We acknowledge that we live and work on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin nation.

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The Transgender Media Portal (TMP) aims to make audiovisual work by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender-nonconforming people more available to artists, activists, festival programmers, researchers, instructors, and the public.

**Achievements**

Overall, test users were enthusiastic about the project’s aims and what has been accomplished so far. They were excited about the prospect of finding out about trans filmmakers and films they did not know and recommending the site to friends. They were positive about the overall look and feel of the public website and the mockups. They appreciated the ways in which the site focused on community engagement—such as by inviting users to email the project to add or correct content on the website and by listing trans arts crowdfunding projects on the “Support Trans Artists” page. They also praised the project’s focus on diverse voices, especially the list of Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour Filmmakers on the public website and the way the Person database records take a flexible and intersectional approach to identity. They particularly appreciated the centering of trans people reflected in the search results checkbox “include cis people” that is unchecked by default.

**Recommendations**

However, users also made the following major recommendations to make the project more ethical and the user experience more satisfying:

1. Incorporate more Black, Indigenous, and Person of Colour trans leadership at all levels of the project;
2. Rewrite language on the public website and in the pilot database to be more accessible;
3. Make the process of contributing to the database less intimidating (e.g. less visual clutter and more instructions, definitions, and examples); and
4. Weave a “thread of gratitude” throughout the contributor experience to acknowledge the usually unrecognized labour of contributors.

**Future Considerations**

Looking to the future when the TMP will become open for members of the public to use and contribute to, our test users recommended the following:

1. Include publicly-available information in a Person record in the TMP without asking that person’s permission but do send them a courtesy email with the chance to revise the content about them;
2. Vet new contributors solely by confirming their email address; and
3. Create transparent abuse reporting processes.

It is clear that the Transgender Media Portal is addressing a pressing need for trans communities to have better access to the legacy of trans artistic innovation. By taking into account users’ experiences and feedback, we can create a tool that meets these needs ethically and effectively. We recommend continuing to conduct usability tests with the project’s target demographics in order to keep adapting it to the changing and varied needs of diverse trans communities.
Introduction

by Laura Horak

This report is intended as a guide to facilitate the development of the Transgender Media Portal (TMP). The Transgender Media Portal aims to make audiovisual work by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender-nonconforming people more available to artists, activists, festival programmers, researchers, instructors, and the public.

The TMP strives to:

- Promote the careers of today’s trans filmmakers
- Call attention to older works so that they can be programmed and preserved
- Jumpstart research on these films
- Provide artists with access to an innovative tradition of work

This usability test examined three aspects of the TMP:

1. **The TMP’s public website:** transgendermediaportal.org. The website posts information about the project and resources on trans filmmaking, such as lists of trans arts crowdfunding projects, Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) trans filmmakers, and contemporary trans film festivals, as well as academic bibliographies and information about university courses on trans cinema.

2. **The TMP database:** the pilot database contains 1500+ records and is currently viewable and editable only by the research team. We gave test participants temporary access to this pilot database in order to provide feedback on it. We are planning to launch the full database to the public in Fall 2023.

3. **Design mock-ups:** our current visual plans for displaying data from the database in a user-friendly way. These mock-ups included plans for the following elements: a new toolbar at the top of the page with icons for browsing different record types; a list of People records (expanded and condensed views); an individual Person page (expanded and condensed); a list of Film records (expanded and condensed); an individual Film page (expanded and condensed); and a list of search results (expanded and condensed).

Our “usability tests” combined aspects of a qualitative usability test (e.g. participants sat in front of computers and completed various tasks) and a focus group (e.g. participants discussed key questions together). We have summarized both aspects of the test in this report.

