

To contact me, please email me at resh.ramasamy@flinders.edu.au or phone/text me on 0450 671 252 (number used only for PhD project).

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Experiences of Autistic Gay or Pansexual Men (Cis or Trans)
and/or Non-binary People in South Australia



Your family or support person can assist you with reading and understanding the document.



inspiring
achievement

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (SUMMARY)

Greetings. I am Resh. I am a coloured autistic gay cis man and non-binary person. I also identify as asexual, aromantic, demisexual and sapiosexual. I am conducting a research project as part of my PhD study at Flinders University. The project is about the experiences of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or non-binary person in South Australia. The project will help policymakers, practitioners and researchers to better understand and cater for the diverse needs of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or non-binary people. At the moment, there is little research on how best to support autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or non-binary people in Australia.




Picture of Resh

To participate in the project, you need to:

- Identify as an autistic gay or pansexual man (cis or trans) and/or non-binary person
- Be 18 years of age and older
- Able to communicate in English (written or verbal)
- Live in South Australia (rural or metropolitan)

Participating in the project will firstly involve catching up informally for a Meet and Greet session in person or online for approximately 1 hour. If you are still keen to help in the project after the Meet and Greet session, you will be invited to attend the interviews on a separate day. You have two options. Option 1 is for two individual sessions approximately 3 hours each, over a 2-week period. Option 2 is for three individual sessions approximately 2 hours each, over a 3-week period. There are also many interview choices. It can be done in person, over Zoom or Teams, Google Forms or by email.

To thank you for your time and for helping me in the project, after the interviews, you will receive a \$150.00 Coles Gift Prepaid Card which can be used at many different stores. For more information about the project, please read the full information sheet from page 3 onwards. My contact details can also be found on page 1 (header) and 24 of the document. I look forward to hearing from you soon. *Have a*  *of a day.*

What is the research project about?

- ❖ This project is about the experiences of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary people in South Australia.



- ❖ I consider autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary as experts of their own lives and wants to listen to their unique life stories.



The research project wants to find out:

- ❖ Stories about the experiences of being autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary people.



- ❖ Stories about the interactions of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary people within their personal and social environment across their life span.



- ❖ Stories about how to help and support autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary people to lead a happier and rewarding life.



Benefits of the research project:

- ❖ You might not personally benefit from taking part in the project. But the stories you share will help policymakers, practitioners and researchers to better understand and cater for the diverse needs of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary people. At the moment, there is little research on how best to support autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary person people in Australia which is disappointing.



Requirements of the research project:

To be able to take part in this project, you need to meet some important requirements. There are two screening requirements.

Screening requirement 1

- ❖ Identify as being autistic (officially diagnosed or self-identified).
Note: you can still take part in the project if you have other disabilities and/or conditions alongside your autistic identity.



- ❖ Identify as being a gay or pansexual man (cis or trans) and/or and non-binary person *Note: you can still take part in the project if you are gender and sexual fluid, meaning you identify with other/multiple sexual and gender identities like myself alongside your gay or pansexual man (cis or trans) and/or non-binary identity.*



- ❖ Must be 18 years of age and older.



- ❖ Be able to communicate in English language – written or verbal.



- ❖ Live in Adelaide (metropolitan and rural) South Australia.



Screening requirement 2

- ❖ I will ask you some questions to understand your reasons (e.g. motivations, interest) for showing interest and/or to take part in the project. This will help me decide if you are suitable for the project.



What happens if you meet the both screening requirements?

- ❖ You will be invited to take part in the project.



There are **TWO** stages to the project.

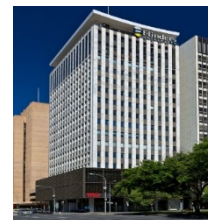
Meet and Greet session (Stage 1)

- ❖ You will be invited to attend an informal unpaid 'Meet and Greet' session. This is the first stage of the project. This will be approximately 1 hour.
- ❖ You can have a support person of your choosing when we meet, if you want. It can be a family, a friend or staff member.



You have **THREE** choices for the Meet and Greet session.

- ❖ **Choice 1:** It can take place at my private office at Flinders University in the city. The address is 182 Victoria Square, Adelaide SA 5000.



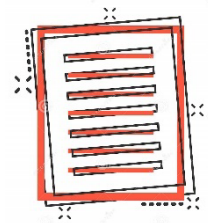
- ❖ **Choice 2:** A place of your choice that is preferably quiet, safe and private for both you and me.



❖ **Choice 3:** On Zoom or Microsoft Teams.



- ❖ During the Meet and Greet session, it will help us to get to know each other better and for you to learn more about the project. You can ask as many questions as you like. The session will go for an approximately 1 hour.



- ❖ For each Meet and Greet choice, the directions and requirements will differ slightly. Once you tell me which choice you want to use, I will email you more information.



