

**DATA PROTECTION NOTICE FOR  
SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**  
**General Data Protection Regulation of the EU**  
**Articles 12–14**  
**Date: December 18, 2024**

**Information on the processing of personal data in the research project entitled  
GET:ORG, Generatiiviset teknologiat ja viestinnällinen organisoituminen  
(Generative Technologies in Communicative Organizing)**

The research project entitled GET:ORG involves processing of personal data. The purpose of this data protection notice is to provide information on the personal data to be processed, from where they are obtained and how they are used. Detailed information on the rights of data subjects will be provided at the end of this notice.

## **1. Data Controllers**

University of Helsinki  
Address: PO Box (Fabianinkatu 33), 00014 University of Helsinki, Finland

Tampere University  
Address: Kalevantie 4, 33014 Tampereen yliopisto, Finland

University of Jyväskylä  
Address: PO Box 35 (Seminaarinkatu 15), 40100 Jyväskylän yliopisto, Finland

## **2. Contact person and principal investigator**

Contact person in matters concerning the research project:  
Name: Docent Salla-Maaria Laaksonen  
Faculty/department/unit: Centre for Consumer Society Research (Kuluttajatutkimuskeskus),  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Address: P.O. Box 16, 00014 University of Helsinki  
Phone: +358 50 415 6576  
Email: [salla.laaksonen@helsinki.fi](mailto:salla.laaksonen@helsinki.fi)

## **3. Contact details of the data protection officer**

You can contact the University of Helsinki data protection officer via email at [tietosuoja@helsinki.fi](mailto:tietosuoja@helsinki.fi).

## **4. Description of the research project and the purpose of processing personal data**

GET:ORG explores new forms of platformed organizing that emerge when expert communities communicate on digital platforms. The project explores how platforms enable and shape organizing and the power structures associated with it. In particular, we will explore the agency of automated and generative technologies such as categorizations, curation, and communicative AI in organizing. The interdisciplinary project combines perspectives of organizational research, communication, information systems research, and computational social science.

GET:ORG (1) aims to develop a comprehensive theoretical model of platformed organizing, (2) investigates platform affordances as socio-technical conditions for communicative organizing, (3) aims to understand the communicative agency of generative technologies in organizational constitution, and (4) develops computational methodology for studying communicative organizing on digital platforms.

The data will be drawn from large-scale digital discourse datasets generated in a diverse set of organizations and organizational communities, both established and emergent. We will also critically investigate platform technologies through technography and user interviews.

Data will be collected and processed in accordance with GDPR requirements and social media research ethics in line with AoIR and TENK guidelines. The collection and processing of data is based on the public interest in accordance with Art 6.1(e) of the GDPR. In addition, in accordance with Article 9.2e, the processing concerns personal data that the data subject has made public.

The project is conducted in collaboration with the University of Helsinki, Tampere University and Jyväskylä University. The data will be stored in accordance with the University of Helsinki's data security rules and will be accessible only to researchers working on the project in the three mentioned universities. The data will not be made available to third parties.

## **5. Personal data included in the research data**

The data we utilize in the project originates from the Stack Exchange platform, across all the subsites it hosts. All the data we utilize is publicly available. The data records are public social media messages, including the username, nickname, time of posting, text content, any images and links attached to the message, the url of the original message, and platform-specific information on the popularity metrics of the message. All this information is also visible in the public browser interfaces of the platform.

## **6. Sources of personal data**

We will access Stack Exchange data in two ways:

- (A) By downloading the data dumps published by the platform itself and
- (B) by collecting qualitative example threads manually by taking prints or screenshots from a web browser

The data dumps (A) include a pseudonymized version of “all user-contributed content on the Stack Exchange network. Each site is formatted as a separate archive consisting of XML files zipped via 7-zip using bzip2 compression. Each site archive includes Posts, Users, Votes, Comments, PostHistory and PostLinks.”

The browsing based data (B) does contain user names and their profile pictures, which makes it personal data.

All user content contributed to the Stack Exchange network is cc-by-sa 4.0 licensed according to their terms of service.

## 7. Sensitive personal data

The following categories of special categories of personal data (i.e. sensitive personal data) under Article 9 of the GDPR may be processed in the survey, but only if the sender has raised the issue in a public social media post. Yet, they are not the focus of our research.

- Racial or ethnic origin
- Political opinions
- Religious or philosophical beliefs
- Trade union membership
- Genetic data
- Biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person
- Health
- Sex life or sexual orientation of a natural person

The processing of sensitive personal data is based on Article 9(2)(j) of the General Data Protection Regulation (processing is necessary for scientific research purposes), as well as Section 6, Subsection 1, Paragraph 7 of the Finnish Data Protection Act.

Also personal data concerning criminal convictions or offences will be processed in the research project only if the sender has raised the issue in a public social media post. In this case, the processing of data concerning criminal convictions or offences is based on Section 7, Subsection 1, Paragraph 2 of the Finnish Data Protection Act (the processing of personal data concerning criminal convictions or offences or related security measures is allowed for scientific research purposes).