By conducting these tests, we are hoping to get:

1. Ideas for how to make the website and database fun and easy to use—a genuine community resource.
2. Ideas for how to run the website and database so that they are ethical, fair, and do not put trans people in harm’s way.
3. A better understanding of how the project can respond to the wants and needs of varied trans communities.
4. Ideas for “Best Practices” to share with other academics undertaking similar projects (e.g. databases that are inclusive of contemporary and historical gender identities, community-academic partnerships, crowdsourced digital projects, etc.).
Recruitment

Our first-priority users for the Transgender Media Portal website and database are trans people with an interest in film and the arts, therefore we focused on recruiting this demographic. We used the research team’s personal networks to invite Ottawa-area trans people of different ages and races/ethnicities with an interest in the arts who have not been involved with the project to participate. Research Assistant Oliver Debney sent the ethics-approved email invitation (see appendix 1) to each invitee and handled all email communication. Of the nine people invited, six people agreed to participate.

Participant Profiles

All six participants were trans and involved in trans art and/or activism. This included two transmasculine, two transfeminine, and two nonbinary/genderqueer participants. Two participants identified as “Black” or “Black-mixed,” one as “racialized,” one as “white,” one as “white Canadian,” and one as “Canadian” and “of Polish heritage.” One participant identified as an “immigrant” and another as a “refugee.” Two identified themselves as “queer,” one as “bisexual” and one as “lesbian.” Two did not describe their sexual orientation. Participants ranged in age from 15 to 65, with three in their early 20s. Three participants were current undergraduate students, one was a high school student, and one was a retired librarian. Apart from the high school student, all participants had some undergraduate schooling; only one had completed a bachelor’s degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Connection to trans art</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>he/him</td>
<td>white Canadian bisexual trans man</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Currently in high school</td>
<td>High school student</td>
<td>Interest in trans art &amp; activism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jade</td>
<td>they/them</td>
<td>Black, queer, trans</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Currently in university (BA)</td>
<td>Student &amp; community organizer</td>
<td>Screens queer films and works with queer artists at queer service centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikayla</td>
<td>they/them</td>
<td>white, genderqueer, queer, Christian</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Currently in university (BA)</td>
<td>Student &amp; coordinator at queer/trans service centre</td>
<td>Coordinator at 2SLGBTQ+ service centre, singer in queer/trans choir, involved in queer/trans student activsm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah</td>
<td>she/her</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Currently in university (BA)</td>
<td>Student</td>
<td>Is a filmmaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>he/him</td>
<td>trans Black-mixed immigrant</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Some undergrad</td>
<td>Freelance creator &amp; community organizer, educator</td>
<td>Documented own transition, “working to build capacity of trans community wherever I am”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tara</td>
<td>she/her</td>
<td>Canadian trans woman of Polish heritage</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>BA English</td>
<td>Retired (former librarian)</td>
<td>Founding member of early trans group, community trans historian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Testing Set-Up

RA Oliver Debney designed and planned the usability tests in consultation with PI Laura Horak and the project team. Each participant received a CA$100 cash honorarium for their participation. The honorarium was intended to recognize trans participants’ significant expertise and knowledge and avoid as much as possible the “extractive” approach that academic research often brings to research on trans people. It was important that it be paid in cash so as not to inconvenience people who were generous enough to devote their time and attention to the project, people who have often had negative experiences with educational institutions in the past.

Participants had the option to bring a laptop from home or use one provided. One participant in each test used a provided PC laptop; the others brought their own Mac and PC laptops.

We held two in-person group usability tests. The first was on Saturday, March 7, 2020, from 10:00AM to 1:00PM, at SAW Video Media Art Center’s Loop Project Space in downtown Ottawa. This test had two participants and was run by the entire TMP project team: RA Oliver Debney, PI Laura Horak, software developer Adam Milling, project manager Kate Higginson, and user experience designer Kit Chokly. The two stations were in different parts of one large room.

The second test was held on Thursday, March 12, 2020, from 6:00PM to 9:30PM, at Carleton University in Ottawa. This test had four participants and was run by Debney, Horak, Higginson, and Chokly. There were four stations—two in a large seminar room, one in Horak’s office, and one in the project office.

