

Tulane University Human Research Protection Office
Social/Behavioral IRB
Consent Script for Participation in a Research Study
*Alliances Across Borders: Transnational Environmental Justice Movements Against Formosa
Plastics*

What is the research study and why is it being done?

You are invited to participate in undergraduate thesis research on the international interactions between environmental activists opposing Formosa Plastics Corporation. You are being asked to participate in this research study because understanding the strengths and limitations of transnational alliances will make environmental activism against Formosa Plastics and other corporations more effective in the future. A total number of about 20 activists in Taiwan will participate in the study, and if further data is needed, more activists will be interviewed in the United States.

What will you do if you participate in the study?

You will be asked to participate in one or multiple 30- to 45-minute interviews with a student researcher, Zoe Friese (静姝). You will first need to look over this information sheet to determine whether you are interested in participating in this research. Then, through email or Facebook Messenger, you can coordinate an in-person or virtual meeting time. Interviews may happen in Chinese or English depending on your preference. In-person interviews may occur in a public or private space that is convenient and comfortable for you. A tea or coffee shop, restaurant, public park, or private meeting room are all potential options depending on what is best for your needs.

In the interview, Zoe will review the information stated in this information sheet and any questions you may have. If you have any concerns regarding this study, do not hesitate to ask about them. Once all issues are addressed, Zoe will ask for your verbal consent to participate in this study, and she will begin asking you interview questions regarding your background in environmental activism and thoughts on transnational activist communities. Topics of discussion will include what you know about environmental activism against Formosa Plastics abroad, how you may currently communicate or collaborate with activists abroad, and potential barriers to these interactions. You are also welcome to talk about other related topics based on your personal interests and experiences. Interviews will not be audio recorded. If time runs out and you are still interested in discussing these topics, you may schedule another meeting with Zoe to continue talking. The duration of your participation is up to you, and no meetings are required or mandatory.

In the case that several activists from one group, community, or organization are interested in participating in an interview, you may be asked to join a small focus group rather than a one-on-one interview. You may also be asked whether an additional environmental justice researcher, Tim Schütz, can join the interview or focus group. The procedure would otherwise remain the same. This is not required, and you may elect for a one-on-one interview instead if that makes you more comfortable.

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What are the possible risks from being in the study?

The risks associated with this study are potential loss of privacy or a breach of confidentiality. The research will take several precautions to ensure that participants' information is protected, but there is always a chance that this information maybe be unintentionally leaked or disclosed. In addition, interviews that occur in public spaces may allow others to overhear conversations regarding environmental organizing. Topics of discussion are not inherently sensitive, but participants may feel embarrassed or uncomfortable if their personal opinions are revealed to others. You will not be asked to discuss any upsetting events or memories involving environmental organizing, but if you choose to, then this may also result in feelings of discomfort.

There is a greater risk of loss of confidentiality when participating in a focus group. All participants of the focus group will be asked to keeping topics of conversation confidential, but participants may still disclose information shared during the focus group to others. Keep this in mind when deciding whether to participate in a focus group.

The student researcher Zoe will take steps to ensure there is a reduced risk of loss of privacy or confidentiality. She will ensure that the interview takes place in a setting where you are comfortable, whether that be a public space of low-foot traffic, a private meeting room, or a virtual meeting. A public space has an inherently higher risk of others overhearing the conversation, so keep this in mind while deciding on where to meet for an interview. You also do not need to answer any question that you do not want to answer, and you are welcome to stop participating in the interview or focus group at any time. To protect your identity, Zoe will not record your name or the name of associated activist organizations directly in written notes from the interview.

What are the possible benefits from being in the study?

The benefits which may reasonably be expected to result from this study are greater knowledge on how to form effective environmental advocacy networks. The insights of this research, which are specific to the communities that are participating in interviews, can provide guidance for future practices that are more successful. Other anticipated benefits include the participants' greater understanding of other communities affected by Formosa Plastics and the potential for meaningful collaborations. We cannot and do not guarantee or promise that you will receive any benefits from this study. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your employment or activism work.

If you take part in this study, how will we protect your privacy?

If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue

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participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The alternative is not to participate. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions.

The results of this research study may be presented at scientific or professional meetings or published in scientific journals. The results may also be published in a virtual archive called “Archiving Formosa Plastics,” on the Disaster STS platform. Published materials may include field notes, analytic annotations, essay writing, grey literature, or public documents encountered during research. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study. Any published materials will be carefully crafted so that research participants cannot be directly or indirectly identified from their contents. Materials in the archive may be utilized by other researchers or activists to conduct further projects on improving activist efforts.

Will you be paid to take part in the study?

You will receive a 250 NTD Yoyo Card for completing at least one interview or focus group. This payment will also cover any transportation costs associated with an in-person interview. If you do not complete at least one interview, you will not receive this payment.

What if you have questions or concerns about the study?

Take as much time as you like before you decide to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, whether before or after agreeing to participate, you can call or text the study Principal Investigator, Zoe Friese (静妹), by the Line App at @zoemiriam or by phone at +1 602-321-6346. You can also call the Faculty Advisor, Dr. Christopher Oliver, at +1 504-865-5541. You can call about any matter having to do with the study, including complaints or questions about your rights as a study participant.

If you want to speak with someone who is not directly involved in the study, you may call the Tulane University Human Research Protection Office at +1 (504) 988-2665 or email irbmain@tulane.edu.

Consent

Please keep a copy of this document for your records. Zoe will also provide a copy for you if you meet for an in-person meeting.

If you agree to participate in this research, please indicate this during your in-person or virtual meeting.