



Black Women Working in the Digital Platform Economy

Letter of Information

Hello, I am part of a research team that is currently researching Black Women's experiences of working via online platforms the University of Toronto in Canada. Increasing numbers of people around the world are turning to online platforms, to generate incomes. Popular accounts of this trend celebrate women for their self-reliance and ability to create money-making opportunities instead of relying on traditional forms of formal employment. Yet, studies also point to the exploitative nature on work via online platforms, especially for black women. As someone who has worked via online platforms, we would really like to hear more about the circumstances that brought you to the world of digitally mediated platform work, and your thoughts about the benefits and costs of this sort of work.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. The interview should last no more than 45 minutes will be scheduled at a time during the day that is convenient for you. Should you agree to participate in this research we will compensate you with \$CAD 30 in recognition of your time and effort. If you do not complete the entire interview, you will still be compensated at a pro-rated amount based on the proportion of your time spent during the interview. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to skip any questions or stop the interview at any point. You also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences and that any data collected up to that point will be erased if you request.

All information shared during the interview will be kept confidential and any identifying details, such as names or specific locations, will be omitted or altered in the published findings. Your personal information will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team and any information that might allow someone to guess your identity will also be removed in publications that arise from this research.

Once the research is completed, all identifiable data will be destroyed, and anonymized data will be stored securely for seven years. The data collected will be stored securely on encrypted digital devices that will be accessible only to the research team. The University of Toronto Research Ethics Board (REB) may also request access to the study data to ensure that as researcher(s) we are meeting our ethical obligations in conducting this research. The REB is bound by confidentiality and will not disclose any personal information.

There are minimal risks involved in participating in this study, but there is a slight possibility that some of the questions I ask might cause discomfort or bring to mind upsetting issues. Please know that if this were to happen you can decline to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer, or you can request that the interview can be stopped. Should you wish, we can provide you with information on the location of support services. Although I cannot ensure any direct benefits to you, your contribution will contribute to future policies and protections for people who work via online platforms.

Any physical material e.g. notebooks or consent forms collected during the research will be kept in a locked cabinet for 7 years at the University of Toronto. We will also keep all digital scripts, notes, surveys, and audio files from these sessions in a password and firewall-protected file that only Beverley Mullings can access. If you wish to withdraw the data collected about you, you will have a year to do so.

Please feel free to ask questions about the research if you have any. I will be happy to explain anything in greater detail if you wish. I can be contacted at telephone number (416) 978 2935. If you have questions about your rights as a participant in this study, you may direct them to the Research Oversight and Compliance Office – Human Research Ethics Program at ethics.review@utoronto.ca or 416-946-3273