

Participant Information Sheet

Research Project on International Surrogacy Arrangements: Online Survey

Who is undertaking this research?

This research is conducted by Dr Claire Fenton-Glynn (Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge) and Professor Jens M Scherpe (Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Cambridge), as part of a consultancy project for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to try to identify common problems that confront UK intended parents when taking part in international surrogacy arrangements.

The researchers have been asked by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to develop guidance documents for intended parents, with the aim of ensuring that they have adequate information, and to help them prepare for issues that may arise.

We are therefore seeking information from those who have previously entered into such an arrangement, as well as from professionals and non-profit organisations working in this field, to try to ensure that we identify all the major risks.

What will participation involve?

Participants will be asked a series of questions concerning their involvement with international surrogacy arrangements, with a particular focus on their motivations for undertaking an international agreement, their reasons for choosing that particular destination, and any legal or practical difficulties they have experienced. Participants will be free to decline to answer any question they wish, or terminate the survey at any time.

At the conclusion of the survey, participants will be asked whether they wish to include their name and contact details, to be able to provide them with information concerning the results of the research project. However, this personal data will not be connected with the any other information provided in the survey, which will stay anonymous.

The research will include the processing of “special category personal data”, as it will ask for information concerning participants’ relationships status, age, and sexual orientation. The processing of this data is necessary for scientific research purposes, as it will provide greater specificity as to the drivers of international surrogacy for particular groups of people. Personal data obtained through this research will be anonymised.

How will my data be used?

Your personal information (including, where appropriate, sensitive personal information) will be used to carry out academic and/or translational research in the public interest.

The data we hold will be covered by the “research purposes” exemption. The legal basis for processing this data is that it is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. The public interest in this research lies in better understanding the factors underpinning a decision to undertake an international surrogacy arrangement, and the difficulties that may ensue.

For further general information about the University of Cambridge’s use of your personal data as a participant in a research study, please see <https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data>

What are the benefits and disadvantages or risks of participation?

There are no direct benefits to participation – the benefit lies in the assistance the information will provide in developing clearer guidance for future intended parents entering into an international surrogacy arrangement.

On the other hand, there are no risks or disadvantages to participation.

Can I withdraw from the research project?

Participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and participants can withdraw from the project at any time without prejudice, now or in the future. Participants will be free to decline to answer any question they wish, or terminate the survey at any time. If the survey is terminated before completion, all information previously entered by the participant will be deleted.

Once the survey is completed, however, it is not possible for the participant to remove their data from the study, as this will be fully anonymised.

Can my answers be anonymous?

The survey does not request your name or contact details when you reply to this survey.

Any personal information that you do give – such as age, gender, relationship status – will be used only for the purposes of contextualising the information given.

How will my data be stored?

The data collected in this survey will be stored in password-protected files, and stored using cloud-based storage systems.

In light of the importance of the long-term availability and preservation of all research outputs including research data, the information obtained through this survey will be stored for ten years. During this time, the researchers may use de-identified data for academic research beyond this specific project for which this data was collected. De-identified data may also be shared outside the university.

Will my information be shared with anyone?

For the purposes of this project, the de-identified data collected in this survey will be shared with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office. In addition, de-identified data may be published as part of academic research publications, or shared outside the university for the purposes of future academic research.

No identifiable personal data will be shared with any other organisation.

What should I do if I have a concern?

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Claire Fenton-Glynn (ces74@cam.ac.uk).