



Personality and Brain Research

(Principal Investigator: Professor Martin Sellbom, Department of Psychology, 03-479 9055)

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully. Take time to consider and, if you wish, talk with relatives, whanau, friends, or your doctor before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, we thank you. If you decide not to take part there will be no disadvantage to you and we thank you for considering our request.

What is the aim of this research project?

This project will study the association between various personality traits and specific brain rhythms. We are particularly interested in brain rhythms that measure behavioural motivations in different contexts. We want to know how these brain rhythms relate to questionnaires that measure personality traits. The results will help us understand how the brain motivates different people.

Who is funding this project?

This project is funded by a Marsden research grant from the Royal Society of New Zealand awarded to Professor Martin Sellbom and Professor Neil McNaughton at the University of Otago.

Who are we seeking to participate in this project?

1. 18-55 years old.
2. Healthy.
3. Have not used alcohol or other drugs in the last 48 hours before testing.

You will NOT be able to participate in the project, because it may involve an unacceptable risk to you, if you have:

1. Susceptibility to photosensitivity.
2. A history of seizure.
3. A history of allergic skin reactions to chemical agents including detergents.
4. Currently taking anxiolytics and anti-depressants.
5. Major illness in the previous 30 days.
6. Appear intoxicated or high on the day of testing.

If you participate, what will you be asked to do?

For the main part of the test, we will record the electrical activity from your scalp while you complete various computer-based tasks. You will be interviewed about your physical and mental health and also be asked to complete several questionnaires that measure aspects of your personality. You will feel like some questions don't apply to you; that's fine, we need to ask the same broad set of questions to everyone. The whole experiment can take up to about four and a half hours. In recognition of the time, inconvenience, and travel costs in attending for testing, you will receive a \$75 supermarket voucher (for out of pocket expenses incurred in participating in the experiment) and there is a chance to win extra cash from the computer tasks.

You will also be asked (but not required) to provide the contact information of three individuals who know you well, and could potentially act as an informant. They will complete some questionnaires about you. Beginning with the first person listed, we will contact possible nominees one at a time until we have received one completed nominee response per participant. Not all nominees provided may be contacted, and you will not be told which nominee responded or what they said. They will not know your results either. Nominees will be contacted via email by the researcher and will not be obligated to participate. It's completely up to them. Nominees will receive \$25 for out of pocket expenses incurred in participating in this experiment.

Please let us know if you feel any discomfort during any of the tests. You can exit the study at any time.

Preparing for brainwave recording

Hair products and natural oils make it difficult to record brain activity. So, please come with a clean scalp: avoid hair products on a day when you have a session; and wash your hair in the 24 hours before, if possible. You will be asked to put your cell phone and other electrical devices in the silent mode.

Brainwave recording procedure



You will put on a cap as shown in the picture. We will fill the sensors (small metal discs) attached to the cap with a gel that makes a good electrical contact between your scalp and an amplifier to give us good brain recordings. To get the best contact, we will scrape your skin gently. The system is regularly certified to the current safety standards for connecting electrical equipment to people.

Is there any risk of discomfort or harm from participation?

You may feel discomfort when we scratch your scalp to apply gel to the sensors on the cap. Exposure to stimuli on a computer screen has a rare risk of inducing seizures in those with or without a history of seizure. If you have a history either of photosensitivity or of any form of seizure you should not take part. The risk of an electrical shock is very small. All our equipment is tested regularly and is connected to a safe power supply. The person recording your brainwaves is trained to connect you to the equipment safely. They also have a current First Aid Certificate, renewed with training every two years at the New Zealand Red Cross, so that we can help you in an emergency.

It is possible that some interview or personality test questions may cause emotional discomfort. However, as mentioned earlier, participation is completely voluntary and you can exit the survey at any point. In the rare event that you should experience emotional distress and would like to speak to a trained professional about this, we will provide you with referral information, or you can contact Psychiatric Emergency Services directly at (03) 474 0999.

One of the computer-based tasks will deliver a loud and unpleasant sound, depending on your responses, but this will not be damaging to your ears or hearing in any way.

What data will be collected, and how will they be used?

Your physical and mental health status, questionnaire scores, and electrical recordings will be stored in secure computer databases and will be identified only with your participant number. Identifying data will be stored separately from the study data and will be used only for contact purposes. Any paper records will be stored securely in locked filing cabinets. Physical health status will be assessed only to exclude participants who do not meet the entry criteria. Your questionnaire, diagnostic and electrical data will be subjected to group statistical analysis to determine general group-wide personality trait relationships and differences from reference data. Urine samples, identified only by participant number, will be disposed of by the analysing laboratory using their usual procedures and only the qualitative, present/absent, result returned by the laboratory will be used for inclusion/exclusion. Data will be stored for 10 years and then deleted.

What about anonymity and confidentiality?

All information generated in this study will be considered highly confidential and must not be disclosed to any persons not directly concerned with the study. Personal information will only be used to connect you to the person whom you nominated. At the conclusion of the study, or after nominee responses have been provided (whichever occurs first), all responses will be de-identified to ensure anonymity. Only unique participant study numbers will identify participants on data documents or in the database. All data will be stored securely and accessed only by study personnel. Reporting of the completed research will be of aggregated data over all participants and no data will be reported linked to an individual participant number.

Can Participants Change their Mind and Withdraw from the Project?

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

What if Participants have any Questions?

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either: Professor Martin Sellbom (Telephone: 03 479 9055; e-mail: martin.sellbom@otago.ac.nz) or Professor Neil McNaughton (Telephone: 03 479 7634; e-mail: neil.mcnaughton@otago.ac.nz). You are also encouraged to contact us should you want a summary of the research findings (or copies of publications reporting these findings) once the study has been completed.

This study (H20/037) has been approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee (Health). If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the research you may contact the Committee through the Human Ethics Committee Administrator (phone +64 3 479 8256 or email gary.witte@otago.ac.nz). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.



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CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Full name:

1. I have read the Information Sheet concerning this study and understand the aims of this research project.
2. All my questions about the project have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I am free to request further information at any stage.
3. I confirm that I meet the criteria for participation, which are explained in the Information Sheet.
4. I know that my participation in the project is entirely voluntary, and that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time without disadvantage.
5. I will be asked to provide contact details of up to 3 people who know me well and can act as informants, but a decision not to do so will not result in any disadvantage.
6. The informants I provide may be contacted by the researchers and asked to provide information about my personality. It is their choice if they want to do so.
7. Informants will not have access to any of the information I have provided for this project.
8. I know that as a participant I will undergo electrical (EEG) testing, and complete interviews and questionnaires assessing mental health symptoms and personality traits, as listed in the information sheet.
9. I understand that I may decline to answer any interview or questionnaire question without disadvantage of any kind.
10. I understand that a qualitative urine test for psychotropic drugs may need to be administered if deemed necessary by the researcher.
11. I know that no personal identifying information will be included in the paper records and electronic files which represent the data from the project, and that these will be placed in secure storage and kept for at least ten years.
12. I understand the nature and size of the risks of discomfort or harm that are explained in the Information Sheet, including the rare risk of computer screen-induced seizures.
13. I will receive a \$75 dollar voucher for out of pocket expenses I have incurred in participating in this experiment.
14. I understand that the results of the project may be published and will be available in the University of Otago Library (Dunedin, New Zealand), but I will not be identified in any publication.

I agree to take part in this project.

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(Signature of participant)

.....
(Date)

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