We decided that Horak, the team’s director, should lead the usability tests because it would communicate that our team takes participants’ feedback seriously and because she is best positioned to answer overarching questions about the project. At the beginning of each session, Horak introduced the TMP (see appendix 3), walked the participants through the consent forms (see appendix 2) and financial paperwork, and distributed the honoraria. She then assigned each participant a facilitator and individual station. When participants arrived, Debney emailed each one a link to a Google doc with URLs for the online surveys and the TMP, a temporary TMP username and password, and links to websites about specific BIPOC trans filmmakers and films that the participants would be asked to add to the database.

At their stations, each participant filled out a short online pre-test survey (see appendix 4).

Then, the facilitators instructed the participants to undertake a series of tasks on the website and database and to give feedback on the design mock-ups (see appendix 5), speaking their thoughts out loud as they went. A video camera recorded the participants’ screens and keyboards and captured their speech. Each participant had one facilitator, who gave them instructions, kept track of time, and took notes on their responses. We scheduled 45 minutes for these activities, but they often went over by 15-30 minutes and not all participants completed all the tasks. It often took longer than expected for participants to explore the public website and for them to read through the filmmaker websites looking for information to add to the database.
Based on the results of the first test session, we removed one task and changed the order of another task. In the first test, we asked participants to use the search box on the public website, but the search results were universally confusing and unsatisfying. Since we already knew that the website’s search display was inadequate, we cut this task from the second test session. In the first test, we also showed participants the design mock-ups (or future plans for the public database) before introducing them to the current pilot database, which made their first experience with the current database more confusing and less satisfying. In the second test we showed the participants the mock-ups last, which seemed to flow better and make more sense to them. Once participants completed the usability test portion they had a short break.

After the break, the participants took part in a group discussion, or focus group, about their experiences of the website and database and their perspective on the project’s future policies on privacy, contributor culture, and anti-oppression (see appendix 6). This part of the session was audio recorded. Horak led the discussion and Debney took notes. The other facilitators did not participate, as we didn’t want the number of research team members to outnumber or intimidate the participants.

The group discussions were scheduled for 30 minutes. In both cases they went over time—in the first session by about 15 minutes and in the second session by 25 minutes. In the second session, participants had so much to say that Horak only had time to pose questions 1, 2, 4, 7, and 9.

Once the discussion ended, participants were invited to fill out an online post-test survey (see appendix 7) on their laptop. With this survey, we wanted to give participants the opportunity to respond individually to make sure some voices weren’t being drowned out in the larger group session and to give participants the chance to reflect on the whole test experience. In the first test, both participants filled out the post-test survey, but in the second test the discussion had gone so late that three participants left immediately after the discussion and did not return to the survey later to fill it out. Only one participant stayed and filled out the post-test survey.

Before they left, Horak asked participants to review their consent forms to see if they wanted to make any changes. All participants reviewed their forms, but no one made any changes.

Overall, both the usability test and the discussion ran longer than scheduled, so we should take this into account when planning future tests by scheduling a longer period and/or reducing the number of tasks and questions.
1. What do People Want From a Transgender Media Portal? by Oliver Debney

We asked users to describe what they wanted from a Transgender Media Portal in pre-test surveys before we showed them the TMP website and database. Four users stated they would like to be able to browse and access trans-created media. For example, Tara stated that she would like “easy access to information regarding films and videos from trans, gender diverse, intersex and Two Spirit people, plus a portal [or link] to actual films where possible.” Likewise, Savannah said that she would like to find “the kind of art and film that our community has produced, especially the more obscure media which may have been lost at some time/lost for some time.” Thane had more expansive hopes and said he was looking for a fluid tool that could be anything from a “trans Netflix all the way to spreading the trans agenda.”