You will be given **TWO** consent options.

Consent option 1

- ❖ You don't need to formalise (e.g. say yes) your engagement in the project on the day of the Meet and Greet session. If you would like to have more time to think and discuss about the project, that is fine too. You will have 2 days (48 hours) for you to decide and to let me know. We will then organise to catch up briefly another time for me to obtain consent from you. I will ask you a few questions to make sure you have a good understanding about the project and know what you are agreeing/consenting to. This is a requirement of my university and must be strictly followed.



Consent option 2

- ❖ If you wish to formalise (e.g. say yes) your engagement in the project on the day of the Meet and Greet session, you can do so. I will then obtain consent from you on the day (see process on page 7).



- ❖ Once I am confident that you understand the research project and the Consent Form signed, we can formalise your engagement in the project. If you are unable to sign the Consent Form, but still interested in the project, a person authorised by law must sign on your behalf.



Interview Sessions (Stage 2)

- ❖ Once the Meet and Greet session is finished and Consent Form signed, you will be invited to attend/do the interview on another separate day. This is the second stage of the project.



You have **FIVE** choices for the interview sessions.

- ❖ **Choice 1: Face to Face (My Place)** - You can meet me at my private office at Flinders University in the city.



- ❖ **Choice 2: Face to Face (Your Place)** - A place of your choice that is preferably quiet, safe and private for both you and me so you can share your stories without any interruptions.

Your Place

- ❖ **Choice 3: Zoom or Microsoft Team** – We can have a conversation online over Zoom or Microsoft Teams. I will send you the link before the interview sessions.



- ❖ **Choice 4: Email** – You can respond to the interview questions over email.



- ❖ **Choice 5: Google Forms** – You can respond to the interview questions on Google Forms. I will send you the link before the interview sessions.



NOTE: You can also mix up the Meet and Greet and Interview choices to suit you. For example, if you wish, you can attend the Meet and Greet in person and attend the interview sessions online. Or you can attend the Meet and Greet online and attend the interviews in person.

What happens in the interviews?

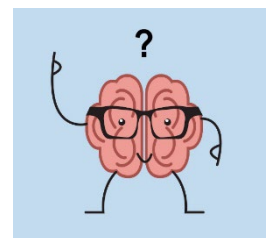
❖ You have two options for the interviews. Option 1 is for two individual sessions, approximately 3 hours each over a 2-week period. Option 2 is for three individual sessions approximately 2 hours each over a 3-week period.



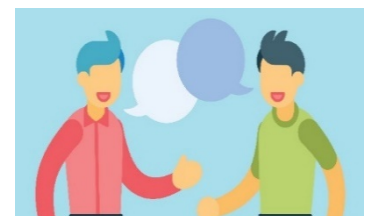
❖ During the interviews, you can have as many breaks as you like. You are in **CONTROL**. You can also break up the interview session into three or more days if you like me to give you more time.



❖ With interview choices 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, I will email you the interview questions a week before the interview. This will give you time to get used to the questions and prepare your responses before the interview. You can also take notes and use them during the interview Session to help you answer the questions.



❖ The interview will be like having an informal conversation and a “**structured chat**”, with you having the questions in advance”. You tell me your story in a way that is comfortable and safe for you. And there is no such thing as a wrong answer.



❖ For each interview choice, the directions and requirements will differ slightly. Once you tell me which choice you want to use, I will email you more information.



❖ Remember **YOU** are the **EXPERT** of your life. I want to hear your story and learn from you. Your story will also help make a difference to other autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or non-binary people in the community.



❖ You don't have to answer all the interview questions. If the questions worry or upset you, you can simply skip them and not provide a reason.



❖ On the day of the interview, if you don't feel up to it, you can also reschedule the interview to another day.



❖ If you have forgotten to say something during the interview, we can also catch up again for a follow up session in person or online.



Will my story be recorded?

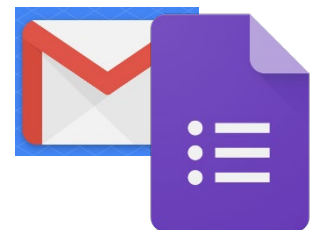
- ❖ For the Face-to-Face interviews, I will record our voices using an audio recorder. This will help me remember what we spoke about.



- ❖ For the Zoom or Microsoft Teams interviews, if you use your microphone only, I will record the audio of us chatting. This will help me remember what we spoke about. If you have your camera turned on which I will be, your/our video will also be recorded. Atm, there is no option on Zoom or Teams to turn on the audio and video but only record the audio.



- ❖ For the Email and Google Form interviews, I will keep a record of your writing/responses. This will help me remember what we spoke about.



The nature of the interview questions

- ❖ The questions I ask you are not intended to harm or hurt you. But the stories you share could upset or worry you. This is completely natural.



