



Are you interested in taking part in the research project “Design of Technology for Work Life Balance”?

Purpose of the project

You are invited to participate in a research project where the main purpose is to investigate, through a combination of conceptual and empirical research, how people can use digital technologies to negotiate work-life boundaries, so to achieve some balance between work and life matters. In so doing, it aims at advancing knowledge in the design of technology for work-life balance.

This project will be guided by three research questions.

- How, if in any ways, are higher education professionals currently using digital technologies to negotiate work-life boundaries?
- To what extent are those technology succeeding in supporting them in accomplishing work-life balance?
- What design opportunities are there for new technologies or technological improvements to support with work-life boundary negotiation for better work-life balance?

This is a doctoral thesis research towards the attainment of Doctor of Philosophy in Informatics – Design of Information Systems. Data collected will be used for the purpose of this project only and no other purposes.

Which institution is responsible for the research project?

University of Oslo, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural science, Department of Informatics is responsible for the project (data controller).

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being selected because you qualify as a member of the participant group: professors at all levels, postdoctoral researchers, PHD research fellows or independent researcher. These groups of professionals are constantly involved in research, teaching, or administrative tasks and due to the flexible nature of their work (travelling for conference, remote work, lecturing, etc.) they make use of technologies that enable them integrate work and life matters from any location or environment. A maximum of 20 participants will be recruited for this project.



What does participation involve for you?

Overall, there are three (3) studies involved in this project. **This is the second study**, and it is known as the design study. At this phase of the study the researcher will work collaboratively with you in the design of an artefact using participatory design approach. Your contribution into how technologies can be designed to effectively negotiate work life balance will immensely be beneficial to this field of study.

This process will involve three (3) workshops at agreed locations where low fidelity prototype can be brainstormed and designed (paper drawings, use of materials, etc.). Pictures will be taken of progress made on the design. Care will be taken that your face is not captured. You will be allowed to review the data afterward. You can suggest changes or request for data to be deleted.

A workshop or focus group may last for a max of three (3) hours at time. Meaning a session can last for 1 hour, 2 hours or 3 hours maximum at a time. If you or the researcher wishes for data collection to last longer than three (3) hours, it will have to be agreed by both parties orally or in-writing (paper, email, etc.).

No design or technical background is required—only a willingness to share, imagine, and build ideas collaboratively.

Workshop Theme 1: Rethinking Communication Technologies for Balance

Synchronous & Asynchronous Communication for Healthy Boundaries

In today's connected workspaces, the boundaries between professional and personal time are often blurred. This workshop explores how we can reimagine communication technologies—including messaging, video calls, and emails—to support more sustainable rhythms of work.

We'll collaboratively investigate for example:

- How real-time and delayed communication affect stress and productivity.
- What role notification timing, availability settings, and response expectations play.
- What design choices might empower users to better manage interruptions.

Participants will co-design interaction models, rules of engagement, and system behaviors that support respectful, boundary-aware communication.

Workshop Theme 2: Designing for Rhythm – Scheduling and Visualization Technologies

Supporting Intentional Planning with Calendars, Timelines, and Workflows



Calendars and scheduling tools are often rigid, fragmented, or overloaded. This workshop focuses on visual and temporal tools that support intentional planning, better control over time, and visual cues for balance.

We'll explore for example:

- How calendar tools can surface work–life trends and rhythms.
- Visualizations that highlight time spent in meetings vs. breaks.
- New models of scheduling that factor in energy, personal commitments, and flexibility.

Participants will co-design new prototypes, interfaces, and visualization metaphors that enable more holistic and human-centered scheduling.

Workshop Theme 3: Awareness and Attention in the Age of Notifications

Designing Subtle, Supportive Technologies for Context-Awareness

From smartwatches to mobile alerts, modern work involves constant nudges for attention. This workshop explores how we can design technologies that promote awareness—of ourselves, others, and work context—without overwhelming or interrupting.

Discussion topics include:

- Life notifications that promote presence, not distraction.
- Ambient displays or cues for shared team awareness without disruption.
- Technologies that help users notice when and how they are focusing or drifting.

Participants will explore non-intrusive design strategies and create mockups or stories about how awareness systems can be respectful and restorative.

Participation Format

- Each workshop will run on a separate day (dates TBA).
- Participants may join one, two, or all three sessions.
- Each workshop will include context-setting talks, collaborative design activities, reflection, and concept sketching.

Data collection

The expected data collection output will take the form of sketches, diagrams, mockups, storyboards, pot-its, whiteboard notes, pictures of the sessions (no participant can be identified from this image), audio recording of group discussion, and reflections. Below is the timeline for this phase of data collection:

- Design study data collection 2 months (May 2025 – June 2025)



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Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified here and we will process your personal data in accordance with data protection legislation (the GDPR).

- *Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data, no one else will be given access to the data.*
- *To ensure that the above is met, UiO approved devices (microphone, camera, and laptop) will be used for data collection. In addition, UiO Service for Sensitive Data (TSD) will be the only data service for collecting (UiO Nettskema - survey), storage, access, securing, and analysis of data. The TSD ensures that no unauthorised person gets access to the data.*
- *In addition to the TSD, strategies such as coding of personally identifiable data, separation of related data, encryption, etc. will be adopted for further security.*
- *No participant will be recognizable in any publication made from this study. Pseudonyms or generalize information will be used where necessary.*

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The planned end date of the project is December 2027. All personal data if any will be extracted, separated, and deleted (removed) from the dataset. The rest of the data will be anonymised and the guideline of the national strategy on access to and sharing of research data and the research council's policy for open access to research data will be applied.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- object to the processing of your personal data, and
- send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data because the project has been assessed to be in the public interest.

Based on an agreement with The University of Oslo, The Data Protection Services of Sikt – Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project meets requirements in data protection legislation.



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Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- University of Oslo, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural science, Department of Informatics via David Sampah (PHD Research Fellow) - daviasam@uio.no
- Supervised by Dr. Aparecido Fabiano Pinatti de Carvalho - fabiano.pinatti@ifi.uio.no
- Supervised by Professor Tone Bratteteig - tone@ifi.uio.no
- Our Data Protection Officer: Roger Markgraf-Bye - personvernombud@uio.no

If you have questions about how data protection has been assessed in this project by Sikt, contact:

- email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 73 98 40 40.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "E. J. A.".

Project Leader
(Researcher/supervisor)