## 8. Lawful basis for processing personal data

Personal data are processed on the following basis (Article 6(1) of the GDPR):

- Task carried out in the public interest:
  - Scientific or historical research purposes or statistical purposes
  - Archiving of research material and cultural heritage material
- Consent by the research subject
- Compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject
- Legitimate interests pursued by the controller or by a third party

Specify the legitimate interest:

If the processing of personal data is based on the research subject's consent, he or she can withdraw that consent at any time. The withdrawal of consent does not affect the lawfulness of processing based on consent before its withdrawal.

## 9. Recipients of data

The personal data collected through interviews in the study will be processed by the project researchers, who are affiliated with the project in one of the three universities. In addition, during the transcription phase, possibly an external service provider and a research assistant to be appointed at a later stage. Data containing personal data will only be stored on servers operated by the respective universities and/or CSC - IT Centre for Science.

## 10. Transfer of data to countries outside the European Economic Area

Data will not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area.

## 11. Automated decision-making

The research project involves no automated decision-making that has a significant effect on data subjects.

## 12. Protection of personal data

Personal data included in the research dataset will be processed and kept protected so that only those who need the data can access them.

The data processed in data systems will be protected using the following:

- Username and password
- Registration/log of use
- Access control
- Encryption
- Two-factor identification
- Other, please specify:

Processing direct identifiers:

- The controller collects the personal data without direct identifiers. (A)
- Direct identifiers will be removed during the analysis stage and kept separate from the analysed research data.
- The data will be analysed using direct identifiers, because (give grounds for preserving the direct identifiers): (B) for qualitative analysis of the data it is essential to be able to follow the events taking place on the platform, many of which are also public by nature.

The material is public data where running user identifiers are part of the original CC-licensed data dumps. The cc-by-sa 4.0 licensing requires attribution of the original content producer and the data source.

### 13. Duration of the processing of personal data in this research project:

GET:ORG project runs 1.9.2024-31.8.2028, but individual sub-studies might continue beyond the final date.

### 14. Processing of personal data when the research project ends

- The research data will be deleted
- The research data will be kept for the purposes of validating or replicating the results of this research project:
- without identifiers  identifiers included
- The research data will be kept for later, compatible scientific research in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR:
- without identifiers  identifiers included

The storage of the research data is based on Article 5(1)(b) and (e) of the GDPR. Before the data can be used for other research, the controller will ensure that the new use is compatible with the initial purpose in accordance with the requirements of the GDPR. Data subjects will receive a new data protection notice on the new use of the research data, unless the controller can no longer identify the subjects from the data.

In addition, the data subjects will not be informed of the new research if delivering this information to them is impossible or involves a disproportionate effort or renders impossible or seriously impairs the achievement of the research objectives (Article 14(5)(b) of the GDPR).

The data will be stored for ten years after the end of the research project using shared facilities offered by CSC IT Centre for Science. Access will only be provided to the researchers who were part of the original GET:ORG project.

### 15. Rights of data subjects and derogations from those rights

The contact person in matters related to research subjects' rights is the person stated in section 1 of this notice.

#### Rights of data subjects

Under the General Data Protection Regulation, data subjects have the following rights:

- Right of access to their data
- Right to rectification of their data
- Right to the erasure of their data and to be forgotten
- Right to the restriction of processing of their data
- Right to data portability
- Right to object to the processing of their data
- Right not to be subject to automated decision-making

However, data subjects cannot exercise all their rights in all circumstances. The circumstances are affected by, for example, the legal basis for processing personal data.

Further information on the rights of data subjects in various circumstances can be found on the website of the Data Protection Ombudsman:

<https://tietosuoja.fi/en/what-rights-do-data-subjects-have-in-different-situations>.

### **If data subjects cannot be identified**

If the processing of personal data for research purposes does not require the identification of the data subject and if the controller is unable to identify the data subject, the right to access, rectify, erase and restrict the use of personal data, as well as any notification obligations and the right to data portability do not apply unless the data subject provides additional data enabling their identification (Article 11 of the GDPR).

### **Derogations from rights**

The General Data Protection Regulation and the Finnish Data Protection Act enable derogations from certain rights of data subjects if personal data are processed for the purposes of scientific research and the rights are likely to render impossible or seriously impair the achievement of the research purposes.

The need for derogations from the rights of data subjects will always be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

### **Right to appeal**

If you consider that the processing of your personal data has been carried out in breach of data protection laws, you have the right to appeal to the Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman.

Contact details:

Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman  
Street address: Ratapihantie 9, 6<sup>th</sup> floor, 00520 Helsinki  
Postal address: PO Box 800, 00521 Helsinki  
Phone (switchboard): 029 56 66700  
Fax: 029 56 66735  
Email: tietosuoja(at)om.fi