When asked why they would use a Transgender Media Portal, four users said that they would use it for personal interest and/or pleasure and four stated they would use it for activism and social justice work. Three expressed a desire for the Transgender Media Portal to have an explicit community-building capacity. For example, Savannah stated that she would like the TMP to be able to “tell me where the closest trans-led film productions are currently taking place and how I can volunteer/participate in them.” Jade said that they would like the Transgender Media Portal “to provide a platform for the trans community so that trans artists can make more money and get more views.” Oliver said he hoped that the Transgender Media Portal would be useful in engaging his high school community, stating: “I think the main thing I’d use it for is for resources for my school’s GSA [Gay-Straight Alliance], either just watching a film as a club or creating an event around it.”

A consistent theme throughout all the survey responses was that users hoped that the Transgender Media Portal would be able to connect them to a plethora of trans-created media, giving them insights into what trans people are creating and how they might compare their own experiences to them:

“I’m keen to learn more about what trans people have to say about their life experiences.”
—Tara

“I’d like to see what other trans people are doing in the world of arts, and how they do those things.”
—Oliver

“I know very few examples of media made by trans people, and I would love to learn more.”
—Mikayla

“I would love to be connected with trans artists I otherwise wouldn’t have heard of! Especially trans People of Colour.”
—Jade
2. Public Website by Jay Cooper

+ Positive Themes

**Overall design**

Overall, the website was well received by users. Three users stated that the site was clear, concise, and well spaced out. Two users praised the site’s colours and stock images as being well suited to the design. Savannah noted: “I like that when I hover over icons it is highlighted so I know it is a link. I also liked the straightforward nature and uncomplicated design of the website.” Users praised the clear menu titles on the website’s header. As Mikayla stated:

“I like that it conveyed a lot of information but I wasn’t overwhelmed. The headers on the banner were nice because they listed what kinds of information you can access here. I like that part of the banner was to Support Trans Artists so it was there regardless of where you were on the website.”

**Content: BIPOC Trans Filmmakers, Description, & Film Festivals pages**

The top three visited pages were the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page (five of six users), the Film Festivals page (five of six users), and the Description page (four of six users). Description was also the first page visited by four of six users. Jade appreciated the location of the sponsor logos on the project landing page: “It is good to list the funders upfront. You understand the scope of the project and can locate it in a broader context.”

The figure below displays the pages that users visited, in order, as they investigated the public website. Each user had approximately 15 minutes to explore the site however they wished. Some chose to look at as many pages as possible while others focused on only a few pages. This table helps to pinpoint which pages are the most intriguing to new users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User</th>
<th>Pathway</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>Home &gt; Description &gt; BIPOC Trans Filmmakers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jade</td>
<td>Home &gt; Description &gt; Support Trans Artists &gt; BIPOC Trans Filmmakers &gt; Festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikayla</td>
<td>Home &gt; Description &gt; BIPOC Trans Filmmakers &gt; Festivals &gt; Support Trans Artists &gt; Events &gt; Advisory Board &gt; Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah</td>
<td>Home &gt; Description &gt; Events &gt; Home &gt; Festivals &gt; Home &gt; Teaching &gt; Syllabi &gt; Bibliography &gt; Home &gt; Sister Projects &gt; Home &gt; Resources &gt; BIPOC Trans Filmmakers &gt; Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>Home &gt; Instagram &gt; BIPOC Trans Filmmakers &gt; Festivals &gt; Home &gt; Bibliography &gt; Support Trans Artists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Order of exploration.
Community engagement and involvement

All six users appreciated the efforts the TMP made to create a community space. In particular, Savannah said “the community aspect of the site really shows and is a part of the draw of the site.”

The Bibliographies, Support Trans Artists, Teaching, and BIPOC Trans Filmmakers pages all have a note at the top of the page that welcomes users to contact the Transgender Media Portal if they would like to add information to the page, notify us of an error, or have themselves removed from the site. In relation to the Support Trans Artists page, Mikayla noted that it is “good that you are transparent about vetting and open to feedback while not gatekeeping as anyone may have their project put on the site.”

