Memorandum of Understanding

SRS Living Labs and the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability

### **How to get the best out of your Living Lab (LL) Experience**

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1. **PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT**

The Purpose of this document is to set out a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between:

* the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability
* the Researcher taking part in the Living Lab project
* the named academic supervisor of the Researcher.

The MOU will clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder and will need to be signed at the bottom of the document.

### ***Everyone approaches a research project differently and it is up to you, as the researcher, to decide how you choose to organise your time and when you complete the different elements of that research.***

1. **BACKGROUND**

At the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS), treating the University as a Living Lab means using our own academic and student research capabilities to solve social responsibility and sustainability issues relating to our infrastructure and practices. Living lab projects provide a context for an academic project in return for an additional output of benefit to SRS.

More information can be found on our website.

[Living Labs at University of Edinburgh](https://www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/programmes-and-projects/student-leadership-for-sustainability/living-lab-projects)

1. **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS MOU (Researcher)**

**Deliverables:**

* Dissertation meeting school requirements.
* Secondary output meeting SRS needs.

**Expectations:**

* **Organising your time effectively and efficiently**. Do NOT expect your LL supervisor to come up with a work plan/schedule for you to work to.
* **The quality of your work**. Up to researcher to ensure research meets academic rigour required for qualification (advised by academic supervisor) and SRS standards (advised by SRS supervisor)
* **Clear and consistent communication**. This is for your written work as well as your communications with your SRS and academic supervisor.

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| **Additional Comments** |

**4** **RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS MOU (SRS Supervisor)**

### **Deliverables**

* Up to 8/10 \*delete as appropriate\* hours of contact time, including weekly/fortnightly \*delete as appropriate\* catch up meetings and emails with researcher.
* 15/30 minute \*delete as appropriate\* touch point with academic supervisor at midway point of project.
* Feedback on a draft of researcher's dissertation up to 5000 words or 50% of final output. \*this should be in line with school dissertation rules on feedback\*

### **Expectations**

* **Provide Guidance on topic.** To keep on track to meet SRS objectives of project.
* **Facilitate access to data.** This includes existing raw data and supporting with collection of new data.
* **Intervene where research poses a risk to SRS.** If research poses a significant risk to reputation or operations of the department the SRS supervisor has the authority to redirect or halt research.

### **What is NOT the responsibility of your work based supervisor:**

* Proofreading
* Reading multiple drafts of your paper
* Setting your work schedule
* Chasing you for meetings/material
* Arranging surveys or interviews
* Sourcing data
* Setting up meetings with other contacts

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| **Additional Comments** |

**IMPORTANT:** SRS supervisors are there to ADVISE and make suggestions, NOT to teach/give detailed instructions or suggest academic improvement. Treat them as though they are your client.

**5 RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THIS MOU (Academic Supervisor)**

### **Deliverables**

* Up to ? \*fill as appropriate\* hours of contact time, including ? \*fill as appropriate\* catch up meetings and emails with researcher.
* 15/30 minute \*delete as appropriate\* touch point with SRS supervisor at midway point of project.
* Feedback on a draft of the researchers dissertation \*if appropriate in line with school feedback guidance for academic supervisors\*

### **Expectations**

* **Provide Guidance on research methods.** To keep on track to meet qualification requirements of dissertation.
* **Intervene where project poses risk to qualification.** If research does not meet rigour required by dissertation criteria SRS supervisor should be alerted and steps to recover should be proposed immediately.
* **Advise on ethical implications of research.** Ensuring adequate time for ethical approval.

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| **Additional Comments** |

**6 SUPERVISORY MEETINGS**

###  **When arranging meetings with your supervisor, please:**

* **Be prepared for your meetings**. You have limited time with your supervisor so make the most of the time meeting time. Come with questions planned or an agenda and ensure you have completed any tasks your supervisor has set you.
* **Take into account any time differences** if you and your supervisor are located in different countries, you will have to find a mutually convenient time that doesn’t cause your supervisor to meet outside of their normal 9-5 work patterns for their time zone, unless they offer this as an option.
* **Some supervisors are supervising multiple students.** If you are working as a group project, you may be requested to always meet as group to avoid duplication of discussion. If you have a particular problem within the group, it may be more appropriate to speak to your academic supervisor.
* **Social Media and private messaging.** Please only use professional communication channels, such as university email, when communicating with your supervisor. Using social media to connect with your supervisor is not appropriate during you Living Lab project.

### **Notifying One Another of Planned Time Off**

**The supervisor and student need to agree when supervisory meetings will be held and should notify one another of any absences due to work obligations or time off at the earliest opportunity.** Both sides should be made aware of absences of more than 3 working days duration, at least two weeks prior to the planned time off. This is to ensure that both student and supervisor can plan use of their time most effectively.

### **Response Times\***

A **three working-day rule** normally applies to correspondence between supervisors and students, i.e. supervisors should respond to student emails within three working days (Monday to Friday). Please be aware that some requests by students cannot be responded to fully within 3 working days, such as providing feedback on text. In these cases, the supervisor is expected to respond by email within 3 working days to indicate when feedback will be provided, and this should, in any case, not be a period of more than seven working days (unless notified absence due to work or time off has already been indicated to the student, in which case the leave days are added to the seven working days in working out the maximum response time by the supervisor).

