

I wish to invite you to participate in my research project **GIRT** Scientific Divers, described below.

My name is Andy Viduka and I am conducting this research as part of my PhD in the School of Humanities at the University of New England. My supervisors are Martin Gibbs and Peter Grave.

Research Project

Can public archaeology inform science based underwater cultural heritage management?

Aim of the Research

Maritime archaeologists do not have the capacity to dive every shipwreck, however this non-renewable historical resource is potentially subject to rapid environmental condition changes. *Gathering Information by Recreational and Technical (GIRT) Scientific Divers* aims to train interested divers to become citizen scientists, capable of systematically documenting the physical condition of their 'adopted' shipwreck, increasing the number of people observing our shipwreck heritage in a scientific manner.

The **GIRT** Scientific Diver project aims to better understand the condition of shipwrecks and the factors driving their preservation or deterioration. It also aims to understand who is interested to participate in this citizen science project and whether their motivation changes throughout the course of their participation.

Confidentiality

Any personal details gathered in the course of the study will remain confidential unless permission is granted by the individual in the consent forms associated with this research project. Interested GIRT Scientific Diver participants will be asked if they wish to be identified with their adopted wreck, to be profiled as member on a website, or other form of media, and if they wish to be clearly accredited for the site surveys they conduct.

As the online, 20-30 minute, survey questionnaire about motivation is anonymous, no individual can be identified or named in any publication of those results.

Participation is Voluntary

Please understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary and I respect your right to stop participating in the study at any time without consequence and without needing to provide an explanation. However, once you begin the online motivation survey your anonymous data which you have already provided cannot be withdrawn. Other data submitted by you related to your adopted site's condition assessments will also remain accessible to other GIRT members and the public.

Initial training for participants will take up to four hours. Once your training has completed and all consent forms have been received your membership and adoption of a wreck will be confirmed. For the first inspection of your adopted wreck, up to three dives may be required to collect necessary data. The number of dives required is dependent on the depth and complexity of the site adopted and will also vary with your background knowledge and experience. Post site inspection, at least two to three hours

will be required to enter data, correctly label images and video, and submit information in the required format.

Questions

The online survey questions will not be of a sensitive nature: rather they are general, and will enable me to enhance my knowledge of you as a participant, your motivations, attitudes and thoughts on the benefit, or not, of protecting shipwrecks and maritime heritage.

Use of Information

By completing and returning the online questionnaire you are consenting to your data being used in the way set out in this document. I will use surveys from GIRT Scientific Diver observations of sites and individual's anonymous online surveys as part of my doctoral thesis, which I expect to complete in 2023. Information collected may also be used in academic journal articles and conference presentations before and after this date. At all times, I will safeguard your identity, unless explicitly given permission, by presenting the information in a way that will not allow you to be identified.

Upsetting Issues

It is unlikely that this research will raise any personal or upsetting issues but if it does you may wish to contact your local Community Health Centre or Lifeline on 13 11 14.

Storage of Information

Hardcopy or electronic notes associated with this project will be located at my residence in Canberra. Electronic data will be kept on cloud.une.edu.au, at the University of New England's School of Humanities. cloud server managed by the research team. It will also be kept on password protected computers in the same location and in Canberra. Only the research team will have access to the data.

Disposal of Information

All the data collected in this research will be kept for a minimum of five years after successful submission of my thesis, after which it will be disposed of by deleting relevant computer files, and destroying or shredding hardcopy materials.

Approval

This project has been approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of New England (Approval HE18-102 Valid to 12/06/2019).

Researchers

Feel free to contact me with any questions about this research:

Contact Details

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GIRT Scientific Diver Coordinator
Mob: +61 452 077 948
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New Zealand Contact
Pam Bain
Tel: 4 472 4341
Email: PBain@heritage.org.nz

You may also contact my supervisor:

Martin Gibbs
Tel: (02) 6773 2656
Email: mgibbs3@une.edu.au.

Complaints

Should you have any complaints concerning the manner in which this research is conducted, please contact:

Mrs Jo-Ann Sozou
Research Ethics Officer
Research Services
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Tel: (02) 6773 3449
Email: ethics@une.edu.au

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to further contact with you.

regards,

Andrew Viduka