At the end of the usability test, three users filled out a Post-Test Survey and all three reported that they were “very likely” to return to the public TMP page and share it with friends. It was described as an “excellent resource,” “a great project for film buffs and the trans community,” and “very useful in content, functionality, and accessibility.” All three users also said that they were “very likely” to search and browse the database once it is launched. Mikayla was excited to be able to “find and watch films made by people like me.”

Negative Themes

Language is too academic

The Transgender Media Portal aims to be used by artists, activists, festival programmers, researchers, instructors, and the public. As such, the language used by the website and database must be made accessible to all sectors. Three users stated that the writing on the Description page was too long and too academic. They suggested adding a more snappy opening. Tara also expressed concern that the blog posts were long, but also that the information included was interesting. Savannah appreciated the use of bullet points wherever possible as she found it more engaging and simpler to read. Savannah also noted that not everyone would know the meaning of the acronym BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) on the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page and suggested that we might “put the acronym on the page rather than on the link? Like I only recently learned about [the term] in my [university] class and if I had not known the term I may not go back to that page.”

Homepage design did not fit users’ top interests

The order of exploration shows that users were more interested in the Resources pages compared to the News section. While Resources are viewable through the menu on the header, the News section appears before the image blocks linking to the individual Resource pages. Thane notes that “nothing really jumps out… the blog posts are older and content updates are infrequent.” Two participants, Mikayla and Tara, visited the Events page and Tara was the only user to visit a News post. Jade suggested a change to the layout of the homepage: “I would prefer resources boxes up top and Latest Posts later.”

Figure 3. A screenshot of the Transgender Media Portal public website homepage (transgendermediaportal.org).
Two users also stated that the website was too text-heavy and did not have enough images. This is not only an issue from a design standpoint, but also from an accessibility one as many people are able to understand visuals more easily than written information and it would be helpful to consider this.

**Recommendations**

2.1 Rewrite academic language

While the project does contain academic information, it is important that it can be understood by all users visiting the site. Three participants noted that new users may not be aware of certain terms and acronyms being used and the Transgender Media Portal should both give explanations for terms and use layperson’s terms whenever possible. This is an issue both of access to academic training and terminology in general, and to education on queer and trans theory and vocabulary in particular. The public website should be reviewed for unnecessarily academic and inaccessible wording.

2.2 Add a living glossary

Thane suggested adding a glossary of terms:

> “I’ve seen other websites have a growing/living glossary page that links people to external resources. Like ‘Why is it important to have a BIPOC page’ and also allowing people to… people know Google exists, but they don’t use Google. It’s about funnelling existing information.”

For example, the term BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and Person of Colour) may be an increasingly common term within activist and academic circles but many users entering the site may not have encountered this term. A glossary of terms will be useful for the user as they navigate the website and also serve as an additional teaching tool provided by the Transgender Media Portal. Terms that have a glossary definition could appear with a distinct visual marker and show the definition when the user hovers over them.

2.3 Rearrange the layout of the homepage

The Order of Exploration by the users shows that the least popular pages were the News and Events sections and the most visited pages were the Resource pages, Support Trans Artists page, and the Project Description. One user stated that “Nothing really jumps out... interesting that resources are at the bottom but also the top.” Two users noted that the Events and News portions of the website were not often updated and were therefore less appealing/useful to users and these sections felt cluttered. One solution to this issue would be to rearrange the layout of the homepage by placing the description directly on the homepage and putting the Resource boxes at the top of the homepage, with the News and Events closer to the bottom of the page.

2.4 Add photos to the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page

On the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page, two users requested photos be added to the filmmakers’ bios. As Oliver says “It’s a lot of text. I would like some pictures of the people.” The goal of the Transgender Media Portal is to showcase audiovisual work by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender-non-conforming people and users wish to see themselves mirrored by the content. As such, photos provide an additional method of seeing oneself portrayed while also providing a more visually-appealing, less text-heavy page.

