

# Research Information Sheet for Participants

**Project Title****NEOBIOME RESEARCH PROJECT**

Designing Technology-Enabled Eco-Community Model for Aotearoa New Zealand

**Master's Research Student's Details:**

**Name:** Adam Wilder

**Email:** research@neobio.me

**Advisor's Details:**

**Name:** Felix Scholz

**Email:** felix.scholz@academyex.com

**Programme Lead's Details:**

**Name:** Laurent Antonczak

**Email:** laurent.antonczak@academyex.com

## INFORMATION SHEET

### Introduction & Project Overview

Kia ora, thank you for your interest in participating in this research project!

My name is Adam Wilder. I am currently enrolled in the Master of Technological Futures at academyEX and seek your help in meeting the requirements of the project component of my Master of Technological Futures programme.

Please take the time to read this document so that you can make an informed decision about whether you would like to express your interest in participating in this research. Participation may involve:

- One-on-one interviews (either a 15-minute informal coffee chat or a 45-minute in-depth interview)
- Completing online survey(s)
- Site visits to eco-communities

### Project Aims

The aim of my project is to design a technology-enabled eco-community model that is specifically suited to Aotearoa New Zealand's context. This research seeks to explore:

- Best practices from existing eco-villages and sustainable communities in New Zealand
- Technology integration possibilities for eco-communities (renewable energy, water systems, waste management, smart technologies)

- Policy frameworks that enable or constrain eco-community development
- Practical adaptation strategies for implementing eco-community principles in New Zealand

The ultimate goal is to develop a replicable model that can support the creation of sustainable, resilient, and liveable communities in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### **Voluntary Participation & Withdrawal**

- Participation in my research project is **completely voluntary**. You are free to decline to participate at any time.
- If you choose to participate, you will be able to withdraw your participation at any time up until **30 May 2026**.
- If you wish to withdraw, you can email me at [research@neobio.me](mailto:research@neobio.me)). Withdrawing from my research will have no impact on you.
- If you withdraw before 30 May 2026, any data you have provided will be destroyed and will not be included in my research outputs.

### **Who Can Participate?**

I am seeking to engage with a diverse range of participants who have knowledge or experience relevant to eco-communities, sustainable living, and related technologies or policies. This includes:

- **Eco-village leaders and residents** with experience in community governance, sustainable living practices, and community development
- **Technology experts** working on renewable energy, smart systems, water management, waste systems, or other technologies relevant to sustainable communities
- **Policy makers and urban planners** involved in housing, sustainability, community development, or related policy areas
- **Sustainability practitioners** and consultants working in the eco-community space
- **Academics and researchers** focused on sustainable communities, ecological design, or related fields
- **Community leaders and advocates** working on sustainability initiatives

### **You can participate if you:**

- Are aged 18 or above
- Have knowledge, experience, or expertise relevant to eco-communities, sustainable technologies, community development, or related policy areas
- Are willing to share your insights, experiences, and perspectives

**There are no specific exclusions**, and I welcome diverse perspectives from anyone with relevant knowledge or interest in the topic.

### **What Does Participation Involve?**

Participation in this research may involve one or more of the following activities:

#### **1. Interviews**

##### **Short Informal Interview (Coffee Chat):**

- Duration: Approximately 15 minutes
- Format: Informal conversation, in-person (Auckland) or online via Microsoft Teams
- Purpose: Brief exploration of your experience and perspectives

#### **In-Depth Interview:**

- Duration: Approximately 45 minutes
- Format: Semi-structured interview, in-person (Auckland) or online via Microsoft Teams
- Purpose: Deep dive into specific topics such as best practices, challenges, technology integration, policy barriers, or lessons learned

#### **Interview Process:**

- I will ask you questions about your experience and knowledge related to community development, sustainability, technologies and related topics
- With your permission, interviews will be audio recorded using Microsoft Teams' built-in recording and transcription features
- **Please note:** Microsoft Teams recordings and transcripts are stored securely within Microsoft 365 services (such as OneDrive or SharePoint) associated with the researcher's Microsoft 365 tenant and are subject to Microsoft's enterprise security and privacy standards. Access to these recordings and transcripts is restricted to the researcher.

## **2. Site Visits**

If you are part of an eco-village or sustainable community, I may request to visit your site to:

- Observe sustainable practices, technologies, and community design in action
- Document (with your permission) physical infrastructure, systems, and community spaces through photographs or notes
- Better understand the lived experience of eco-community members

Site visits will be arranged at a time convenient for you and your community, and will be conducted respectfully and with minimal disruption.

## **3. Online Survey(s)**

- **Eco-villages survey:** targeting existing eco-villages to gather information about their current technology usage, infrastructure, and experiences with technology integration in their communities
- **Public / potential residents survey:** targeting the general public and potential residents to gather sentiment about their attitudes, expectations, and openness toward living in a technology-enabled eco-village

## **Your Privacy**

### **Confidentiality and Anonymity**

- In the context of my project, **confidentiality** means that your identity will only be known to me (Adam, the researcher) and potentially my advisor. Your responses will be **anonymised** before being shared with anyone else or included in any research outputs.

- Your interview responses, survey responses, and any other data you provide will be **anonymous** in all research outputs (including my master's report, presentations, website, or any publications).
- Your **real name and contact information** will not be shared with anyone other than me and will not be included in any research outputs.
- However, I will keep the option open to acknowledge **opinion leaders or high-profile participants** by name **only with your explicit written consent**. For example, if you are a recognized leader in the eco-community movement and agree to be identified, I may acknowledge your contribution in a LinkedIn article or similar publication. This will be entirely optional and will require separate consent.

