



Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU) Research Participation Consent

Project: A Digital Active Aging Training Program for Older Adults (AAT)
Study 2. White Canadian Older Adults (AAT_EN)

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INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE. This study assesses the effectiveness of an active aging program on physical, mental, and social functions of White Canadian older adults. It is funded through a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant and an Age-Well Grant, reviewed and approved by the Toronto Metropolitan University Research Ethics board [REB 2023-187]. This study will serve as Cassandra Skrotzki's dissertation project. Our partners include Cogniciti and CogniFit who would provide support with their web-based brain assessment/training tasks.

WHAT YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO DO. The study has four phases: pretest, training (16 sessions over 4 weeks), posttest, and 1-month follow-up. The outcome evaluation sessions (i.e., pretest, posttest, and follow-up) will occur in groups on Zoom, with an online outcome test package on physical, psychological, cognitive, and social functions. Each outcome evaluation session will take around 1.5 – 2 hours. The pretest evaluation also includes sociodemographic and COVID-related questions, as well as two screening measures for cognitive and physical impairment. The training includes 8 training sessions (1.5 hours each, twice a week) delivered in small groups on Zoom (10-15 individuals) hosted by research assistants, and 8 practice sessions completed on your own (following links on a Google sheet). These sessions will be recorded, followed by a short online feedback survey to reflect on the training experience. Please note that if you miss a training session you will be required to watch the recorded session and complete the required activities. Data from those who fail to complete at least half of the training sessions will not be included in the final analysis. The outcome and training tasks include physical, social, and cognitive elements where you will learn and engage in activities that contribute to healthy and active aging. The entire process will take around 30 hours if you participate in all the training and evaluation sessions.

ELIGIBILITY. This study involves tasks that need to be completed online on your own computer, thus basic computer skills, and the ability to attend Zoom meetings, are required. We will recruit 120 participants who meeting the following criteria:

- 1) Aged 65 or over and healthy
- 2) White Canadian citizen
- 3) Can speak, read and write English
- 4) Have access to a computer with internet access and supports Zoom

POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS. You may not directly benefit from participating in this study. The potential benefits may include (1) you will learn and engage in activities that contribute to health and active aging, and (2) being part of scientific research into the development of an active aging training program. All information provided comes from a research perspective, and as such we cannot guarantee any therapeutic benefit from participation. Please note that you may not experience *any* benefits from participating. This study is considered low risk, and you will not be exposed to anything significantly different from your daily life. However, some questions might be challenging or make you feel uncomfortable, in which case you are free to skip any questions that you do not wish to complete. You may withdraw from the study at any time by telling a member of the research team and/or actively disengage yourself from the task. If you

experience any lasting discomfort after exiting the study, you may contact the research lab for support or further resources. Please note that to complete some physical tasks, you may be required to seek approval from your family physician or care providers to minimize the risk of injury. Please closely follow task instructions and adjust your level of engagement according to what feels right for you.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY. Sociodemographic information (e.g., age, gender, education) will be collected for screening purposes and to assess their impact on the results. Given the group testing format, your participation is not anonymous but will remain confidential within your group. There is a potential risk that your personal identity may be revealed (e.g., being identified either directly or inadvertently) and/or that dual relationships (e.g., pre-existing relationships between researchers and participants or among participants) may occur. All participants are requested to protect the privacy and confidential information of oneself and others in the online group sessions. Any disclosed personal information will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any presentations or publications. Each participant will be given a unique study email address to access study materials on Google Classroom and attend regular Zoom meetings related to this study. These emails might be accessible to the research team, so please do not send any personal emails through this dedicated study email account.

The data will be de-identified and coded by subject numbers and saved in a passcode protected lab server/folder that is accessible exclusively to the research team. We will consult and strictly adhere to PHIPA principles with respect to the collection, storage, and deletion of all personal health information gathered. All hard-copy materials (if applicable) will be filed in a dedicated filing cabinet located in the Cognitive Aging Laboratory at TMU.

POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OF INTEREST. There is no real conflict of interest related to the research agreements made between Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), on behalf of the Cognitive Aging Lab (CAL), and the research partners, CogniFit and Cogniciti. Please note that both CogniFit and Cogniciti are for-profit organizations. There is a possibility that they might cite the publication/presentation results from this project to promote their services/products. However, there is no direct commercialization of the results from the current study. The data collected here are for research purposes only, and the companies involved will have no control or influence on the study results and findings.

