



Wind Value Community Engagement

Focus Group Information



Thank you for considering the Wind Value research project. This document explains what the study is about and what your participation would involve so you can make an informed choice.

The purpose of this study is to assess attitudes towards wind energy and the possibility of community ownership of onshore wind farms. Should you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in a focus group with a member of the research team and to complete an online survey afterwards. The focus group will be audio recorded and is expected to take 40 - 50 minutes. The online survey should take less than 6 minutes.

Participation in the focus group and the survey is completely voluntary. There is no obligation to participate, and should you choose, you can refuse to answer specific questions, or decide to withdraw from the focus group or survey. You may take part in either the focus group or the survey or both. Once the focus group has been concluded, you can express your desire to withdraw at any time in the subsequent month. In this case, the researchers will re-write the information taken from the focus group recording and attempt to remove your input. This may not be entirely successful as it may be too difficult to distinguish your input from other people's. You may withdraw from the survey up to a month after submitting, in that case your information will not be used. The right to withdraw from either the focus group or survey cannot be permanent as research reports and papers will be written and published based on anonymized information received from you and the other participants.

All the information you provide will be kept confidential and anonymous and will be available only to the Wind Value research team (see the Wind Value website for an up-to-date list of team members here https://windvalue.ie/?page_id=14). The only exception is where information is disclosed which indicates that there is a serious risk to you or to others. In that event, suitable statutory authorities will be notified. Once the interview is completed, the recording will immediately be transferred to a safe UCC data storage platform and wiped from the recording device. The interview will then be transcribed by one of the research team, and all identifying information will be removed. Once this is done, the recording will also be deleted and only the anonymized transcript will remain. Similarly, the results from the survey will be anonymised and stored securely. Your information will be stored on a University College Cork supported cloud storage platform, namely the Wind Value Microsoft Teams Account which may only be accessed from the researchers' UCC login. The data will be stored for minimum of ten years. The anonymized information you provide may contribute to research publications and/or conference presentations as well as a PhD thesis and research reports available on the project website at <https://windvalue.ie/>.

We do not anticipate any negative outcomes from participating in this study. At the end of the focus group, the moderator of the group will discuss with you how you found the experience and how you are feeling. Should you experience distress arising from the interview, the contact details for support services provided below may be of assistance.

This study has obtained ethical approval from the UCC Social Research Ethics Committee. If you agree to take part in this study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

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