

Participant (*smartvote Australia* users) Information Sheet

5 April 2019

This project, surveying the policy positions of candidates, parties, and voters through a Voting Advice Application (VAA) called *smartvote Australia*, is being managed by Professor Patrick Dumont, Professor Ian McAllister and Dr Jill Sheppard, researchers at the Australian National University (ANU).

Project details

- Description and Methodology: All candidates running for the 2019 House of Representatives and Senate election have been invited to answer a questionnaire on a range of policy issues. Your responses to the same questionnaire on the *smartvote Australia* website will enable you to compare your positions to those of the candidates and parties standing in your local electorate. Your responses will remain secure and anonymous. You will be able to see graphical and statistical data that compares your positions to the local candidates' and parties', but no one else will see your responses or those data.
- Use of Data and Feedback: The data will be analysed, and the results will be reported by the ANU and reported in national media. The confidentialised data will then be retained in the Australian Data Archive for future research.
- Project Funding: The project is funded by the ANU.

Participant Involvement

- Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal: Participation in the project is entirely voluntary. You are invited to respond to questions about policy issues in order to get a personalized analysis of how close candidates and parties are to your own positions. You can skip questions if you prefer not to answer them. You can also indicate whether a question is more or less important to you. Responding to the socio-demographic and propensity to vote questions at the end of the policy issues questionnaire is optional. These questions will not intervene in the calculation of your policy closeness with candidates and parties and are purely collected for research purposes, which will lead only to aggregate-level analyses where individuals cannot be identified. IP addresses

are not collected so your data are in effect anonymized throughout. You can also withdraw consent at any time, even after your responses have been submitted and collected, via anonymised respondent identification numbers. If you withdraw, the primary investigator will retrieve and destroy your data record. You can contact *smartvote Australia* investigators for further information and questions through smartvote@anu.edu.au.

- What does participation in the research request of you? All that is required of you is to respond online to the questionnaire, expected to take 10 to 15 minutes of your time. Further inspection of all the information provided on the tool may lead to variable length of time spent on the platform though.
- Risks and confidentiality: In any collection of personal information, there is some risk that third parties will access confidential data. To minimize that risk, no personal information is collected and stored. Your socio-demographic information (optional questions) do not allow for the identification of individuals and your IP address is not collected. At the end of the research only aggregate results will be presented and no one will be identified. The information will be stored in a secure location for at least five years following publications arising from the research.
- Benefits: Your benefits consist in the ability of gathering a wide range of information about candidates and parties running in your electorate on a single platform. A tool performing such a function was recommended by the parliamentary committee report on the 2016 federal election as beneficial for regaining trust in parties and politicians and provide policy-based information in the campaign. The ANU team expects that this research will improve understanding of policy-based political competition and representation in Australia by complementing the Australian Election Study voter survey and the candidate survey run by the same investigators with new data on candidates, parties and voters.

Privacy notice

In collecting your personal information within this research, the ANU must comply with the Privacy Act 1988. The ANU Privacy Policy is available at https://policies.anu.edu.au/ppl/document/ANUP_010007 and it contains information about how a person can:

- Access or seek correction to their personal information;
- Complain about a breach of an Australian Privacy Principle by ANU, and how ANU will handle the complaint.

Data Storage

Where and how long: The users data collected on the public website will be anonymised (i.e. any identifying information will be removed and destroyed) and stored securely at the ANU for at least five years from following publication of the results. The data will then be archived in the Australian Data Archive for potential longitudinal (comparison of results in future iterations of *smartvote Australia*) and comparative analysis in the future.

Queries and Concerns

For any further information, queries, or complaints, please:

- Email the *smartvote Australia* team: smartvote@anu.edu.au
- Or contact the primary investigator:
Prof. Patrick Dumont
School of Politics and International Relations
College of Arts and Social Sciences
The Australian National University
Acton ACT 2601
Telephone: 02 6125 5602
Email: patrick.dumont@anu.edu.au

Ethics Committee Clearance

The ethical aspects of this research have been approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee (Protocol 2019/192). If you have any concerns or complaints about how this research has been conducted, please contact:

- Ethics Manager
The ANU Human Research Ethics Committee
The Australian National University
Telephone: +61 2 6125 3427
Email: Human.Ethics.Officer@anu.edu.au

Full *smartvote Australia* Research Team

Professor Patrick Dumont, Professor Ian McAllister, Dr Jill Sheppard, Mr Mark Kenny, Dr Marija Taflaga, Dr Shawn Treier, Mr Feodor Snagovsky, Mr Bermond Scoggins, Mr Matt Bowes, Ms Emily Downie from the ANU.