Qualitative research participant agreement your data and our confidentiality terms

Please read this before your session. It explains how we use what you tell us, where it is stored, and what we ask you to keep confidential.

November 2026

01 About this agreement

Thank you for taking part. This agreement has two parts: Part A explains how we use your personal data and asks for your consent, and Part B sets out what we ask you to keep confidential.

This agreement covers the qualitative research you have been invited to take part in, such as a focus group, interview, workshop, online community or immersive visit (each a "session"). It is between you and Public First Limited, a company registered in England and Wales (company number 10149826) whose registered office is at Fourth Floor, 40 Villiers Street, London WC2N 6NJ ("PF Global", "we", "us"). PF Global is the research and advisory group that includes the former Stonehaven, Public First and Robertsbridge businesses.

We run research on our own behalf and for clients. Where this research is for a client, we will tell you who the client is before the session unless revealing it would affect the research, in which case we will tell you at the end. The client receives our findings, not your name or contact details.

Taking part is voluntary. You can leave the session at any time, and you can withdraw your consent afterwards as described in section 07.

Part A: Your personal data

02 What we collect

We collect only what we need to run the session and analyse what was said:

- your name and contact details, used to arrange the session and pay your incentive (often held by the recruitment agency rather than by us);
- your answers to the screening questions used to select participants;
- audio and, for online or filmed sessions, video recordings of the session;

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- written transcripts of the recordings, and the moderator's notes.

Depending on the topic, the discussion may include special category data, such as your political opinions, health, religion or ethnic origin. You do not have to share anything you would rather keep to yourself.

03 How we use your data

We use your data to run the session, analyse what was said, and report findings to our client or publish them. Our lawful basis is your consent. For special category data, it is your explicit consent.

In reports and presentations we describe people who took part in general terms (for example, "a teacher from Leeds"). We may quote what you said, but we do not name you or include details that would let someone identify you.

We do not sell your data, use it for marketing, or share it with anyone outside PF Global except the service providers described in section 05 and, for incentives, the recruitment agency.

04 Recording, transcription and AI tools

With your consent we record the session so that we can transcribe it accurately. We use AI tools to help transcribe and analyse transcripts, under these conditions:

- **Approved tools only.** We use only tools that our Data Protection Officer has approved after a data protection impact assessment, under enterprise agreements with a data processing agreement in place.
- **No training on your data.** Our agreements with these providers stop them from using your data to train their AI models.
- **Secure workspaces.** Staff use the tools only through company-managed accounts in our secure workspace, never personal accounts or personal devices.
- **Pseudonymised for analysis.** Before transcripts are analysed in depth, we remove names and other direct identifiers. We keep the key that links a transcript back to you separately, with restricted access, and delete it within 12 months of the session. After that the transcript is anonymised.
- **A person makes the judgements.** AI tools do not make decisions about you. Every finding is checked by a member of our research team before it is used.
- **Client terms come first.** If a client contract restricts the use of AI tools or overseas processing, we follow it.

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05 Where your data is stored

We store your personal data on secure systems hosted in the United Kingdom or the European Economic Area.

Some of the service providers we use for recording, transcription and analysis are based in the United States. When your data is processed by these providers it is transferred outside the UK. We protect these transfers with the UK's approved safeguards: either the UK Extension to the EU-US Data Privacy Framework, or Standard Contractual Clauses with the UK Addendum issued by the Information Commissioner's Office. These keep your data protected to the same standard as in the UK, and you keep your rights under UK law.

We transfer data overseas only where it is needed for the purposes in this agreement. Where we run research in another country, we check local rules on recording and on moving data to the UK before the session.

06 How long we keep it

- **Recordings, identifiable transcripts and the key that links transcripts to you:** deleted no later than 12 months after the session.
- **Contact details for incentives:** deleted once your incentive has been paid.
- **Anonymised transcripts, data, findings and published reports:** kept indefinitely. We may use anonymised transcripts in our future research and to develop our research methods and products. Once data is anonymised it can no longer identify you, so it is no longer your personal data.

Deletion is permanent and carried out under our Data Retention and Destruction Policy.

07 Your rights and withdrawing

Under UK data protection law you have the right to:

- see the personal data we hold about you and get a copy of it;
- ask us to correct it if it is wrong;
- ask us to delete it, or to stop or limit using it;
- withdraw your consent at any time.

To use any of these rights, or to ask a question, contact our Data Protection Officer at data@pf.global, giving the date of your session.

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If you withdraw, we will delete your recordings, transcripts and personal details. We cannot remove your contribution from findings that have already been anonymised, combined with others or published, because we can no longer tell which parts came from you.

If you are unhappy with how we have handled your data, you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office at ico.org.uk or on 0303 123 1113. We would appreciate the chance to put things right first.

Part B: Confidentiality

08 What we ask you to keep confidential

Qualitative research works because people speak openly. To protect anyone else taking part and our client, we ask you to keep certain things confidential.

What is confidential

"Confidential information" means:

- the names, and any details that could identify, anyone else taking part;
- anything anyone else said during the session, especially anything personal or sensitive;
- any materials we showed you, such as draft campaigns, products, policies, images or videos, and anything you learn about them;
- the identity of our client, if we told you, and the subject of the research where we told you it is not yet public.

What you agree to

You agree that you will not:

1. share confidential information with anyone, in person, online or on social media;
2. record, photograph or screenshot the session or the materials we show you;
3. copy or keep any materials we give you during the session;
4. contact anyone else who took part about the session or use what they said for any purpose.

You can talk freely about your own views and experiences, and about having taken part in research in general terms.

What this does not stop

Nothing in this agreement stops you from:

- sharing information that is already public, other than through a breach of this agreement;

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- reporting a crime or suspected wrongdoing to the police, a regulator or another authority, or making a protected disclosure;
- getting confidential advice from a lawyer, doctor, counsellor or support service;
- doing anything the law requires you to do.

If something said in the session worries you, or you are concerned about the safety of anyone involved, please tell the moderator or contact us using the details in section 07.

How long it lasts

Your confidentiality obligations start when you sign and last for two years after the session. Obligations about other people's identities and personal information do not end.

Our confidentiality to you

We keep what you tell us confidential in the same way. Your recordings, transcripts and personal details are held only in our approved systems, are seen only by the team working on the project and the providers described in section 05, and are never shared with our client in a form that identifies you without your agreement.

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09 Signature

By signing below, you confirm that:

- you have read and understood this agreement;
- you give your explicit consent to PF Global using your personal data as described in Part A, including any special category data you choose to share, the recording and transcription of the session, the use of AI tools, and the transfers outside the UK described in section 05;
- you agree to keep the confidential information confidential as set out in Part B.

You can withdraw your consent at any time as described in section 07. Please keep a copy of this agreement; another is available from data@pf.global.

Table 1: Participant signature

Full name
Signature
Date

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