**Department of Science, Innovation, Technology and Entrepreneurship, Business School, University of Exeter, UK.**

**Information for Participants**

**Project title: Talking about gene drive: An exploration of language to enable understanding and deliberation in Africa, Europe, North America and Australasia.**

**Who is funding this research?** This project is supported by the Wellcome Trust, one of the world’s biggest charity foundations funding research that aims to improve human and animal health.

**Who is carrying out the research?** This research is carried out by an international research team of social scientists led by Professor Sarah Hartley, University of Exeter. The research team includes: Professor Jason Delborne, North Carolina State University, US; Dr Katie Barnhill-Dilling, North Carolina State University, US; Professor George Openjuru, Gulu University, Uganda; Dr Chris Opensen, Gulu University, Uganda; Professor Sujatha Raman, Australian National University, Australia; Professor Brigitte Nerlich, University of Nottingham; Dr Katie Ledingham, University of Exeter; and Dr Aleksandra Stelmach, University of Exeter.

**What is the study about?** This project investigates the language and communication of gene drive, a novel genetic engineering technology. The aim of the focus group is to ask secondary school teachers to explore and discuss the language used to talk about gene drive in the media and in public debates. Secondary school teachers are experts in facilitating understanding and in explaining abstract and complex concepts in an accessible language. Science teachers are experts in communicating biology, English teachers are experts in using language creatively, by drawing on analogies, metaphors, and storytelling. The findings from this focus group will inform the research which maps and assesses utility of the language used to explain gene drive across four case studies: the UK, US, Australia, and Uganda.

**Who’s participating?** Science and English secondary school teachers based in Devon.

**What will the participant have to do?** Participants will be invited to take part in a focus group discussion that will last 90 minutes and will include 6-8 secondary school teachers. We will hold two focus groups: one for science teachers and one for English teachers. The focus group will be conducted online via a digital meeting platform and participants will receive an email with a link to access the focus group. The focus group discussion will be recorded and transcribed. Before the focus group takes place, participants will be sent a short 10-minute film to watch and two short articles to read so they can familiarise themselves with basic concepts of gene drive. Prior to the focus group, the participants will be asked to sign a consent form which indicates that their participation is voluntary. In order to protect anonymity in the recording, participants will be asked to pick a pretend name that will be used during focus groups discussions instead of their real name.

**What are the benefits of participating in the study?** By participating you are helping to broaden our understanding of geographical and cultural differences in communication about gene drives, to identify potential challenges in communication and to develop an independent and shared understanding of how to talk about gene drive.

**What happens to the collected information?** Focus group discussions will be recorded and transcribed. Instead of participants’ real names, pretend names will be used in the process of transcription, analysis and handling of the data. All data from transcription will be anonymised, and later coded and analysed. Digital recordings will be destroyed once transcribed. The anonymised data will be stored in a secure place and only accessible for research purposes. The anonymised data will be kept at the University of Exeter for five years and then destroyed.

**What are the research outputs?** We will develop and publish at least one academic research paper. In all of the research outputs, participants will not be identified.

**Are there any foreseeable risks to the individual if they participate in the research?**

There are no foreseeable risks involved in the participation of this study. Individuals participating in this research will be anonymous and no identifiable personal data will be published.

**Are there any costs or inducements to taking part in the research?** There are no costs incurred to research participants, nor are there inducements to take part in this study. All participants will receive a book token worth £50 as a thank you for taking part in this research.

**Participation is voluntary, what should you do if you do not want to participate?** If you are unable to participate or do not want to participate, please inform the researcher and you will not be contacted again. Participants are able to withdraw for any reason or at any time prior to the publication of any research output.

**Researcher contact details:**

If you have any questions about this research, please contact:

Prof. Sarah Hartley (01392 723515, Sarah.Hartley@exeter.ac.uk)

**Complaint procedure**

If you have any concerns about this research, then in the first instance please contact Prof. Sarah Hartley, Sarah.Hartley@exeter.ac.uk or Dr Adrian Bailey, Chair of Business School Research Ethics Committee at the University of Exeter, A.R.Bailey@exeter.ac.uk .