### Use of Quotes

- Anonymised quotes from your interview or survey responses may be included in my research outputs (master's report, presentations, website, or publications).
- I will not seek individual permission before using anonymised quotes, as they will not be identifiable to you.
- If I wish to use a direct quote that could potentially identify you, I will contact you to seek your explicit permission before including it in any output.

### Risk of Identification

While I will make every effort to protect your privacy by anonymising your responses, please note that **I cannot completely exclude the risk of you being identified** by those who know you well, particularly if you express distinctive views or provide specific details about your experience. If this is a concern for you, please feel free to discuss it with me before participating.

### Security & Storage of Your Information

- All data collected from interviews, site visits, and surveys will be stored securely on **password-protected platforms and devices**, specifically **Microsoft SharePoint** (document library) and my personal password-protected computer.
- **Audio recordings** of interviews will be securely stored during the research period and will be **deleted immediately after the completion of my master's degree (September 2026)**.
- **Transcripts and survey data** will be stored securely and will be **destroyed approximately two years after the completion of my master's degree** (approximately September 2028).
- **Signed consent forms** will be securely stored and will be **destroyed approximately two years after the completion of my master's degree** (approximately September 2028).

### Use of AI Tools

The raw data collected from interviews and surveys may be analysed with the assistance of **artificial intelligence (AI) tools**, including:

- Microsoft Teams' built-in transcription features
- Microsoft 365 tools (Word, Excel) with AI features (Microsoft Copilot)
- Other AI tools for thematic analysis or data visualization
- If external AI tools are used for data analysis, **the raw data will be anonymised** before being entered into the tool

- I will carefully consider the privacy and data storage policies of any external AI tools before using them.
- AI tools will only be used to support analysis and will not be used to make automated decisions about participants.

### Data Outputs and Archiving

- The analysed data (summary findings, themes, insights) will be included in my master's report and may be shared on my project website and in presentations or publications.
- **No primary data** (raw interview transcripts, audio recordings, or survey responses) will be publicly shared. Only the **analysis and results** will be made available.
- The analysed data and findings will be archived indefinitely and may be used in future presentations, publications, or on my personal website (research.neobio.me).

### Benefits of Participating & Research Findings

By participating in this research, you will:

- Contribute to the development of a technology-enabled eco-community model specifically designed for Aotearoa New Zealand
- Help identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities for eco-communities in New Zealand
- Support the advancement of knowledge about sustainable living and community development in the New Zealand context
- Potentially influence future policy and practice related to eco-communities and sustainable housing

### Research Methods

As part of my master's research, I will be using the following research methods:

- **Literature review** to understand existing knowledge about eco-communities and sustainable technologies
- **Systems mapping** to analyse the relationships between different elements of eco-communities
- **Interviews** to gather in-depth insights from experts and practitioners
- **Site visits** to observe eco-communities in practice
- **Surveys** to collect broader perspectives and data

Most of the data collected will be **qualitative** and analysed thematically. Some survey data may be **quantitative** and analysed using descriptive statistics.

### Access to Research Findings

The research findings will be shared via:

- My **master's report** (submitted to academyEX in September 2026)

- My **project website** (research.neobio.me), which will include summaries of findings, insights, and recommendations
- **Presentations** at academic conferences or community events
- Potential **publications** in academic journals or industry outlets

### Research Timeline

- **Research activities:** March – May 2026
- **Final date to withdraw participation:** 30 May 2026
- **Expected completion:** September 2026

### Digital Consent Process

For your convenience, this research uses a **digital consent process**. After reviewing this Information Sheet, you will be asked to complete an online consent form via **Microsoft Forms**.

#### How the digital consent process works:

1. After reading this Information Sheet, you will complete an online consent form via Microsoft Forms
2. Once you have submitted your consent form, you will receive a link to your interview via Microsoft Bookings
3. By typing your name and submitting the form from your email address, you are providing your **legally binding digital consent** to participate in this research
4. This digital consent has the same legal effect as a handwritten signature under New Zealand law
5. You will receive an automatic confirmation email with a copy of your completed consent form for your records
6. The consent form captures your email address, timestamp, and responses, creating a secure audit trail

#### Benefits of digital consent:

- Convenient and accessible from any device
- Immediate confirmation and record keeping
- Secure storage in password-protected Microsoft systems
- Easy to complete before your interview
- Environmentally friendly (no paper required)

If you prefer to provide written consent on paper, or if you have any concerns about the digital consent process, please contact me at [research@neobio.me](mailto:research@neobio.me) and I will arrange an alternative method.

### Conclusion of Information Sheet

If you agree to participate in my master's research project, you will be asked to complete the digital consent form first. After submitting your consent, you will receive access to the interview booking system to schedule your participation. Completing the consent form does not prevent you from changing your mind or withdrawing from the research project before **30 May 2026**.

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If you have questions or concerns about my project at any time during my master's studies, please email me at [research@neobio.me](mailto:research@neobio.me). If you wish to withdraw as a participant, you can email me directly at [research@neobio.me](mailto:research@neobio.me). **Withdrawing from my research will have no impact on you.**

Regardless of whether you choose to participate, to not participate, or to withdraw from my research project, I still very much appreciate your time and consideration. Thank you kindly!

### **Ethics Approval Information**

**Ethics approval Number:** MTF.8888.294

This study has been approved by the ethics panel of the academyEX Research, Enterprise and Ethics (REE) Working Group from 14/11/2025 to 14/11/2027. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the REE through the chair ([david.parsons@academyex.com](mailto:david.parsons@academyex.com)). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

**If you are happy to participate in this research, please read sign the Consent Form electronically.**

**Link to electronic Consent Form:** [Research Consent Form](#)