![Figure 4. A screenshot of the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page.](image-url)
3. Database: Filling Out Person and Film Records by Kit Chokly

+ Positive Themes

Includes detailed and useful content fields

Users appreciated the many different types of information they could add to Person and Film records. Oliver, Jade, and Mikayla all made positive comments about having a place to add external links, contact information, and social media profiles to Person records. Jade and Mikayla also appreciated having the “network” section to record a person’s mentors and collaborators.

While these users were primarily interested in using the Transgender Media Portal to find and access trans-made films, Mikayla noted that the detail and variety of information that could be added to the TMP provides excellent research opportunities.

Captures flexible & intersectional aspects of identity

The second section users encounter when entering a Person record is “aspects of identity.” In this section, users are instructed to “fill in this information based on the person’s stated self-definitions, ideally from their personal website or else based on festival programs, publicity material, etc. Leave blank fields that are not known.” The fields available include “country,” “job title,” “top-level gender category,” “pronouns,” “gender identity,” “gender-and-sexuality,” “race/ethnicity,” “Indigenous affiliation,” “disability status,” “religious status,” “miscellaneous aspects of identity,” and “additional identity notes.” Most of these fields use auto-fill with open vocabularies, meaning that as users begin to type into the field, it displays suggestions from the field’s vocabulary. If a user types in a new word, a new item is added to the field’s vocabulary. Users are instructed to use commas to separate items if they would like to add multiple entries.

“Top-level gender category” and “gender-and-sexuality,” however, use checkboxes because they are closed vocabularies. The top-level gender categories available to users are: “not yet categorized,” “trans,” “Two-Spirit,” “nonbinary,” “intersex,” “other gender-nonconforming,” “cis,” and “not known.” Instructions in this section note that this field is “for statistical purposes” and that users should “Choose all that apply.” Under the gender-and-sexuality section, users are given the option to choose “bulldagger,” “stud,” and “Two-Spirit.” They are told that “these terms refer to identities that cannot be reduced only to gender or only to sexuality” and that, again, they should “Check any that apply.”

Figure 5. The “aspects of identity” fields presented to contributors as they fill out a Person record.
All of the users generally thought that the Person records handled these aspects of identity well. Reasons for this approval included: the ability for users to add new terms, the way the database allows for self-definition, and the manner in which the fields encompassed various aspects of identity.

Regarding flexibility, Savannah said that: “It addresses identity in a very respectful and academic way. It was nice that it wasn’t a drop down menu, it was a type-in-what-you-like sort of menu.” Jade not only highlighted the use of an open vocabulary to allow people’s self-identification to be captured, but also appreciated how these categories were not only focused on gender. They stated: “It was nice to see the term stud there because it’s so specific to the Black community and encompasses more than just gender which was nice.” Jade also emphasised how they liked that users were told to prioritize filmmakers’ statements about themselves: “I liked the note that was put in there about looking for what the person is self-identifying as… I think having it bigger and maybe bolded and at the top would be good.”

Jade, Savannah, and Oliver all reacted positively to the inclusion of aspects of identity that go beyond gender. Jade, for example, liked how there was also a field for miscellaneous aspects of identity when adding a Person record. Savannah claimed that the process “acknowledges and respects that identity is diverse.” Oliver explained that the many different fields helped him think about identity in ways he had not expected. He stated:

“Thane was not alone in feeling intimidated by the process of adding content. While all three users who filled out the post-test survey agreed that they would be “very likely” (5 on a 5-point scale) to return to the website, share it with friends, and search and browse the website when it was ready, two choose “3” and one chose “4” when asked how likely they would be to contribute to the database. The two users who chose “3” said they weren’t sure they would have time to do it and the one who chose “4” implied that it would depend on “what the registration, sign-up, and publication processes will look like.” In the focus group, Savannah said: “I think that would be really helpful to make it clear what fields are necessary and make it clear that the majority are entirely optional. It’s kind of daunting when you open up the page and you might not know immediately that you have to fill all of these out. Even if you do know, it’s kind of scary when you open up the page and it’s this massive form. I appreciate that most of it is hidden, but just having a box at the top with the really crucial stuff and that the rest of the fields are entirely optional.”

