

INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS*Ethical Clearance Reference Number: HR/DP-23/24-40452***YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET****Title of project: Advancing emotional and physiological safety in conference settings.**

Invitation Paragraph You are invited to take part in this research project, which is being conducted by the [Violence Abuse and Mental Health Network](#) (VAMHN). 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. Contact us (vamhn@kcl.ac.uk) if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of the project? The purpose of the study is to develop guidelines and recommendations to support the emotional and physiological safety and wellbeing among researchers attending conferences that address violence and abuse. We are seeking to understand (1) the emotional and physiological impact of attending these conferences; (2) researchers' views on the availability and use of measures that could support attendees' emotional and physiological safety and wellbeing at conferences; and (3) what can be done to help support attendees' emotional safety and wellbeing.

Why have I been invited to take part? You are being invited to participate in this study because you have current or previous experience of conducting research (either as a student, a staff member, or as a self-employed/freelance researcher) and of attending an academic or research conference that included content on violence and abuse. Please note that you must be aged 18 years or older and proficient in English to take part in the study.

What will happen if I take part? If you agree to take part you will take part in an online focus group with up to six other researchers who have experience of attending conferences that included content on violence and abuse. The focus group will take place on Zoom and will be scheduled for up to 90 minutes. To protect the confidentiality of your information and that of the other participants, you will be asked to join the group from a private room. Unfortunately, we cannot offer payment for taking part in the research.

During the focus group we will ask you about your experiences of attending conferences that included content on violence and abuse, what measures were in place before, during, and after the conference to support your emotional safety and wellbeing, what other support you might have found helpful, and the positive and negative impacts of attending. All questions are optional. You can access a PDF copy of the topic guide [here](#) if you would like to view the questions before deciding whether to take part.

Do I have to take part? Participation is completely voluntary. You should only take part if you want to and choosing not to take part will not disadvantage you in any way. Once you have read the information sheet, please contact us if you have any questions that will help you make a decision about taking part. If you decide to take part we will ask you to sign a consent form and you will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

What are the possible risks of taking part? During the focus group you will be asked about your experiences of attending conferences that included content on violence and abuse and the positive and negative impacts that attendance had. Answering these questions might bring up upsetting memories or feelings. Please only take part in the research if you feel safe and emotionally able to do so. If there are questions you do not want to answer, you can choose not to do so: all questions are optional. If you do feel distressed, some suggested sources of support are below.

It is possible that you may know other people participating in the focus group. Also, although we ask all participants to treat the information shared within the focus group as confidential, we cannot guarantee that this request will be respected. Please do not discuss anything in the focus group that you would not be happy for other people who know you professionally or personally knowing. A facility will be provided for you to speak privately with the researcher after the conclusion of the focus group if there is anything you would like to share with us confidentially.

Samaritans: Free to call service 24 hours a day, call them on 116 123.

Shout: If you would prefer not to talk but want some mental health support you can text SHOUT to 85258. Shout officers a confidential 24/7 text service providing support if you are in crisis and need immediate help.

NAPAC: NAPAC supports people who have experienced violence and abuse in childhood. Their support line is open 10am-4pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and from 2pm-9pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays. They also offer support by email: support@napac.org.uk

Childline: Childline is there to help anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Whether it's something big or small, their trained counsellors are there to support you. You can call Childline for free anytime, day or night, on 0800 1111 or access support and advice via their website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/>

Further information about sources of support can be found on the Survivors Voices website at <https://www.survivorsvoices.org/support/>

Data handling and confidentiality: Your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection law (including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018). Focus groups will be audio recorded and the recordings saved to MS SharePoint. Data stored on Microsoft SharePoint are hosted and stored in Microsoft's European data centres and protected by multiple layers of security technology and encryption. Audio recordings will be securely transferred to a third-party transcription service that has signed a confidentiality agreement and destroyed after transcript checks have been completed. Your name will be replaced with a pseudonym during transcription checking and any personal identifiable information removed. Transcripts and consent forms will be saved to MS SharePoint as password protected files. Only the research team will have access to these files. Consent forms will be retained for 18 months. Anonymised transcripts will be held for ten years and then securely deleted. The information you provide will not allow you to be identified in any research outputs/publications.

King's College London has a responsibility to keep information collected about you safe and secure, and to ensure the integrity of research data. Specialist teams within King's College London continually assess and ensure that data is held in the most appropriate and secure way.

Data Protection Statement: If you would like more information about how your data will be processed under the terms of UK data protection laws please visit the link below: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/research/support/research-ethics/kings-college-london-statement-on-use-of-personal-data-in-research>

What if I change my mind about taking part? You are free to withdraw at any point of the project, without having to give a reason. Withdrawing from the project will not affect you in any way. Please note, however, that due to the group format, once the focus group has commenced you will not be able to withdraw your data from the research.

How is the project being funded? This study is supported by VAMHN, which is funded by the UKPRP Violence Health and Society Consortium and the BECS Foundation.

What will happen to the results of the project? The results of the study will be summarised in a report and also submitted to a peer-reviewed journal as an academic paper. The report will be published on the VAMHN website (www.vamhn.co.uk) and shared via the VAMHN mailing list. You can sign up to the VAMHN mailing list via the VAMHN website. If you would like to receive the report but do not want to join our mailing list, please email vamhn@kcl.ac.uk to request this.

Who should I contact for further information or to take part in the research? If you have any questions or require more information about this project, or if you would like to take part in the research, please contact Angel Deng via vamhn@kcl.ac.uk

What if I have further questions, or if something goes wrong? If this study has harmed you in any way or if you wish to make a complaint about the conduct of the study you can contact King's College London using the details below for further advice and information: **The Chair, Health Faculties Research Ethics Subcommittee** rec@kcl.ac.uk

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