- ❖ If you are worried or upset because of helping me with this project, please tell me straight away. Your safety is important to me.



- ❖ You can also contact my supervisors (Dr. Jessie and Dr. Fiona) and let them know. Your safety is important to them as well.



You can also contact the following services for free confidential support:



Lifeline – 13 11 14
www.lifeline.org.au
a 24-hour nationwide service that provides access to crisis support, suicide prevention and mental health support services.



Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636
www.beyondblue.org.au
Provides nationwide information and support regarding anxiety, depression, and suicide.



Diverse Voices – 1800 184 527
<https://www.diversevoices.org.au/>

A non-profit organisation with a focus on the wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) communities through the operation of teleweb counselling services.



Queer Life - 1800 184 527

<https://qlife.org.au/>

QLife is Australia's first nationally-oriented counselling and referral service for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex (LGBTI).



Autism Connect – 1300 308 699

<https://www.amaze.org.au/autismconnect/>

Autism Connect is a free, national autism helpline, providing independent and expert information over phone, email and webchat. It supports autistic people, their families and carers, health professionals, researchers, teachers, employers and the broader community.

- ❖ It might also be helpful to have someone you are close to who you can talk to about the project in private.



Is participation in the project voluntary?

- ❖ Participation is completely **VOLUNTARY**. This means you should never feel forced to take part in the project. You take part in the project because you want to. You are always in **CONTROL**.

Voluntary Participation



- ❖ You can say **NO** or decide to not take part in the project at any time. Even after you have started the interviews, you can change your mind. You won't get in trouble or have to pay me for saying NO or wanting to stop being in the project.



- ❖ You **DON'T** have to give me a reason for saying **NO** or wanting to stop from taking part in the project.



- ❖ But you must let me know immediately. I will **THANK YOU** for your help. I will also remind you of the free confidential support services that you can use if you need to.



- ❖ If you are not selected to progress to the interview stage, **ALL** information collected before and during the Meet and Greet session will be destroyed. If you are selected to attend the interview stage but decide to withdraw from the project at any point during the interviews, I will destroy **ALL** the interview data (your story that you shared with me in private) and not use any of it in the project.



What happens after the interviews?

- ❖ Once the interviews are finished, I will get a professional transcriber to type up the stories you shared with me on a Word document. This is only for face to face and online Zoom/Teams interviews. For Email and Google Forms interviews, I will do it myself. The transcriber and I will sign a **confidentiality agreement** to ensure the information you shared with me is kept private and confidential.
- ❖ I will then email the transcription (typed up interviews) in a Word document for you to have a look at and give me feedback.



- ❖ You will be given 7 days from the day I email you to look at the **interview transcript document** and give me feedback. You don't need to do it if you don't want to. It is your choice. *If I don't hear back from you, I will assume that you are okay for me to use what I had sent you.*



- ❖ If you need more time to give me feedback with the **interview transcript document**, you can let me know which is completely fine.



Closer to the end of the project....

- ❖ Closer to the end of the project, you will also be given the opportunity to review what I have written about your stories and the stories of others. Your feedback will help shape the final story of the project which will represent important discussions and key points that others should take note of.



- ❖ You will be given 14 days from the day I email you to look at your **final story document** on Word and give me feedback. You don't need to do it if you don't want to. It is your choice. *If I don't hear back from you, I will assume that you are okay for me to use what I had sent you.*



- ❖ If you need more time to give me feedback with the **final story document**, you can let me know which is completely fine.



I will share with you what I found out from the project...

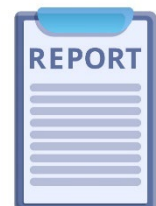
- ❖ As part of my PhD study, I will need to present the project to other researchers and university staff. Public may also attend. I will invite you to attend the talk too. I will do this online over Zoom.



- ❖ You don't have to do this if you don't want to and/or if you don't want others to know you took part in the project. It is entirely your choice.



- ❖ When the project is finished, I will also email you a short summary report about the project. You can keep this and share with others.



Is your information safe with me?

- ❖ The interview recordings, transcripts and responses will be kept safe and private on two password protected computers. One will be at university and the other one at my home. cons



- ❖ Only I will have access to the information. My supervisors or advisors won't have access to your stories.



- ❖ I will use a different name to hide your identity when writing about your story in the project and when sharing it with others. You will help me find a good fake name for you. This will be fun!



- ❖ The interview recordings, transcripts and responses will be kept for at least five years.



- ❖ After five years, I will delete all your information that you shared with me privately.