Usability Test Report Findings & Recommendations

Negative Themes

Intimidating layout & lengthy process

All users complained that the process of adding records and contributing to the database was intimidating and lengthy. During the usability test, Thane noted that this issue is not just about how many fields there are on the contributor’s page, but also about the layout of these fields. Furthermore, his initial impression that every field needed to be filled left him feeling overwhelmed as soon as he began. He stated:

“I’m definitely a person who scans something and sees that it is more than three things and I don’t know if I’m going to do this […] I would look at this and just click off. I would look at this and just be like no. It looks like a lot of work.”

In the post-test survey, Oliver added: “I also like how specific and inclusive the process to add a person is in terms of identity.”
Confusing terminology

As users moved through adding new records to the database, there were a number of field and section names they didn’t understand. These included:

Both Person and Film record types

1. Primary image
   • Uncertainty surrounding this field possibly because the field requires text rather than visual media to be added
   • Mikayla notes that this is important to get right, as more images makes the database more inviting

2. Archives
   • Mikayla and Jade had uncertainty about the meaning of this term
   • Savannah felt that this term was only useful for academics

3. Information with source
   • Jade was uncertain about what the source would be
   • Tara and Mikayla enjoyed having a field to add sources, but Tara was uncertain about the depth of sources expected

4. Hidden
   • Uncertain about what this would mean for the record, or why it should exist

Person records

5. Name active between dates
   • Confusion regarding what this means (Career title? Deadname?) and why it is important from Tara, Oliver, Jade, and Savannah

6. Name description
   • Unclear what this field is meant to capture
   • Both Tara and Savannah attempted to add the person’s bio to this field
   • Tara: “Under name description I entered the complete bio but then there was a bigger space for the bio which was a more proper way. I’m assuming the name description would be for a shorter description. When you do it once it makes sense, but if you’re doing it the first time through, you’re not going to do it correctly.”

7. If the location is active
   • Jade was uncertain as to what an “active location” meant and what the field was trying to capture

8. Funding
   • Similarly, uncertainty regarding both the definition of funding and its use was seen as mostly “technical academic stuff” (Savannah)

9. Film
   • Mikayla wanted to make it clearer that “film” could also include short videos and YouTube posts

10. Writings about film
    • Oliver was uncertain what this might pertain to

11. Film link
    • Oliver was uncertain about whether this is a link to view the film or a place to order/buy it
    • Oliver: “There’s no film link if it has to be ordered right? I guess I could put the order link. But no, it isn’t a link to the film it is just a link to order the film. I don’t know. It is not a link to the film.”

12. Duration
    • Oliver believed duration to be under the “Episode name” field
    • Oliver: “The duration is only for episodes? I can’t put in the length of the film because it’s a film not an episode. I can’t find runtime anywhere else. I don’t know where to add this information.”

13. Alternate Title
    • Jade was uncertain what this field would be used for

14. Trailer (YouTube) vs Watch full film
    • Jade had a YouTube link to the full film but added it as “Trailer (YouTube)” rather than “Watch Full Film,” probably because they were drawn to the term YouTube

15. Genre vs Theme
    • Jade was uncertain about the difference, wanted to know if they should “make this up”

16. Subtitles vs Closed captions vs Audio description
    • Jade and Mikayla did not know the difference or what exactly these terms refer to

17. Copyright
    • Jade was uncertain about what this refers to
Unclear or missing instructions & examples

In addition to not knowing what particular field names and section headings meant, users wanted more instructions and examples in order to know how to correctly fill in the fields. In the post-test survey, Oliver wrote that one aspect of the Portal that needed the most improvement was the contribution process, suggesting that he wanted it to be clearer and to have more examples. This would help users know what to put into fields that may use less common terminology. The following is a list of areas where users expressed desire for further instructions or examples, as well as areas where users did not follow instructions correctly.

