

## **Participation information sheet**

### **Research – Assessing the “inner truth” of individuals**

We ask you to take part in this research that examines how public officials conducting asylum interviews try to objectively evaluate things that are difficult to assess, such as the sexual orientation or gender identity of an individual. The study focuses on both the asylum seekers being evaluated and the officials conducting the evaluations. We are interested in how both parties experience and view these challenging processes. The results will promote transparency in decision-making and in evaluation of asylum seekers. This is necessary in order to develop ethically acceptable evaluation criteria. After reading this information sheet, you will have the opportunity to ask more questions about the study. After this, you will be asked to sign a consent form confirming your participation in the study.

There is no reward for participating in the study. Your decision to participate, will not affect the asylum-seeking process.

The study will commence in spring 2022, and end during the summer of 2024 at the earliest. The project may last few years longer if we receive further funding. During the project, we will interview people participating in the evaluation processes and collect other data related to the evaluation proceedings. These include official guidelines and audio recordings of asylum interviews.

### **How will the data be collected?**

The interview will last from 1 to 2 hours, and it can be conducted in a location convenient for you (e.g., at the university or at your home) at a time suitable for you. During the interview, we will ask you questions and take notes based on your answers. If you give us consent, the interview will also be recorded. The interview will later be transcribed as a text document.

We would also like to see documents from the asylum interviews if you consent to share them with us. We are also interested in record potential asylum interviews. We can agree on the extent of your participation during the research interview. You do not have to commit to anything in advance.

We are happy to give you more information about the study during the interview. Participation is entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. If you withdraw from the study, we will destroy all data concerning you, if you so wish.

## **Benefits and risks for participating in the study**

There are no immediate benefits for participating in the study. However, the results of the study can be used to develop ethical evaluation practices and promote informed social debate. They can also help to bring forward problems faced by the people taking part in the evaluation process.

Discussing the topics may feel difficult and distressing. You can always choose not to answer difficult questions or interrupt the study.

## **Confidentiality, processing and storing data**

Your personal data will be treated confidentially in accordance with The EU Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act of Finland.

Written texts may include direct quotations from your speech. The texts will not include any information from which you can be identified. They will not include personal details regarding you or your family, such as names, places of residence, schools, or workplaces. The texts will refer to you either without a name or using a pseudonym. All the notes and recordings collected during the interview will be used only by the research group. The research group includes Valtteri Vähä-Savo, Johanna Hiitola and Venla Koivuluhta. More researchers may be recruited to the research group during the project. In addition, research assistants will transcribe the audio recordings into text files.

The researchers have a duty to protect the privacy of the research participants and to keep their information confidential. We are not permitted to disclose any information gathered during the study in a way that could lead to the participants being identified. The people handling the data will sign a data processing agreement, which will require them to process the data in an ethical and secure manner. Your personal data will not be released to people outside the research group. The audio recordings will be destroyed after they have been transcribed as text files. All the data will be stored in a password protected network drive at the University of Tampere and the University of Oulu.

## **Research funding**

The research project is funded by the Kone Foundation.

We will be happy to answer any questions you might have regarding the study. Information regarding the study can be found on the project website:

<https://innertruthevaluation.com/>

## **Research group**

Valtteri Vähä-Savo  
University of Tampere  
Kalevantie 4, 33100 Tampere  
050-3298821  
[valtteri.vaha-savo@tuni.fi](mailto:valtteri.vaha-savo@tuni.fi)

Venla Koivuluhta  
University of Tampere  
Kalevantie 4, 33100 Tampere  
050-4306888  
[venla.koivuluhta@tuni.fi](mailto:venla.koivuluhta@tuni.fi)

Johanna Hiitola  
University of Oulu  
Pentti Kaiteran Katu 1, 90014 Oulu  
02-94483748  
[johanna.hiitola@oulu.fi](mailto:johanna.hiitola@oulu.fi)