



## Participant Information Sheet – Industry focus groups

### Researchers:

We are Laura Jones, Brenda Martin, Dr Phillipa Watson, and Dr Hedda Ransan-Cooper. We are researchers at the School of Engineering in the College of Engineering and Computer Science at the Australian National University.

**Project Title:** Customer-focussed distribution network capacity management

### General Outline of the Project:

- **Description and Methodology:** We are conducting research on how the electricity network can be built in ways that reflect the values of people who connect to it (particularly private individuals). This is particularly relevant now as the energy system decarbonises to mitigate climate change. There are significant changes occurring in electricity supply and it is important that we consider people's perspectives during this change. This research seeks to understand what people hold important (values) and help us understand how these can be used to create energy system management methods that better reflect these values. It will use a method called "value sensitive design". In this work we will be looking at documents and asking people in focus groups to help us understand what is important to both energy users and the energy industry. We will then use that information to build some scenarios for how the energy system might make decisions differently with consideration of energy user values. Then we will take these scenarios back to energy users in more focus groups and ask participants to reflect on them and refine them.
- **Participants:** A big part of this research is focus groups. Focus groups allow us to enhance and construct understanding collectively by talking in a group. Because you are an industry expert I am asking you to participate in one focus group that will go for 1¾ hours. You will be in a focus group composed of industry experts from different types of organisations. As experts we are interested in your experience from your position in the energy sector. We recognise though you will be speaking from your personal point of view and not on behalf of your organisation. The industry experts focus group will have between four and eight participants. We will conduct three other focus groups with a variety of energy users. We expect the total number of participants in this research to be between 16 and 32.
- **Use of Data and Feedback:** What you tell us in focus groups will be converted to text, analysed and used to report findings in a deidentified form. We will use what you tell us to understand how decisions are made in the energy system today, and how you feel processes and criteria used to make decisions could be improved. The results of this work will be shared via an end of project funding report to ECA, presentations and peer-reviewed published articles. Reports will be freely available on the [www.bsgip.com](http://www.bsgip.com) website.
- **Project Funding:** This project has received funding through a grant from Energy Consumers Australia.

### Participant Involvement:

- **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal:** We are seeking your voluntary involvement in this research. You do not have to be involved in this research. You can pull out of the research at any time. You can also request we withdraw all or part of your contributions. We will do our best to identify and withdraw data at your request. Withdrawing data from a focus group transcript can be difficult as we sometimes are not able to identify which people provided which comments. Additionally, comments in a focus



group feed later discussion and other people can base what they say on what you have said. If you want to pull out you can contact us by phone or email (listed under “queries and concerns” in this document) or tell us before or during focus groups

- **What does participation in the research entail?** Taking part in this research involves one 1 ¾ hour focus group to be held online (using a platform such as Zoom). In this focus group we will discuss what we found looking at rule change and regulatory documents and ask you whether it reflects your organisation’s decision-making processes and how it can be improved. The focus group is intended to be held in December 2022 or January 2023.
- **Location and Duration:** Research will take place online using online meeting software (such as Zoom or Teams) and online whiteboard software (such as Miro).
- **Risks:** While all focus group discussions are deidentified for any reporting or publications, there is a small risk that you could be identified in the research outputs despite our best efforts to hide your identity. While we will keep what you tell us confidential and ask other participants to do the same, we can’t guarantee that other participants won’t share what you say. We ask that you do not say anything that could harm yourself or others, or tell us anything that is confidential. If there are sensitive issues discussed, you can let us know and we will ensure this issue is treated appropriately in our reporting. You may know other participants in the focus group. While we will facilitate discussion and this is a topic that is unlikely to be distressing, there is a chance there will be conflict or disagreement. If this conflict makes you uncomfortable you can draw our attention to it, and we will steer conversation away from the topic. Alternatively, or additionally, you may choose not to participate in that part of the discussion or ask to leave the room. If you have any concerns or questions, please contact us (see Queries and Concerns section).
- **Sensitive, personal information:** It is unlikely that sensitive, personal information will be shared during the industry focus group. If sensitive information is mentioned that supports discussion in the project, we will make sure we report these points in a way that is general and not identifying. The online focus group will be video recorded using the inbuilt functions of the software platform. These recordings will be deleted at the end of the project. Additionally, focus group transcripts will be deidentified before being archived. We cannot hide your identity from other participants in the focus groups. Additionally, the project team will collect other information (such as email address or phone number) so we can contact you.
- **Benefits:** It is unlikely that you will personally benefit from this research. This work has been commissioned to help stakeholders in the energy industry make decisions in the future.
- **Implications:** Participation in the research is not an expectation of your employment or association with the research team, and your choice will not affect your relationship with any party.

### **Confidentiality:**

- Your data will be protected as far as the law allows. Unless you tell us otherwise, we will de-identify what you tell us. You will not be identifiable within published outputs unless you have selected otherwise.
- You will witness the discussion in focus groups. We ask that you maintain the confidentiality of focus group discussions. You should refrain from making statements of a confidential nature or that are defamatory of any person in the workshop environment. Also, you may know other participants in focus groups. If this occurs and means you would prefer not to participate you can leave at any time.



- There are some circumstances where we must disclose what you told us by law (for instance if someone's health or safety is at risk). We will not be discussing things where situations like this are likely to come up.
- Only the project team (listed at the top of this letter) will have access to the 'raw'(identifiable) material you provide us.

### Privacy Notice:

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at [https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP\\_010007](https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007) and it contains information about how a person can:

- Access or seek corrections to their personal information;
- Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

### Data Sharing:

Sharing of data with other researchers is becoming more common, especially for publicly funded research. Data sharing can help other researchers to independently check research conclusions and can help them to develop new ideas. The data collected as part of this project will be de-identified and may be made available to other researchers on request for the purposes of reanalysis and replication and for new analysis. We will ensure that they have ethics approval for their research, and will consider any ethical issues arising from our sharing of the data, including confidentiality.

### Data Storage:

- **Where:** In accordance with ANU Code of Research Conduct, identifiable data will only be stored on ANU computers and data storage. Recordings and transcripts that have identifiable material will be password protected and encrypted. Printouts with your details will be stored in a secure and locked location at the ANU. ECA may access de-identified data if required for auditing our performance in this research.
- **How long:** All data will be retained and securely stored for at least five years following publications arising from the research.
- **Handling of Data following the required storage period:** After the storage period, all identifying details will be removed from the data and the non-identified data may be archived at the Australian Data Archive ([www.ada.edu.au](http://www.ada.edu.au)) for use in later research, including potentially by other researchers.

### Queries and Concerns:

- **Contact Details for More Information:** If you require more information please get in touch with Laura Jones at mobile 0419 386 270, email [laura.jones@anu.edu.au](mailto:laura.jones@anu.edu.au) or Phillipa Watson on 02 6125 9062, email [phillipa.watson@anu.edu.au](mailto:phillipa.watson@anu.edu.au)

### Ethics Committee Clearance:

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2022/499). If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

Ethics Manager  
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee



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