

University of Georgia
Consent Form for On-the-Spot Interviews
Citizens' Views on Challenges to Democracy: Evidence from the U.S.

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) below if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

We are doing research on individuals' opinions and views on the state of democracy in the U.S. Citizen participation is key for a functioning democracy, and it is therefore important to understand how people such as yourself think about and participate in politics.

We are looking to speak with U.S. residents at least 18 years of age.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in an in-person interview.

This interview will take 15-25 minutes. With your consent, we will audio-record the interview. With your permission, we will also collect your contact information, such as your phone number and email address, so that we can get in touch with you during the study and keep a record of participation for all study participants. There is a possibility that we will contact you within about a year to request a follow-up interview, which will take 45-60 minutes.

Participation is voluntary. You can refuse to take part or stop at any time without penalty. Your decision to refuse or withdraw will not affect any benefits that you are otherwise entitled to. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your participation in other programs or future research projects.

During the interview, you will be asked about your views on important challenges facing your community and the country, what you consider to be an appropriate response to these challenges, and your thoughts on the potential for political conflict in the future. There are questions that may make you uncomfortable, and you can skip these questions if you do not wish to answer them. In addition, some political conversations and perspectives in the U.S. these days may be sensitive insofar as they have the potential to negatively impact one's social reputation or employment prospects. We prioritize confidentiality and discuss below the protocols in place to protect identifiable data.

Your responses may help us understand how regular people such as yourself think about the current state of democracy in the U.S. and participate in local and national politics. There are no anticipated direct benefits for study participants.

To protect your confidentiality, research records, such as interview notes and recordings, will be labeled with study IDs that are linked to you by a separate list that includes your name and contact information. This list will be destroyed once we have finished transcribing the interviews, which will take about one year; it is important for us to keep your name and contact information so that we have a record of who has participated and in the event that we contact you to request a follow-up interview. Research records and the list of study IDs will be stored separately in password protected folders on a secure server.

With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded. The recordings are needed to transcribe the interviews for data analyses. Any identifying information will be removed from the transcript.

All study data will be stored in the same password protected folders mentioned above. Only the researchers, study staff, and university central offices and the institutional review board of the University of Georgia will have access to these files. The study staff will transcribe the recordings into a text document; this will take about one year. The recordings will then be permanently destroyed, along with the list described above that includes your full name and contact information.

The researchers will not release identifiable information to anyone other than the individuals or offices identified in the document without written consent unless required by law.

Study Incentive

As a token of appreciation for your participation, all study participants will receive a \$20 Visa electronic gift card. You will receive the gift card at the end of the interview via email. If you withdraw from the study, you are still entitled to receive the study incentive.

Withdrawal from the research study

If you decide to withdraw from the study or the investigator terminates your participation, the information that can be identified as yours will be kept as part of the study and may continue to be analyzed, unless you make a written request to remove, return, or destroy the information.

If you are interested in participating or have questions about this research, please feel free to contact Megan Turnbull at 706 542 6705 or megan.turnbull@uga.edu, or Kathleen Klaus at +46 18 471 22 79 or kathleen.klaus@pcr.uu.se. If you have any complaints or questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the IRB at 706 542 3199 or by email at IRB@uga.edu.

Please keep this letter for your records.