DATA STORAGE. Qualtrics. The outcome test package will be built in Qualtrics (a US platform). US authorities under the provisions of the USA Freedom Act (formerly known as the Patriot Act) may access the data (<https://www.qualtrics.com/privacy-statement/>). However, all participants will be given a study ID to identify themselves in Qualtrics, meaning that their personal identity will not be connected to their Qualtrics survey answers. All data will be encrypted and backed up on the Qualtrics server, then downloaded by the researcher, after which the data will be deleted from Qualtrics. Your IP address will not be collected.

CogniFit. The CogniFit data will be encrypted and stored on Amazon Web Services (AWS) servers in the USA. Consequently, US authorities under the provisions of the USA Freedom Act may also access this data. Participants' study email addresses, location, and IP addresses will be collected for the purposes of accessing the CogniFit platform (e.g., creating an account), troubleshooting technical issues, and producing aggregated user statistics. This information will be kept secure and confidential by CogniFit, in accordance with PHIPAA, CPA, and GDPR requirements. CogniFit does not sell any collected data.

Cogniciti. Participants' raw data will remain the property of Cogniciti, and will be handled according to their [Terms of Use](#) and [Privacy Policy](#). The Cogniciti study results collected for this project will be owned by TMU, on behalf of the Cognitive Aging Lab. Cogniciti will be given the rights to use the Cogniciti Study Results for the purpose of (a) conducting this study; (b) possible publication of the study results on Cogniciti, and (d) further developing and validating the Services.

The online training sessions will be video recorded for transcription, double-checking, replaying, and further analysis. These recordings will only be accessible to the research team and will be deleted once transcribed. All the data will be saved in a passcode-protected Cognitive Aging Laboratory server/folder at Toronto Metropolitan University, and only accessible to the research team. The research team has full access to the data and can analyze it for research purposes and knowledge dissemination.

All data will be de-identified (removing information such as names and contact information), coded by subject number, and saved in the passcode-protected Cognitive Aging Laboratory server/folder at TMU. This de-identified data will be deposited into a publicly accessible repository (e.g., Open Science Framework) with your consent. You are still eligible to participate even if you do not consent to the future use or public accessibility of your de-identified data. Proper procedures will be followed before any additional data analysis is performed.

Data files with identifying information will be stored for 3 years after completing data collection to allow for double-checking and/or coding purposes. The de-identified raw data files and coded, aggregated data files will be stored in the lab drive for 10 years following publication.

DATA DISSEMINATION. Only the group data will be analyzed and disseminated (i.e., presentations, publications, community knowledge mobilization events). The main results will be posted on the [lab website](#) and/or in the lab newsletter within 3 years of study completion.

YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT. You are not giving up your legal rights by agreeing to participate in this study. Participation is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw at any point. You may skip questions or withdraw at any time. You may contact us (aging.cal@torontomu.ca) to withdraw your participation up until the follow-up evaluation session. Given the group nature of the Zoom meetings, we will not be able to remove your participation from these recordings. However, any data collected up to your withdrawal will not be included for further analysis. Withdrawing from the study will not affect your relationship with the researchers or Toronto Metropolitan University.

INCENTIVE FOR PARTICIPATION. You will receive \$15 for each of the pretest, posttest, and follow-up sessions, as well as a \$15 bonus if you complete all the training/practice sessions. Payment will be in e-gift card format (Walmart or Amazon) and will be sent to you at the end of the study, or when you withdraw from the study.

QUESTIONS. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please email us at cal@torontomu.ca with the subject title "AAT - English". You may reach out to the Principal Investigator, Cassandra Skrotzki, at cskrotzki@torontomu.ca. Please understand that if you reach out to us your identity will be revealed to the person you have contacted, however this information will be kept confidential. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact:

TMU Research Ethics Board
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Toronto Metropolitan University
350 Victoria street, Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K3
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You may, at your discretion, share the information in this consent form with your primary care physician and/or other health care providers.

If you need mental health support, feel free to call Toronto Seniors Helpline (416-217-2077/ 1-877-621-2077), Seniors Safety Line 1-866-299-1011 or 911 in case of emergency. You may also contact any of the agencies listed on the [CMHA webpage](#).