

Plain Language Statement

School of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences



Project: Perceptions of Landscape Professionals to Woody Meadows: A Novel Planting Approach for Low Maintenance Public Plantings

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in our research project. Here is some information to help you decide if you would like to take part.

Please read this information carefully. Should you have any questions about anything you don't understand, or want to know more about, please contact the project researchers.

Participation is voluntary. If you don't wish to take part, you don't have to. If you begin participating by starting the survey you can stop at any time by closing the browser and your answers will not be recorded.

What is this research about?

The aim of this Masters level student research project is to understand landscape professionals' views (perceptions) about Woody Meadow plantings, a novel planting approach using Australian shrubs to create high quality and low maintenance public plantings, currently being installed in Australian cities.

For this project we are interested in the views of horticulturalists, landscape architects, urban planners, parks and open space officers and others working in the design, management and/or planning of public landscapes in the greater Melbourne metropolitan area. Accordingly, you need to meet this criteria in order to complete the survey. People who do not work in the Greater Melbourne area will not be able to complete the survey and will automatically be exited from the survey tool.

What will I be asked to do?

This 10-15 minute anonymised survey will ask you about your views on Woody Meadows. Questions will cover the aesthetics, biodiversity value, ecosystem service benefits, maintenance requirements and costs. You will also be asked about the opportunities Woody Meadow plantings provide for expanding planting diversity in urban areas. Questions will also cover your background and work in public landscapes as well. There are no right or wrong answers, we just want to know what you think. This survey is open for a three (3) week period from Monday 13 March 2023 until COB Friday 31 March 2023.

You can navigate through the questions by using the arrows located at the bottom of the page. You can also go back and change previous answers if desired.

To help you complete the survey, photographs explaining the Woody Meadow approach and the plantings used are included, either as images you can scroll through directly within the survey or as a link which opens as a new tab on your browser.

It is recommended the survey be completed on a computer so images are large enough to see clearly, however it can be completed on a mobile phone or tablet if required.

What are the possible benefits?

By participating in this research you will help researchers better understand the views of landscape professionals about a novel approach to low maintenance public landscape plantings. You will also help them to develop generalisable findings on how Woody Meadow plantings may be applied in other public urban landscapes.

What are the possible risks?

The focus of this research project is your own personal views on a novel planting approach for low maintenance public landscapes. It does not ask any questions on sensitive or distressing topics. Accordingly, it is considered the possible risks to you through participation are minimal.

To help protect your identity, the survey is anonymised. Individual participants and/or employers or clients will not be able to be identified. Identifying information, including the names of employer organisations or other personal information will not be collected.

Will I hear about the results of this project?

The results of this research will be summarised and provided to all participants who wish to be notified. These results may also be made publicly available through conference papers and seminars, research publications and in the student research project report.

What will happen to information about me?

All information collected about you will be held in secure electronic storage and will be accessible only to the student researcher/ investigator and the project supervisors, with responsibility for managing the data resting with the responsible researcher and primary project supervisor.

Except where participants have expressly consented to providing their email contact details for the purposes of receiving project updates and results, all research data collected will be in aggregated and de-identified form.

At the end of 5 years after submission of the student research project report all research data will be destroyed in accordance with university data retention policy.

Is there any potential conflict of interest?

Both Associate Professor Farrell and Associate Professor Rayner are highly linked to the woody meadow concept, as they are lead researcher and chief investigator respectively for the Woody Meadow Project which is trialling the use of the planting approach.

Accordingly there is the potential for perceived conflict of interest. However this potential has been considered in the design of the study and by involvement of a third research supervisor not connected to the Woody Meadow Project, Professor Williams.

Where can I get further information?

If you would like more information about the project or encounter problems when completing the survey, please contact the responsible researcher: Associate Professor Farrell Tel: [+61 3 9035 6849](tel:+61390356849) or Email: c.farrell@unimelb.edu.au or the student researcher/ investigator, Ms Beesley Mobile [+61 401 089 422](tel:+61401089422) or Email: abeesley@student.unimelb.edu.au

Who can I contact if I have any concerns about the project?

This project has human research ethics approval from The University of Melbourne [ID number 2023-25281-36504-3]. If you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of this research project, which you do not wish to discuss with the research team, you should contact the Research Integrity Administrator, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity, University of Melbourne, VIC 3010. Tel: +61 3 8344 1376 or Email: research-integrity@unimelb.edu.au. All complaints will be treated confidentially. In any correspondence please provide the name of the research team and/or the name or ethics ID number of the research project.