

# Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced: 07/08/2024

## Project Title

**24/199 Digital literacy and competencies for Human Resource Management:  
Understanding the current state in Aotearoa**

## An Invitation

Hello, we are Associate Professor Marcus Ho, Dr Paulette Brazzale and Dr Irene Ryan from Auckland University of Technology. We are reaching out to invite you to participate in our research study, which focuses on understanding the role of HRM and HR professionals in the context of digital transformation. We want to emphasise that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any point during the data collection phase without facing any consequences. It is important to note that your participation as an interviewee will not provide any advantages or disadvantages for you. Your insights and perspectives are highly valuable, and we appreciate your consideration in joining our study.

## What is the purpose of this research?

In this research project, we aim to explore the current knowledge, understanding, and experiences of HRM professionals in Aotearoa regarding digital technology and digital transformation. This investigation will inform the development of a HRM digital competency framework and assess the impact of this understanding on the acceptance and capacity-building of digital technologies in the workplace.

We aim to interview up to 30 HR professionals. This research aims to provide valuable insights for organisations, professional HR institutions, HR training organisations, and members of the HR profession, by enhancing their understanding of essential digital competencies for the HR profession and its functions. It will shed light on how these competencies influence employees and stakeholders, helping HR professionals navigate the digital landscape effectively and maximise the benefits of digital tools for everyone involved. By emphasising continuous knowledge enhancement and development, this research strives to strengthen the expertise of HR professionals in the field.

## How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been identified as a potential participant as an HR professional in New Zealand. You have been invited either because you were referred to by one of your colleagues or received an advertisement through your personal/professional networks.

## How do I agree to participate in this research?

To participate in this research, please complete, sign, and return the attached Consent Form via email to confirm your participation. It's important to note that your participation is voluntary, and you have the freedom to decide whether to participate. Your decision to participate or withdraw from the study will have no impact on your advantages or disadvantages. If at any point you choose to withdraw, you will be given the option of having any identifiable data associated with you removed or allowing it to be retained for analysis. However, it's important to remember that once the findings have been generated, removing your data from the study may not be feasible.

## What will happen in this research?

This study aims to gather your perspectives on HR professionals' competencies, digital competencies, and their intersection. We are interested in: What are the roles of the HR professionals and the HR function in digital transformation within both the HR function and organisations in Aotearoa? What competencies do HR professionals need to understand, utilise, and implement digital technologies in this digital transformation era? What is the current state of digital competencies for HR professionals in Aotearoa?

A member of the research team will conduct the interview and will last approximately 60 minutes, at a time convenient for you. Ideally, the interview will take place in one of the meeting rooms at AUT City or South campus. Alternatively, we can conduct the interview online through platforms like Microsoft Teams or over a phone call, depending on your access to technology. The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed by the interviewer. If the interview is conducted online, you will be asked to provide separate oral consent, which will also be recorded. Rest assured that your name and your organisation's name will not be used; pseudonyms will be used instead. The data collected from the interview will be securely stored at AUT and analysed by the researchers, Associate Professor Marcus Ho and Dr. Paulette Brazzale.

## What are the discomforts and risks?

During the interview, our focus will be on gathering your perspectives regarding the HR function, HR competencies, and digital transformation. However, it's worth noting that some participants may experience slight discomfort with certain questions as they reconcile their organisation's human resource practices and digital transformation initiatives with the actual experiences of employees or employers. It is important to acknowledge that not all participants may positively associate with the changes brought about by digital transformation in the workplace. Rest assured, you have the freedom to respond to the questions in a manner that makes you comfortable, and you may choose not to answer any question if you prefer. Limited confidentiality is guaranteed, and no information that identifies you, your organisation, or any individuals you mention will be used or disclosed to protect your identity and the data you provide. To maintain accuracy, you can review and confirm the interview transcript before it is analysed.

## How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

As noted above, we acknowledge there may be times where some of the questions could bring about slight discomfort, or there may be a possible conflict of interest due to the relationships you might have with the researchers (e.g., being members of the same networks or associations). Participants may experience emotional/psychological discomfort or embarrassment regarding their perceptions or experiences of digital transformation initiatives in their workplace. In this case, participants will be reminded that participation in the research is entirely voluntary. Interviewees may choose not to answer if they feel uncomfortable and may withdraw from the research up to a certain time after participating. In addition, a list of free services and contact details is provided below should you need further support or help following interviews:

AUT Student Counselling and Mental Health can offer three free sessions of confidential counselling support for adult participants in an AUT research project. These sessions are only available for issues that have arisen

directly because of participation in the research and are not for other general counselling needs. To access these services, you will need to:

- drop into our centre at WB203 City Campus, email [counselling@aut.ac.nz](mailto:counselling@aut.ac.nz) or call 921 9292.
- let the receptionist know that you are a research participant and provide the title of my research and my name and contact details as given in this Information Sheet.

You can find out more information about AUT counsellors and counselling on <https://www.aut.ac.nz/student-life/student-support/counselling-and-mental-health>

## What are the benefits?

**Participant:** This study aims to understand how digital transformation has impacted the knowledge and competencies expected of HR professionals. By examining the role of digital transformation in shaping HR practices, this research provides insights for managers and employees, highlighting the importance of continuous learning and development in HRM.

**Community:** This research contributes valuable insights for HR institutions, professionals, and organisations, enhancing their understanding of the digital competencies required in the HR profession. By navigating the digital landscape effectively, HR professionals can leverage digital tools to benefit employees and stakeholders.

**Researchers:** This research offers opportunities for professional growth and expertise development for the researchers involved. Through publication in reputable journals, the study can establish them as knowledgeable experts in their fields, enhancing their careers and opening doors to future opportunities in academia and beyond.

## How will my privacy be protected?

To ensure confidentiality, the names of participants will not be disclosed throughout the research process. Pseudonyms will be used whenever necessary to protect privacy. Your information and interviews will be securely stored and kept confidential. Additionally, the names of organisations or individuals will be removed and replaced with pseudonyms to maintain confidentiality.

## What are the costs of participating in this research?

Your participation in this study will require the investment of your time for the interview. I fully understand the demands of your role and will ensure that the interview is conducted efficiently, taking no more time than necessary. Based on my estimate, the interview should take approximately 60 minutes. You have the flexibility to choose the day and time that are most convenient for you. We can split the interview into two 30-minute sessions if needed to accommodate your schedule and preferences.

## What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Due to the limited timeframe to gather information for this phase of the study, you will have ten working days to confirm your participation in this study by responding to the email and returning the completed, signed consent form.

## Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

A one-to-two-page summary of the findings will be provided to you upon completion of the study via email if you have requested this on the consent form.

## What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the primary researcher, Associate Professor Marcus Ho, in writing to [marcus.ho@aut.ac.nz](mailto:marcus.ho@aut.ac.nz).

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of ATEC, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz), (+649) 921 9999 ext 6038.

## Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

### Researcher Contact Details:

Name: Associate Professor Marcus Ho

Email: [marcus.ho@aut.ac.nz](mailto:marcus.ho@aut.ac.nz)

AUT Phone: (09) 921 9999 ext. 5448

### Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Name: Dr. Paulette Brazzale

Email: [paulette.brazzale@aut.ac.nz](mailto:paulette.brazzale@aut.ac.nz)

AUT Phone: (09) 921 9999 ext. 9065

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 20/08/24, ATEC Reference number 24/199.**