to the restrictions specified in the consent form.

**Who is funding this project?**
This research is funded by the Creativity and Wellbeing Hallmark Research Initiative of the University of Melbourne.

**Where can I get further information?**
If you would like more information about the project, please contact the researchers; Prof. Jane Davidson (j.davidson@unimelb.edu.au) or Dr. Frederic Kiernan (kiernanf@unimelb.edu.au)

**Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?**
This research project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of The University of Melbourne. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Manager, Human Research Ethics, Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 2073 or Email: HumanEthics-complaints@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.