Three UK-based groups have been selected to take part:

- Social Entrepreneurs (SEs)
  - SEs are often on the go and are an example of a remote worker
  - SEs have no standard working hours or work location
  - SEs’ work focuses primarily on social impact

- Students
  - Younger population aged between 16 and 25 years old
  - Under- or postgraduate in any field

- Office-based employees
  - Employees who work regular working hours
  - Office-bound (no home workers)
  - In any industry and level of seniority

The aims form part of a multidisciplinary research agenda which is described below:

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are known for their impact on individuals, teams, organizations and societies at large (e.g. Panteli, 2009)

- Boundary theory within the literature on Work-Life Balance (WLB) argues that individuals perform different roles (e.g. colleague, parent) in the different domains of their lives (e.g. work, family) (Burke, 2006)

- Different types of transitions (or switches) between and across those different roles and domains have been identified (e.g. micro/macro, physical/psychological) (Ashforth, 2000)

- However, it is not clear how the rising popularity and use of ICTs influences those transitions between roles and also WLB more generally

- This research aims to understand whether ICTs support the management of more flexible transitions—creating more permeable boundaries and a less segmented persons—or whether they encourage leakage across boundaries and difficult identity management tasks

- These aims form part of a multidisciplinary research agenda which is described below:

BACKGROUND AND AIMS

- Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are known for their impact on individuals, teams, organizations and societies at large (e.g. Panteli, 2009)

- Boundary theory within the literature on Work-Life Balance (WLB) argues that individuals perform different roles (e.g. colleague, parent) in the different domains of their lives (e.g. work, family) (Burke, 2006)

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- This research aims to understand whether ICTs support the management of more flexible transitions—creating more permeable boundaries and a less segmented persons—or whether they encourage leakage across boundaries and difficult identity management tasks

- These aims form part of a multidisciplinary research agenda which is described below:

THE PROJECT

- This study is conducted as part of a wider, multidisciplinary study, known as the Digital Brain Switch (DBS)

- The DBS team comprises social scientists and computer scientists aiming to both understand the phenomena under study and to develop technologies that will help individuals manage their switches more efficiently

- The project runs through mid-2015, is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) and constitutes a collaborative effort between Lancaster University, The Open University, Royal Holloway University of London, and University of Kent.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

- Participants are briefed about the study and given a camcorder
- Participants are asked to record a week-long video diary of their lives
- The focus of the videos is on switches between roles and domains, in particular in relation to ICT use
- Participants are free to decide what to record and how long the videos last
- On completion, each participant is debriefed and collection is arranged
- On collection of the video data, the research team analyses them thematically with the use of NVivo

THE PARTICIPANTS

- Three UK-based groups have been selected to take part:
  - Social Entrepreneurs (SEs)
    - SEs are often on the go and are an example of a remote worker
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METHODOLOGY

The video study

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The interview study

- An individual interview is conducted with each participant on completion of the video study, usually within a month
- The aim of the interview is twofold:
  - To discuss a selection of video excerpts shown during the interview, and
  - To gather each participant’s views on the topics under study
- A narrative approach is adopted whereby the interviewee is encouraged to share his/her views and stories
- The interview data are analysed thematically with the use of NVivo

REFERENCES