

## Participant Information Sheet

### Project Title

Understanding the Influence of Pay Transparency on Gen-Z Organisational Commitment in Fashion Retail Industry

**Main researcher (Primary Researcher):** Thin Nadi Thwe

**Research supervisor:** Dr. Betty Ofe-Grant

**Date that data collection process (interview) will start:** 20/07/2025

### Welcome introduction

*Kia Ora,*

You are invited to take part in a research study about how pay transparency (how openly salaries and pay structures are shared within an organisation) affects Generation Z employees' commitment in the fashion retail industry.

This study is being conducted by Thin Nadi Thwe, a master student at Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, with the guidance of Dr. Betty Ofe-Grant (research supervisor). This research is part of the requirements for completing a Master of Business degree in Management.

This Participant Information Sheet provides all the necessary details about the study, including why you have been invited, what your participation involves, potential benefits and risks, your rights as a participant, and what happens after the study is completed. It is designed to help you understand the purpose of this research and how your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how pay transparency and Gen-Z employees' commitment are connected in the fashion retail industry. By reading this information sheet, you will be able to make an informed decision about whether you would like to take part.

This document is six pages long, and we encourage you to read it carefully to fully understand the study. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

### What is the purpose of this research?

The main purpose of this research is to explore whether pay transparency truly influences Gen Z employees' commitment in the fashion retail industry, which faces high turnover rates. While reviewing existing academic research, I found that although factors like work-life balance, career development, and growth are well-studied in relation to organisational commitment, pay transparency remains largely

underexplored. This gap in knowledge sparked curiosity about whether openly sharing pay information could improve job satisfaction, trust, and long-term commitment among Gen Z employees to their respective organisations.

To investigate this, the study will use a qualitative approach with semi-structured interviews, gathering insights and opinions from approximately 10-12 Gen-Z participants who are currently working in fashion retail stores in Auckland, New Zealand. The results and findings from this study will contribute to academic research, industry practices, and discussions on workplace transparency, helping fashion retailers develop better strategies to engage and retain Gen Z employees. The results may be used for academic publications and presentations

This research study has been approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 21/05/2025, AUTEK Reference number (25/117).

### **How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?**

Potential participants have been invited to take part in this research because they may have responded to a recruitment advertisement on social media, shown interest during in-person visits to fashion retail stores, or been referred through the snowball sampling technique.

For the final participant selection, the study will be following the provided inclusion and exclusion criteria.

#### **Inclusion Criteria (Who may be selected):**

- Participants must belong to Generation Z group (aged 18-28).
- Participants must be currently employed in the fashion retail industry (either part-time or full-time).
- Participants can be male or female.
- Participants must be based and worked in Auckland, New Zealand.
- Participants that consent to being interviewed.

#### **Exclusion criteria (Who may not be selected):**

- Former employees who have already left the fashion retail businesses.
- Individuals with a direct personal relationship to the researcher (e.g., close friends or family members) to ensure unbiased findings.

### **How do I agree to participate in this research?**

If you decide to take part in the study, you can contact the researcher via email and you will be provided with a Consent Form, either in physical or digital format, depending on your choice in doing online or in-person interview. You will have the opportunity to review the information, ask any questions, and only after voluntarily signing the Consent Form will your participation be confirmed. The research will proceed once the consent is given.

You are also given to make a choice to withdraw from the study at any time by informing the researcher if you ever feel any discomfort or unsafe regarding the research. When you choose to withdraw, you may request for any information collected up until your withdrawal to be deleted unless you withdraw after the study analyses have been undertaken, in which case your data may be used to maintain the study's integrity.

### **What rights do I have as a participant?**

As a participant, you have several important rights:

**Confidentiality:** All study files and the information you provide will remain strictly confidential. No material that could personally identify you will be included in any reports or discussions.

**Access to Information:** You have the right to access the information collected about you during the study. If any findings appear that may be beneficial to you, the researcher will contact you as well.

**Voluntary Participation:** Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. There will be no pressure to take part.

**Interview Environment:** In order for you to share your thoughts and insights freely and honestly, the researcher will choose an environment that is quiet and private and create a neutral setting for the interview process.

### **What will my participation involve?**

After confirming your participation and signing the consent form, face-to-face interviews will take place in AUT private study rooms, Auckland Library, and various cafeterias that provide a quiet atmosphere suited for the interview. For online interviews, video call applications such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams will be used.

Before the interview process, a set of questions will be sent in advance, along with the consent form, to guide you through the research interview. The one-on-one interview will take around 30 - 60 minutes to complete, depending on the flow of the conversation. Data will be collected through recorded interviews (audio only, unless otherwise agreed upon), and confidentiality will be maintained using pseudonyms. You will have two weeks to review and offer any feedback on the transcript before it is used in the study.

