



## Participant Information Leaflet

### Sample kit request form

**Study Title:** Citizen Science: “Know your river” – Rivers as a resource for all

**“Know your river” team**

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Dr. Lijiang Song

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#### Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish.

Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

#### Who is organising and funding the study?

This project is organised by research staff at the University of Warwick, School of Life Sciences, as part of the programme Enhancing Research Culture funded by the University of Warwick.

#### What is the study about?

This part of the project aims to raise awareness on the pollution status of rivers in England and potential risks to human health. It has been shown that discharges of polluted effluents from wastewater companies have a negative impact on the quality of water, aquatic life and microorganisms that inhabit these environments. Ongoing studies investigating water quality in relation to sewage pollution of rivers in England will be further enhanced by analysis of river/stream water samples collected by the public through a citizen science approach. Samples collected by the public and received at Warwick will be chemically analysed for quantification of selected pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals and other relevant pollutants and used for detection of antibiotic resistance bacteria. The data collected through the citizen science approach will be integrated with the results of anonymous surveys regarding the use of rivers for recreational activity for correlation analysis (if you would like to participate in this part of the project too, please visit our website for the link to the survey and further information).

This study will be used to form a platform which can inform stake holders and the public about the current status of our knowledge concerning the public health risks posed by polluted rivers, in particular in relation to antibiotics and sewage pollution and antibiotic resistant pathogens.

### **What would taking part involve?**

You can voluntarily decide to collect a water sample from your local river / stream and send it to us at University of Warwick for chemical and microbiological analysis as described above. A sampling kit will be sent to you through the post and after you have collected the water sample, please send it back to us (instructions and pre-paid postage label will be provided).

### **Do I have to take part?**

No. Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can choose to withdraw your participation without giving a reason. Research data cannot be withdrawn after submission. Further details about withdrawing from the study are provided later on in this document.

### **What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?**

Your participation will allow to gather insightful knowledge on rivers pollution. Based on the results from this study, we aim to build a platform for discussion of the current status of important environmental resources such as rivers with third-party organisations and develop public awareness and interest in the science of ecosystem analysis as well as giving ownership to the fight against pollution of our environment.

### **What are the possible disadvantages, side effects or risks, of taking part in this study?**

Undertaking environmental sampling might pose some health and safety risks. Potential risks include personal injuries due to fall on slippery riverbanks, contact with hazardous plants present at the site where you plan to collect the water samples, sickness due to contact with biological hazards in the environment and environmental damage. A risk assessment has been conducted at the University of Warwick taking into consideration these aspects and a summary of good practices for sampling safely river/stream water reflecting the risk assessment is reported in the "Health & Safety guidance notes" document available on the website for consultation. Following the Health and Safety guidance notes and the provided sampling instructions present in the kit should limit the risks. However, it is your responsibility to assess the health and safety risks related to the site you are visiting for sampling and any personal circumstance or medical condition that might expose you to risks while sampling.

### **Expenses and payments**

Participation is voluntary and free. No payment or reimbursement will be provided.

### **Will my taking part be kept confidential?**

Identifiable personal data will be kept confidential and only accessed by approved members of the research team at the University of Warwick for sampling kit delivery. Identifiable personal data will not be shared with any third-party organisation. Personal protected information will be deleted after 1 month of the sampling campaign end date.

### **What will happen to the data collected about me?**

As a publicly-funded organisation, the University of Warwick has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information from people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, such as this, we will use your data in the ways needed to conduct and analyse the research study.

We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. We are committed to protecting the rights of individuals in line with data protection legislation. The University of Warwick will keep identifiable information about you for 1 month after the sampling campaign has finished. The software Qualtrics used for sampling kit request forms submission will act as data processor.

Research data will be **pseudonymised** as quickly as possible after data collection. This means all direct and indirect identifiers will be removed from the research data and will be replaced with a participant number. The key to identification will be stored separately and securely to the research data to safeguard your identity.

### **Data Sharing**

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. The University of Warwick has in place policies and procedures to keep your data safe.

This data may also be used for future research, including impact activities following review and approval by an independent Research Ethics Committee and subject to your consent at the outset of this research project.

For further information, please refer to the University of Warwick Research Privacy Notice which is available here:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/dataprotection/privacynotices/researchprivacynotice> or by contacting the Legal and Compliance Team at [GDPR@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:GDPR@warwick.ac.uk).

### **What will happen if I don't want to carry on being part of the study?**

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You can choose to withdraw your participation without giving a reason by either not sending the samples to us or requesting for your submission to be deleted. Your request will be pseudonymised as soon as the sampling kit has been dispatched from us. If environmental samples have been submitted already, you can request for your personal data to be removed from the sample kit request form, but the environmental samples cannot be withdrawn as they are collected anonymously and cannot be identified. If you would like to request for your personal data to be removed from the sample kit request form, please email the "Know your river" team at [KnowYourRiver@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:KnowYourRiver@warwick.ac.uk) with subject line "Removal of personal data from sample kit form".

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible and keep the data secure in line with the University's Information and Data Compliance policies.

### **What will happen to the results of the study?**

Results will be shared publicly through reports, talks, scientific journal publications, presentation at scientific conferences, social media posts, project website updates and discussion with other interested third-party organisations such as local organizations and non-governmental organizations.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

This study has been reviewed and given favourable opinion by the University of Warwick's Biomedical & Scientific Research Ethics Committee (BSREC): **90/21-22**

### **Who should I contact if I want further information?**

Please contact the "Know your river" team at this email address: [KnowYourRiver@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:KnowYourRiver@warwick.ac.uk)

## **Who should I contact if I wish to make a complaint?**

Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might have suffered will be addressed. Please address your complaint to the person below, who is a senior University of Warwick official entirely independent of this study:

### **Head of Research Governance**

Research & Impact Services

University House

University of Warwick

Coventry

CV4 8UW

Email: [researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk)

Tel: 02476 575733

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter: [DPO@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:DPO@warwick.ac.uk).

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

**Thank you for taking the time to read this Participant Information Leaflet**