

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS

Ethical Clearance Reference Number: LRS/DP-24/25-45649



Title of project

Digital Partnerships for Productivity Growth

Invitation Paragraph

I would like to invite you to participate in this survey that forms part of a research project funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) through The Productivity Institute. Before you decide whether you want to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what your participation will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of the study is to explore the role of partnerships in enabling wider digital transformation. To this end, we will investigate how digital technology providers and manufacturing firms collaborate to share knowledge and develop skills for digitalisation. Our goal is to enhance understanding of these partnerships and create practical guidelines for managers. These will help manufacturing businesses adopt and benefit from new technologies, while also enabling digital technology providers to develop successful relationships with their customers.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You are being invited to participate in this project because you work for a company that is based in the UK, and its main economic activity is listed on Companies House under category C (Manufacturing) in the list of UK SIC codes. Your company has adopted at least one digital technology, with this adoption being enabled by an external digital technology provider. Within your company, you hold a role directly involved in decisions regarding the adoption and implementation of this digital technology.

What will happen if I take part?

If you agree to take part, you will be asked to complete a survey containing questions about your company's current use of digital technologies and the relationship with your most important digital technology provider.

The survey will take approximately 5–10 minutes to complete, and you will only be asked to complete it once. Examples of themes covered in the questions include:

- Which digital technologies your company has adopted from an external digital technology provider, such as cloud computing, enterprise software (ERP, CRM, CAD), big data, AI/ML, IoT, robotics, blockchain, automation, and 3D printing
- The knowledge and technology transfer occurred through the relationship with your most important digital technology provider
- The main outcomes of the relationship with your most important digital technology provider

The information you provide will be used to better understand how manufacturing firms work with digital technology providers, and how such partnerships contribute to skills development and business performance.

Company details will be visible to the survey agency exclusively for the initial processing of the information, after which they will be completely anonymised. The survey agency will send the data to the research team in a fully anonymised form.

Neither your name nor the name of your company will be included in final data files, reports, or publications. Results will only be presented in aggregated form in the final outputs to ensure anonymity.

Do I have to take part?

Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you wish to, and choosing not to participate will not disadvantage you in any way. If you agree to take part, you will be asked to provide your consent by confirming that you have read and understood the information provided and that you agree for your data to be used for the purposes explained.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable risks beyond those encountered in everyday life when completing a questionnaire.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Participants will not be monetarily compensated for their participation in this project. However, your participation will help produce informed guidance for manufacturing firms to support them in their digital transformation journey.

Data handling and confidentiality

King's College London is the Sponsor of this research and is responsible for looking after your information.

We will need to use information from you for this research project. The research team and an authorised third-party survey agency will use this information to do the research or to check your records to make sure that the research is being done properly.

Your data will be processed in compliance with UK data protection laws, including the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Categories of Personal Data	To identify a list of suitable respondents, we will collect the name and telephone number of your company, your name, job title and e-mail address. However, it will not be possible to identify you from the completed questionnaire. Your responses will be linked to an online identifier associated with your company exclusively for the initial processing of the data, after which they will be completely anonymised.
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Data Storage	The anonymised data will be stored securely on King's College London's OneDrive and it will be accessible only to the research team.
Data Sharing	The researchers will download a list of suitable respondents from the FAME database owned by Moody's Analytics. The list will be shared with an authorised third-party external survey agency to administer the survey. After completion of the survey, company details will be visible to the survey agency exclusively for the initial processing of the information, after which they will be completely anonymised. The survey agency will send the final data to the research team in a fully anonymised form.
International Data Sharing	The data will not be shared outside the UK.
Data Retention	The anonymised data will be retained until 31 December 2034 in line with the College's research records retention schedule.
Anonymity in Research Outputs	Participants and company affiliations will remain completely anonymous in research outputs, as data will only be analysed and presented in aggregated form.
Archiving/Future Use	The anonymised data will be archived using King's College London's OneDrive for future research use.

Further information on how King's processes research data can be found at:

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

Please contact the research team if you require further information on data processing or a printed version of the webpage link above.

What if I change my mind about taking part?

You are free to withdraw at any point during completion of the survey, without giving a reason, and withdrawing will not affect you in any way. However, once you have submitted the survey, it will no longer be possible to withdraw because the data will have been committed to the final analysis.

How is the project being funded?

This study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) through The Productivity Institute: <https://www.productivity.ac.uk/>

What will happen to the results of the project?

The results of the study will be analysed and presented in the form of research reports and academic journal articles. Findings will also be shared with external stakeholders through workshops, forums, policy briefings, and academic conferences to maximise dissemination and impact.

All publications and presentations will use fully anonymised data. Neither individual participants nor their companies will be identifiable in any outputs. The anonymised dataset will not be made publicly available.

Who should I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or require more information about this project, please contact me using the following contact details:

Dr Claudia Vecciolini
Lecturer in Entrepreneurship and Innovation
King's Business School
claudia.vecciolini@kcl.ac.uk

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong?

If this project has harmed you in any way, or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the project you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information:

The Chair of the E&B REP
rec@kcl.ac.uk

Thank you for reading this information sheet and for considering taking part in this research.