

School of Computer Science**#BritainBreathing: Using citizen science to survey the
incidence of seasonal allergy symptoms**

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

The #BritainBreathing Team, who are Dr Markel Vigo*, Dr Caroline Jay, Dr Sheena Cruickshank, Dr Lamiece Hassan and Prof Andy Brass (all at The University of Manchester).

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Title of the research.

#BritainBreathing: Using citizen science to map the incidence of seasonal allergy symptoms

Why have I been chosen?

I am inviting anyone who is computer literate to download the app and complete the online questionnaire if they want to. Under 16s should obtain permission from a parent/guardian.

What would I be asked to do if I take part?

You will first need to download the free #BritainBreathing app to your phone. Currently the app is only available on the Android operating system but we hope to expand to iOS soon. Your phone will also ask if you want location tracking enabled – please allow this. It means that we can match your symptoms to what conditions are like in the area you are (e.g. weather, pollen levels, pollution levels).

Once downloaded, you will need to fill out a short questionnaire giving basic details about you (year of birth, gender and allergy type).

You can then start entering data on the app. You will be asked to record how your allergy symptoms are currently affecting your eyes, nose and breathing. The app has been designed to be as simple as possible to use. Entering the data should take less than one minute to complete each time you do it. For best results, we recommend that you aim to enter data at least daily.

However, you can enter data as often, or as little, as you like. Once you start entering data, you will be able to view a series of graphs to see how your symptoms change over time.

What happens to the data collected?

By downloading and using the app, you agree to share your data with researchers as part of the #BritainBreathing research project. Only anonymous data will be collected and the data will never be linked back to you. All electronic data are stored securely at The University of Manchester and are accessible only to researchers.

How is confidentiality maintained?

Only anonymous data will be collected and the data will never be linked back to you. We do not ask for names and/or any other information that may identify individuals. Furthermore, we will only use your approximate location at postcode district level (i.e. the first part e.g. M14) with the level of detail limited to 500 metres for mapping and analysis purposes. Therefore no one will be able to recognize who the data belongs to.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

You will not be paid for participating in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

The questionnaire will take less than one minute to complete each time you use the app.

Where will the research be conducted?

You can complete the online questionnaire via the app at any time or place you like. Data analysis will be conducted at The University of Manchester.

What if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you can download the app and begin to enter data. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

On the project website, we soon hope to launch a national map where you can see how people around the UK are experiencing allergy symptoms on any given day.

The outcomes of the research will be published in technical reports and/or conference/journal papers. If you visit the website <http://www.britainbreathing.org/> and provide your email address to

receive updates, we will send you regular emails about progress with the project, including any reports or publications we produce about scientific findings.

Contact for further information.

For further information, please contact me (details above).

What if something goes wrong?

If a participant wants to make a formal complaint about the conduct of the research they should contact the Head of the Research Office, Christie Building, University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL