



DCN Film Project 2020-2021

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in our new short films. We've had a wonderful response to our call-out and we appreciate both your enthusiasm for the project and willingness to contribute!

This document should give you a bit more information about what would be involved, as well as ideas of other ways you might like to share your personal story beyond or in place of the new films.

What is this project?

We have successfully applied for funding to make some new updated films.

The current plan is that over the next 12 months we will make several short films, each one a compilation of different interviews with donor conception families, their children and donor conceived adults, as well as with selected professionals working in this field. The film content will be tailored mainly for use in our facilitated workshops, helping prospective parents and parents understand more about the experiences of donor conception families (warts and all!) in the context of that particular workshop theme, such as telling and talking. The new films will show the diversity of donor conception families and their experiences as well as what they share in common. We know how reassuring it can be to hear about how other people have managed their decision-making process as they've navigated the questions, doubts and challenges arising along the way.

We would love you to be part of it.

Why are we making new films?

In our workshops (*'Preparation for Parenthood'* for those who don't yet have children and *'Telling and Talking'* for those who do) we show our own DCN-produced films to give parents and prospective parents the opportunity to hear from real people about their donor conception experiences. We know from feedback over the years just how valuable this is. However, our films are several years old and need a refresh, as well as a more diverse set of 'stories'. We have few egg donation, double donation or embryo donation families, for example, and no surrogacy families.

What would I be agreeing to?

In the first instance you will just agree to a Zoom call over the coming months to discuss what you might talk about in the film and ask any questions you may have. We are looking for a range of family situations and a variety of stories so we will want to explore your personal experiences in some detail before confirming and proceeding to the next stage of filming.

We plan to record the Zoom conversations, with your consent, and to delete them securely if you do not proceed. These recordings will be helpful to DCN (and to you perhaps!) as an aide memoire to what was discussed, and may be used by the film crew for storyboarding and possibly to include some clips in the final film (with your consent, of course).

If, after the Zoom call, you are selected to be filmed and are happy to participate, we will be filming in person - probably in North London - in the Spring next year. If that isn't feasible for you, filming can be arranged online using Zoom or similar. We already have an initial group of participants for a first stage of filming next month, so the filming we do in the Spring will supplement the footage we collect then. In the film we will just use your first name. Your children can either be named or unnamed as you prefer.

How will the filming work and when and where will it take place?

We have already scheduled a first stage of filming for an initial group of participants (representing a good range of family and donation types) on Saturday, 3rd and Sunday, 4th October. The second stage of filming, which we're hoping you will be interested in, will be in late spring 2021. The film crew, Campbell and Stewart, are experienced and know DCN well. They are aware of the sensitive and confidential nature of the topic. They have been working on productions over the last few months and are set up to do in-person filming work following current guidelines.

The venue we plan to use is the private home of one of our founding families in North London. In the house, we have a separate room where people can wait if they are early, so we can limit the number of people in the main room at any one time. Parking arrangements will be advised.

We will set up a schedule/timetable for the filming day so that participants can plan their travel ahead of time accordingly. You will probably be needed for a couple of hours and we will provide necessary refreshments. We can cover reasonable travel expenses.

For those who are further away and cannot easily get to London, we plan to do the interviewing online (using Zoom or similar). The film team have said they should be able to integrate this seamlessly into the film in a way that enhances its visual interest. We may need to do a couple of test runs and, if necessary, send a decent microphone/webcam to ensure the quality is good enough for the final film.

Where will the films be used?

As we've described, the main objective is to produce films for our workshops. However, we may use clips on social media or on our website and we may add material to our Vimeo channel. We will only ever use first names, if using names at all, when sharing content online. You would need to give your consent to us to use the footage in these ways and will be asked to sign a release form to this effect.

Will my footage definitely be used in the final films?

We can't guarantee that all interviews will make it to the final films. That partly depends on the editors and the length and range of stories we film. However, we will almost certainly use short clips from any unused footage on our website so it will still be really valuable.

What if I decide not to participate in the film? Can I be involved in a different way?

Yes! You might like to write something for the website – we are always looking for personal stories. Or we could interview you and then produce a written article. Or you might prefer to do a podcast for our website.

Still interested? What to do next ...

Reply to our email telling us whether you are still keen to get involved and would be interested in proceeding with a Zoom call in the coming months.

The Zoom call will be an opportunity for us to find out more about you/your situation, and for you to find out more about the project. It will take the form of an exploratory conversation lasting 30 mins to an hour and you won't be committing to anything. As we've mentioned, we would like to record these conversations, but will delete them afterwards if you decide you don't want to proceed.

If you have further questions, you can email Frances on frances@dcnetwork.org.

Thanks again and we look forward to your response!