



Project Title

Academic Blogging and the Public Humanities in the Twenty-First-Century Knowledge Economy

Research team contact details

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Description

This project aims to investigate the influence of academic blogging on the twenty-first-century knowledge economy. Building on a developing literature about the position of academic blogging in the scholarly publishing landscape, this project is significant as the first mixed-methods study of its kind. Expected outcomes include greater understanding of the use and impact of academic blogs across the three core domains of a university's mission: teaching, research, and public engagement.

This project is being undertaken as part of a UniSQ Research Capacity Building Grant. This project therefore has ethics approval from the University of Southern Queensland {ETH2023-0103}.

The purpose of this project is to:

- Develop an evidence-based understanding of the status and value of academic blogging in the knowledge economy;
- Generate data through a survey, interviews, documentary analysis, and data analysis; and
- Strengthen national and international networks with key stakeholders: blog authors, readers, and supporters; and policymakers.

Participation

Participation in this project will involve partaking in an interview which will take approximately 60 minutes.

Questions will include:

Do you engage with academic blogging? If so, how and why? If you blog yourself, what are you doing it for?

The increased uptake and visibility of academic blogging during the 2010s generated an important new conceptual schema: Patrick Dunleavy outlines that *solo blogging* is undertaken by an individual author or co-authors and published on a personal website; *collaborative blogs* are run by an authorial team who generate most of the content; and *multi-author blogs* are led by an editorial team who commission blogs by multiple authors (Dunleavy, 2014). What is your experience of solo blogging versus collaborative blogging or multi-author blogging?

Have you ever cited any blog – including either academic or non-academic blogs – in your scholarly work? Why?

Your participation in this project is entirely voluntary. If you do not wish to take part, you are not obliged to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. You may also request that any data collected about you be withdrawn and confidentially destroyed.

To participate in this interview, all participants must be over 18 years of age. Participants must be academics employed on a casual, fixed-term, or full-time basis at a university within the past ten years. This includes current Higher Degree by Research (HDR; PhD or Masters) students. Participants must include self-identified readers, authors, and/or editors of academic blogs.

Participation in this project is entirely voluntary. A participant's decision about whether to take part in the survey or not will in no way impact their current or future relationship with the University of Southern Queensland and/or their current or future employer.

Participants will have the opportunity to review the transcript of their interview. Participants will be given two weeks to respond regarding the accuracy of their interview's transcript.

If you do wish to withdraw from this project or withdraw data collected about yourself, please contact the Research Team (contact details at the top of this form).

Expected benefits

It is expected that this project and its findings about academic blogging will not directly benefit interview participants professionally.

This project will advance knowledge about the influence of multi-author academic blogging upon the university's mission of teaching, research, and public engagement. By developing a framework for how academic blogging can be most used effectively, this project will empirically investigate the role of academic blogs in communicating scholarly research and supporting student learning by sharing advanced academic theories for a wider readership. It will also assess the impact of academic blogs in the knowledge translation of academic research into media, policy, advocacy, and the community.

These findings will be of interest to academics seeking to make academic blogging part of the core public-facing outputs of research projects. Benefits include insight into the function of academic blogging at a juncture when the importance of public-facing research outputs is increasingly recognised. This project may also benefit the Australian Women's History Network.

It is appropriate to acknowledge the time a research participant contributes to a research project (UniSQ, 2022). All interview participants will therefore be offered a book voucher in acknowledgement of their contribution. (Note: Interview participants are welcome to decline this acknowledgement of their contribution should they wish.) As per UniSQ's *Guidelines for the Giving of Prizes as Incentives for Research Participation in a Research Activity*, this incentive will be beneath \$5,000.00, not perishable, not money, not prohibited, and given within Australia (UniSQ, 2022).

The interview participants who accept an acknowledgement of their contribution will be given a \$50.00 book voucher from Monash University Publishing. These interview participants will be sent the \$50.00 book voucher in the weeks following their interview.

References

National Health and Medical Research Council [NHMRC] (2007, updated 2018). *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*. Canberra: Australian Research Council and Universities Australia.
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/national-statement-ethical-conduct-human-research-2007-updated-2018>

University of Southern Queensland [UniSQ] (2022). *Guidelines for the Giving of Prizes as Incentives for Research Participation in a Research Activity*. Toowoomba: University of Southern Queensland.
<https://www.unisq.edu.au/current-students/academic/higher-degree-by-research-students/conducting-research/human-ethics/resources>

Risks

By participating in the interview, there are no anticipated risks beyond normal day-to-day living.

In the unlikely event that this interview causes distress or adverse outcomes, please consider reaching out to UniSQ's Counselling and Wellness services or Beyond Blue for support:

UniSQ Counselling and Wellness: <https://www.unisq.edu.au/current-students/support/counselling>

Beyond Blue: <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Interview participants may participate in this interview on the basis of complete pseudonymity (i.e., deidentified and presented in a non-identifiable manner) as per social science research methods. Alternatively, interview participants may participate in this interview as an oral history, following oral history research methods where identity may be re-identifiable.

Privacy and confidentiality

All comments and responses are confidential unless required by law.

All interviews will take place via Zoom. One interview participant and one member of the Research Team (the Principal Investigator) will be in attendance at all Zoom interviews. The interviews will be recorded using Zoom, and a transcript of the interview will be generated from the recording. The Project Officer, who will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the transcripts, will also be in attendance at some of the Zoom interviews.

The interview will be recorded for the purposes of transcription. It is possible to participate in the project without a video recording; however, it is not possible to participate in the project without an audio recording. The recording will not be used for any other purpose beyond data collection.

Interview participants may request a copy of the interview transcript for review and endorsement of accuracy prior to its inclusion in the project data. A timeframe of two weeks will be given to interview participants to review and request any changes to the transcript before the data is included in the project for analysis.

Access to the recording will be limited to the Research Team listed above. The Project Officer will be primarily responsible for checking the accuracy of the automatic Zoom transcription and amending the transcription as required.

The data will only be accessible to the Research Team listed above. The data will be accessible and reusable to this Research Team for future research purposes (i.e., for similar research projects). The data will be stored and shared in the same format as per the preference selected on the participant's consent form, which may be non-identifiable, re-identifiable, or identifiable.

Following the conclusion of the research project, participants will be provided with an executive summary of results. Participants will also be advised about scholarly outputs from the research project. The email address securely provided by participants will be used to communicate these results.

This research is funded with the generous support of a 2023 UniSQ Research Capacity Building Grant.

Any data collected as a part of this project will be stored securely, as per University of Southern Queensland's Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure.

Consent to participate

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (enclosed) to confirm your agreement to participate in this project. Please return your signed consent form to a member of the Research team prior to participating in your interview.

Participants can withdraw their participation at any point during (or after) the interview without any adverse or negative implications.

Questions

Please refer to the Research team contact details at the top of the form to have any questions answered or to request further information about this project.

Concerns or complaints

If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the project, you may contact the University of Southern Queensland, Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics on +61 7 4631 1839 or email researchintegrity@usq.edu.au. The Manager of Research Integrity and Ethics is not connected with the research project and can address your concern in an unbiased manner.

Thank you for taking the time to help with this research project. Please keep this document for your information.