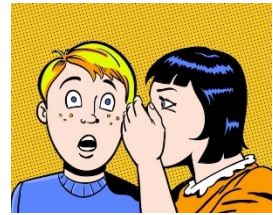


- ❖ If and when I use your stories for future projects such as publications (e.g. journal articles, books, etc.), in talks (e.g. conferences, etc.) and on my personal 'YouTube and podcast channel', to raise awareness and education about the needs of autistic gay or pansexual men (cis or trans) and/or non-binary people, they will be de-identified. That means, your name won't be used, and no one will know it was you who said it.



Disclosure of illegal activity

- ❖ I am a mandatory notifier. I may tell others about you if you tell me something that is illegal or something that is making you or others feel unsafe and worried.



I will THANK YOU for your time and help with the project

- ❖ If you decide to take part in the project, I will THANK YOU for your time and helping me with the project.



- ❖ I will give you a Coles Gift Prepaid Credit Card worth \$150.00 after we finish with the interviews. You can use this card like a debit card at any store of your choice. If we meet face to face, I will give the gift card in person. If we meet online, I will post the gift card to you.



About me and my supervisors



Chief Researcher

Vemel (Resh) Ramasamy
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Flinders University
Adelaide South Australia
Tel: **0450 671 252**
Email: resh.ramasamy@flinders.edu.au
Pronouns: he/him or they/their

I am an autistic Indian gay cis man and non-binary person. I am a university lecturer, developmental educator (disability specialist) and specialist support coordinator, author and human and animal rights activist. I am passionate about making a difference in the lives of those oppressed by actively lobbying for justice and equity. Some of my current humanitarian work include offering free human rights education to over 60 countries on the Global Forum for Teacher Educator virtually and working with NDIS participants as a Developmental Educator. My work is informed by my ongoing experiences dealing with systemic discrimination and oppression and am a role model to many queer and disabled people.



Second Supervisor

Dr. Jessie Shipman
Social Health Sciences
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Flinders University
Adelaide South Australia
Tel: 8201 7646
Email: jessie.shipman@flinders.edu.au
Pronouns: she/her or they/their

Dr. Jessie Shipman is a medical sociologist from the UK. Jessie teaches in Health Sciences, working with students to develop knowledge and skills in social analysis of health, inclusive and reflective practices, and qualitative research methods. Her main research interests are reproductive justice, families and relationships across the lifespan, embodiment, empowerment, intersectionality, and wellbeing in Higher Education. Jessie is also a fierce gender and sexual diverse (LGBT+ equivalent) ally and supporter.

Second Supervisor

Dr. Fiona Rillotta
Disability and Community Inclusions
College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Flinders University
Adelaide South Australia
Tel: 8201 2198
Email: fiona.rillotta@flinders.edu.au
Pronouns: she/her



Dr. Fiona Rillotta is a Senior Lecturer in Disability and Community Inclusion and the Course Coordinator for the Bachelor of Disability and Community Inclusion in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Fiona's research includes inclusive university for people with intellectual disability; enhancing social networks of adults with intellectual disability; family quality of life; and attitudes towards intellectual disability. She has been working with people with disabilities of various ages in various settings for almost 20 years.

Third Supervisor

Dr. Paul Withers
Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust
United Kingdom
Email: paul.withers2@merseycare.nhs.uk
Pronouns: he/him



Dr. Paul Withers is a clinical psychologist working at the Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust in UK. He works with people with an intellectual disability (ID) and/or autism since 1991. Paul has supported the development of community and hospital-based support and advocacy groups for LGBT+ people with ID. He collaborates with people with ID to publish research about important matters. Paul also identifies as a gay man and a huge supporter and role model to other queer individuals.



Fourth Supervisor

Dr. Alex Toft

Research Fellow

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families

School of Social Sciences

Nottingham Trent University

Email: alexander.toft@ntu.ac.uk

Pronouns: he/him

Dr. Alex Toft is a research fellow in the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families at Nottingham Trent University based in UK. His research focuses upon sexuality, gender, disability, spirituality and identity. Alex has published extensively in the area of queer and disability. He is currently one of the leading scholars in this research area. Alex has worked on projects funded by organisations such as NSPCC and the Fundamental Rights Agency (EU). He recently received British Academy funding to conduct research exploring how young disabled LGBT+ people negotiate their identities.

Ethics Committee Approval

Flinders University's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved the project (**project number 4307**).

- ❖ If you have any questions about the project, please speak to me.
- ❖ Or you can also speak to Dr. Fiona Rillotta or Dr. Jessie Shipman.
- ❖ If you have any complaints or worries about the way I am doing the research, you may contact the Human Research Ethics Officers by calling them on 08 8201 2543 or emailing them at: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au





Thank you for taking the time to read the Participant Information Sheet document.

If you would like to be involved in the project,

please contact me, (Resh) by texting or phoning
on **0450 671 252** (number used only for PhD project)



You can also email me to let me know you are interested in
the project. My email is resh.ramasamy@flinders.edu.au