*\*Please be reasonable in any requests and notify your academic supervisor in the first instance, or the Programme Director if you have and concerns around lack of communication from your work-based supervisor.*

**IMPORTANT: How the contact hours are organised will vary and will need to be discussed and agreed with your supervisor early on in the project process.** The supervisor and student are jointly responsible for organising supervisory meetings. At a minimum, the following meetings are suggested:

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| **Types of Meeting**  | **Participants** | **Suggested dates and times** |
| *Introduction to the Living Lab project concept:* An exploratory meeting/call/email chain, where you discuss whether this work based Living Lab project is for you. | Researcher SRS supervisor | Prior to beginning project |
| *First discussion, refining of the research proposal and MoU*. This will cover, broadly: the feasibility of the idea; possible sources of data and reading; research methods; resources; a plan or timetable; research ethics; risks and contingencies, completing MoU.  | Researcher SRS supervisorAcademic supervisor  |  Before end of May.(this meeting) |
| *SRS* *supervisor Weekly/ fortnightly progress meetings*  | Researcher SRS supervisor |  |
| *Academic supervisor progress meetings* | Researcher Academic Supervisor  |  |
| *Supervisors midway check in:* to share concerns or ideas and collaborate to progress these. (NOTE: if an immediate concern becomes apparent supervisors should address this by email as appropriate) | SRS supervisorAcademic Supervisor |  |
| *Pre submission SRS supervisor meeting*: discuss interpretation of data, supervisor feedback on draft and confirm form and timeline of secondary output.  | ResearcherSRS supervisor  | Prior to dissertation submission  |
| *Secondary output SRS supervisor meeting:* Researcher shares completed secondary output and recommendations for SRS. | Researcher SRS supervisor | Post dissertation submission |
| **Additional meetings** |  |  |

**7** **FUNDING**

There is no funding available while taking part in a Living Lab, however, your School may have some funding related to research costs, such as travel or printing

**8** **DISPUTES**

It is recognised that, due to the work based non-standard nature of this educational experience, difficulties may arise. Where serious difficulties are identified during this Living Lab project, they should be discussed among the three parties with reference to the agreed Memorandum of Understanding and the relevant procedures of School or College to advise, if required.

**Complaints or concerns should be raised as early as possible to ensure that they are dealt with in a timely manner.** **Ideally, you should discuss any issues with your supervisor in the first instance.**

In the first instance, if there are issues try to resolve these with your work based supervisors, but if you feel unsatisfied with the solution, you can also raise these with your academic supervisor, who can take this forward with the SRS Project Coordinator for Sustainable Development Goals and Living Lab Projects, Lucy Patterson on Microsoft Teams or by university email at lpatters@ed.ac.uk

**8** **NEURAL DIVERSITY AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**

As a researcher (staff of student) at the University of Edinburgh and you have a disability, learning difference or health condition that may impact on your studies, please make contact with the Student Disability Service, to discuss your support needs.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

At SRS we celebrate neural diversity, so when you take part in a Living Lab with us, do talk to your supervisor about any preferred ways of working that might make your learning experience easier and more rewarding. We are happy to listen to any strategies that you’ve learnt so far, or help you find new ones, that work for you.

Please use our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion form below to let us know if you would like to have a conversation about learning support at the start of the Living Lab project.

**9** **WELLBEING**

Your wellbeing is really important to us and the university. It’s normal to meet challenges while you are studying with us, but it is also normal to have brought challenges with you and we want you to feel fully supported during you time with us. Here are some additional resources that you can reach out to for additional advice and support:

* Advice Place <https://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/support_and_advice/the_advice_place/>
* Chaplaincy <https://www.ed.ac.uk/chaplaincy>
* Wellbeing Centre <https://www.ed.ac.uk/students/health-wellbeing/health-and-wellbeing-centre>

Please also use our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion form below, to let us know if you would like to have a conversation about well-being support. We all experience stress in different ways and have different triggers, so having a conversation at the start of the project to identify any points when you are likely to feel additional stress or overwhelmed is a really good way to try and reduce the impact of those times. However, if you start to struggle at any stage of the project, speak to us as early as you can and we can work with you and your academic supervisor to find the best path forward.

**10** **SIGNATURES**

**Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability Supervisor**

Name:

Date:

Signature: (electronic version)

**Researcher**

 Name:

School:

Degree programme:

Date:

Signature: (electronic version)

**Academic Supervisor**

Name:

School:

Date:

Signature: (electronic version)

**11** **EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability is committed to equality of opportunity for all staff and students, and promoting a culture of inclusivity. In order to improve engagement and widen participation, we would like to better understand our audience.

Read our [anti-racism statement](https://www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/news/2020/anti-racism-statement) to learn more about how we are tackling systemic racism.

This section is intended to be for the **Living Lab student to complete**, however it is optional. We highly value its completion to ensure we can enact change, if or where we see equality, diversity and inclusion is not taking place.

What is your gender identity?

## What is your ethnic origin?

What is your nationality?

Do you have a disability?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

Do you have any mental health difficulties you would like us to know about?

Yes

No

Prefer not to say

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