### **What are the benefits?**

This study will help fill the academic gap in understanding how pay transparency influences Generation Z employees' organisational commitment, particularly within the fashion retail industry. By exploring on employee perspectives, the research will contribute to management and human resource literature on workplace transparency, motivation, and retention.

For fashion retail organisations in New Zealand, The findings may also provide valuable insights into how pay transparency affects young employees' job satisfaction, engagement, and long-term commitment. This can help businesses develop better salary policies to attract and retain Gen Z talent while fostering a fair and transparent work culture.

Participants will benefit by having the opportunity to voice their experiences and perspectives, contributing to meaningful research that may improve workplace practices. The researcher will gain new valuable insights for their master's thesis, advancing knowledge in organisational management.

### **What are the costs?**

The main cost for participants will be their time, depending on the flow of the conversation. For face-to-face interviews, participants may incur costs related to transport and parking while traveling to the interview location. For online interviews, participants may need to cover their internet fees. However, these costs will not be reimbursed.

As a token of appreciation for their time and participation, every participant who completes the interview process will receive a token of appreciation a \$30 gift voucher or shopping voucher in recognition of their contribution to the research.

### **Will the results of the study be published?**

The results of this research will be published in a Master's thesis, which will be accessible to the general public through the AUT Library.

### **What are the discomforts and risks and how will they be alleviated?**

Since no sensitive data is required for the research, any discomfort should be minimal, though some interview questions might cause discomfort for the participants as the research topic is related to pay information and transparency. The data collected will only reflect the participants' personal experiences and perceptions without revealing their identities or organisations, ensuring there is no risk involved in this research. Since everything will remain confidential, any concerns related to cultural, employment, financial, or similar pressures will not be an issue. Participants are also free to skip any questions they do not feel comfortable answering.

### **What will happen to information about me?**

All the information related to you will be handled as follow:

**Identifiability of Data:** The data collected will be non-identifiable with the use of pseudonym where participants' names will be changed to numerical pseudonyms to protect anonymity. No personally identifiable information will be linked to responses.

**Types of Information Collected:** The study will collect opinions and experiences regarding pay transparency and organizational commitment. No sensitive personal data such as health, education, or organizational records will be requested.

**Data Storage and Access:** All collected data, including interview recordings and transcriptions, will be securely stored on AUT's OneDrive with restricted access only to the primary researcher and the research supervisor. The paper Consent Forms will also be kept in a locked drawer in the supervisor's office at AUT University. The data will be stored for a minimum of six years, in accordance with AUTECH ethical guidelines. After this period, all electronic data will be permanently deleted, and any physical documents will be securely shredded.

**Coding and Anonymization:** Each participant will be assigned a participant number or pseudonym, ensuring that no responses can be traced back to an individual. The list linking participant names to pseudonyms will be securely kept by the primary researcher.

**Use of Data:** Participants are only consenting to the use of their data for this specific research project. No future or extended research use is planned. The data will not be stored in an open scientific repository or linked to other data sources.

**Participant Rights:** Participants have the right to access and review their own interview transcripts to ensure accuracy. They may also request corrections to their information.

**Legal and Ethical Compliance:** Identifiable information will only be disclosed outside the study if required by law or if the participant provides explicit permission.

### **What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?**

Potential participants will have at least one week to consider the invitation. During this period, they may contact the primary researcher for further clarification. Additionally, a follow-up invitation will be sent via email one week after the initial invitation to remind those who expressed initial interest but have not yet confirmed their participation.

### **Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?**

If participants request for the summary of the findings in the consent form, they will receive a digital copy of a one- or two-page summary via email after the study is completed.

You are also welcome to review the transcript of your interview before data analysis; this can be indicated in the Consent Form. This is to ensure that the participants perspectives are accurately represented in the research.

### **Who do I contact for further information about this research?**

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

#### **Supervisor Contact Details:**

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Supervisor.

Full Name – Dr. Betty Ofe-Grant

Email – [betty.ofe-grant@aut.ac.nz](mailto:betty.ofe-grant@aut.ac.nz)

#### **Primary Researcher Contact Details:**

Full Name – Thin Nadi Thwe

Email – [qtq0891@autuni.ac.nz](mailto:qtq0891@autuni.ac.nz) (OR) [thinnadithwe4@gmail.com](mailto:thinnadithwe4@gmail.com)

#### **AUTEC (Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee):**

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEC, [ethics@aut.ac.nz](mailto:ethics@aut.ac.nz), (+649) 921 9999 ext. 6038.

**Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 21/05/2025**

**AUTEC Reference number 25/117.**