

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

### Renters

**Project ID: 46231**

**Project title: The Machine-Readable Renter**

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We invite you to take part in this research project which is being conducted by Samantha Floreani as part of a PhD program. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether to take part. If you want to learn more about this project, please contact us at the email addresses listed above.

### What does the research involve?

This project aims to understand the ways that digital technologies in the private residential real estate sector (referred to as 'Landlord Tech' or 'RentTech') are impacting renters and housing justice in Australia.

RentTech includes online rental application platforms (e.g. 2Apply, Sorted, Ignite, Snug), property management apps (e.g. Kolmeo, Cubbi, ConsoleTenant, PropertyMe), rent payment platforms (e.g. Rental Rewards, Ailo, SimpleRent), among others.

Your participation will involve an interview with PhD student researcher, Samantha. In the interview, Samantha will ask you questions about your experiences as a renter and your use of RentTech. You will also be invited to show her an app, website or platform that you use or have used in the past, and explain your experience and perspective on it. The interview will take approximately 60 minutes.

In order to participate in this project, you need to have some experience with, or opinion on, RentTech. This includes people who decide *not* to use RentTech, or who may not be able to use it for any reason. You also need to have some experience with Australia's private rental market, however you do not need to have a current tenancy agreement or current fixed housing.

Interviews will be conducted either online on Zoom or in-person at a time and place that is mutually convenient (for example: cafes, libraries). Audio of the interview will be recorded and automatically transcribed, then checked for accuracy. Following your interview, Samantha may follow up with you to clarify points if necessary. You are also welcome to request to review and amend your interview transcript, however this is optional (you can indicate this on the consent form). If you choose to amend your interview transcript, we request that you return a marked-up version within eight weeks of receiving it.

### Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

Your participation in this research project is entirely voluntary. We will ask you to sign a written consent form to confirm your agreement to participate. You can decline to participate or withdraw from the research project without

negative consequences. You can withdraw anytime, including during the interview, or request that we delete and not use your interview responses within eight weeks of your interview.

### **Possible benefits and risks to participants**

It is expected that this project will be beneficial to renters, as it is intended to center renters' experiences and perspectives, which are often overlooked in empirical research. RentTech is of increasing interest to renters, researchers and policy makers alike, especially in the context of Australia's ongoing housing crisis. We are hopeful that this research will contribute toward renters' rights and housing justice advocacy and policy making efforts in relation to real estate digital technologies.

There are minimal risks associated with your participation in this research project. However, given that the interview will include discussion of your rental housing experience, it is possible that this may raise some level of discomfort or elicit negative emotions or memories for some participants. You are not required to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable.

### **Payment**

A gift card for the value of \$50 will be offered to you for participation, to recognise your time and perspective as a valuable contribution to this project. If you wish to receive a gift card following your interview, you can tick the box on the consent form. We will need to collect some of your personal information, including your email address, in order to send the gift card to you as well as for auditing purposes.

### **Confidentiality**

You will not be named in the PhD dissertation or any other research outputs that arise from this project. This is to protect your confidentiality and enable you to speak candidly about your experience with real estate agencies, landlords and various technology products. However, we encourage you *not* to provide personally identifying information about individual real estate agents or landlords.

### **Storage of data**

Any data collected as part of this research (audio-recordings, transcripts, notes) will be stored on secure Monash University servers or drives, accessible only to members of the research team. Data will be stored for at least five years after the last research activity (for example, after the publication of the final journal article). The data will be destroyed once no longer required.

Interviews will be audio-recorded and automatically transcribed by transcription software. Transcripts and audio files will be promptly deleted from any third-party transcription services following transcription.

### **Use of data for other purposes**

Data collected from your participation will be used in a PhD dissertation, and possibly in additional research outputs such as in published journal articles, books, media articles, and in conference presentations.

### **Results**

A summary of the results of this project will be available in mid-2027. You may provide your email address on the consent form if you would like to receive a copy of the summarised findings.

### **Complaints**

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC):

Executive Officer  
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)  
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity  
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