

# Being Human: Discovering and Advancing School Students' Perceptions of the Relationships between Science and Religion

## Information Sheet for Teachers

### **Invitation**

This project seeks to better understand how children think about how science and religion/people's cultural beliefs relate. In this survey, we are interested in gathering the views and experiences of teachers, of teaching about contemporary questions raised by science. This research is being funded by the Templeton World Charity Foundation and is being jointly undertaken by the University of Reading (UK) and University of Tasmania (Australia). In Australia, the research is being conducted by Associate Professor Sharon Fraser from the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania.

### **What is the purpose of this study?**

The overall purpose of this study is to better understand what children think science and religion/their cultural beliefs say about being human. We want to find out whether there are any puzzles for them when they think about this area, and what ideas they find helpful and stimulating. Ultimately we want to assist teachers to teach these ideas in ways that assist students' learning.

### **Why have you been invited to participate?**

You are invited to take part in this research because you teach science to secondary school students.

### **What will you be asked to do?**

If you consent to taking part in the research, you are consenting to participating in an online survey which will take approximately twenty minutes, and will focus on key themes associated with science, religion and being human. The survey will be anonymous and hence we will not link your name to any of the responses you provide.

### **Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?**

By participating in this research you will be contributing directly to educational research. In our experience, research that invites personal responses to questions about science and religion is highly stimulating for both students and teachers. The study will also give you an opportunity to reflect upon, examine and discuss your own practice in relation to the focus of the research. The science education research community and the teaching community may benefit from the findings of this study in terms of identifying the kinds of teaching practices that are most influential in assisting students to deal with the complexities relating to faith and science in their world. The research will also add to the global scholarship on education encompassing science and faith / religion and the issues that are currently experienced in one local context. The outcomes will inform the development of resources and professional learning for teachers engaged in teaching science.

### **Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?**

There are no risks or disadvantages to taking part in the study, other than the time commitment required to carry out the survey.

### **What if I change my mind during or after the study?**

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You will be able to withdraw at any time during the completion of the survey. If you wish to withdraw during this time, simply do not submit your answers to the survey. As you do not have to disclose your name when completing the survey, your data will be amalgamated and therefore not able to be retrieved and deleted after submission.

### **What will happen to the information when this study is over?**

All data generated in hard copy from this research will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in my locked office, at the University of Tasmania, Faculty of Education Newnham Campus. All computer files will be password protected and the password will only be known by me. Hence all data will be treated confidentially. The data that we generate from your participation in this research will be kept for 5 years from the date of publication of the first report or journal article. After this time, raw data will be shredded and/or deleted from computer files

### **How will the results of the study be published?**

All data generated in this research will be analysed and the results will be discussed in the form of papers and presentations which we plan to submit to conferences and to journals which address issues in education.

### **What if I have questions about this study?**

Any questions regarding this project may be directed to: Sharon Fraser: email [sharon.fraser@utas.edu.au](mailto:sharon.fraser@utas.edu.au) or telephone +61 6234 3083

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, please contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on +61 3 6226 6254 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. Please quote ethics reference number [H0014581].

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this study. If you are happy to take part in it, please sign the attached consent form. This information sheet is for you to keep.**