Both Person and Film record types

1. Capitalization
   - Jade asked whether or not “it mattered” if they used capitalization (unknown field)

2. Autocomplete
   - Users did not recognize that the circle icon located in the field (text box) meant that there were autocomplete possibilities available
   - When autocomplete options came up, some users viewed this to be a dropdown and limited their entry to the choices they were presented with
   - The numbers beside autocomplete suggested confused users, who were uncertain about why they were there
   - Oliver: “It would be nice if you can add terms in case somebody doesn’t go by any of those. There are a lot, but there are always more. So it would be nice to add new terms.”

3. Commas/tag separators
   - Although Savannah demonstrated that she understood how tags work, she did not read the instructions to separate tags using commas
   - She then suggested that the database force users to separate their tags

4. Unknown fields
   - Although most users understood that they should leave unknown fields blank, it took some a while to recognize this. This was especially apparent when it came to aspects of identity, which users were largely hesitant to guess or assume
   - Jade expressed difficulty in leaving fields blank

5. Country
   - Jade first put in a city, but then caught themselves
   - Mikayla asked for more clarification about what it referred to while adding a Person record

6. Hidden
   - Mikayla asked for instructions about when a record should be hidden or not

Person records

7. Pronouns
   - Although pronouns auto populate, Thane also requested examples. “Having open text boxes is nice, but it would be good to have a list of some pronouns as well with the open text box as an option.”

8. Contact
   - Mikayla asked about whether they should include contact information for secondary sources, such as agents or managers

9. Gender
   - Difficulty finding specific terms for someone’s gender

10. Users were hesitant to assign someone’s gender for them if it was not explicitly stated somewhere

11. Bibliography
    - Users were uncertain about what a bibliography should consist of. Jade questioned if a URL would suffice or if a full academic citation is necessary.
    - At the same time, users expressed concern for attributing data to its source to avoid plagiarism

Film records

11. Distribution formats
    - Jade specifically asked for an example of what to put in this field

12. Genre
    - Jade was uncertain if they should “make it up” for this field
    - Mikayla asked for more examples of what a genre could be, or a list of suggested genres which could be selected from

13. Content warnings
    - While Oliver, Mikayla, and Jade responded positively about including content warnings in focus groups, Jade and Mikayla were also uncertain about what should be flagged as such
    - Mikayla: “I think another thing that would make the content warning field more user friendly and effective would be to have some examples. When I think of content warnings, anything could be triggering or upsetting and I can’t think of them all off the top of my head. Even if it is a short little list of some things that might warrant a content warning, that might help.”
Skepticism about categorizing aspects of identity

While there was a lot of positive feedback surrounding the way identity was handled when entering a new person record, there were also a few areas where users were uncomfortable or skeptical, specifically around the “race / ethnicity” field.

Jade was concerned with “messing up” the race and ethnicity field while filling out a Person record. Similarly, Tara shared an acute awareness of the importance of filling out this field properly. The filmmaker Tara entered into the database described herself as a “femme of colour,” connecting the categories of gender and race. Tara demonstrated hesitancy separating these two aspects of identity to fit within the database fields offered to her while filling out the record. In the focus group, she questioned the language used to describe the fields. Tara stated:

“I came across the box with Race/Ethnicity which I thought might be a little troublesome. The person I was entering lists themselves as a ‘femme of colour’, connecting the categories of gender and race. I thought that there could be some sticky areas here, but I like that the database accepted my entry because I was worried about how narrow of a description it would allow.”

Thane also questioned the possibility of separating identity into categories, as well as concern with the term “ethnicity.” He stated: “I don’t know if things need to be separated like this on the filling-out section. On the far backend for data and stats, grouping tags into these categories or containers for sure, but I don’t know if it needs to be this way for contributors.”

Furthermore, Thane also scrutinized the manner in which the autofill feature automatically centered certain forms of identity. He stated:

“Why is Race/Ethnicity separated from Indigenous Affiliation? Because it doesn’t pop up when you have the tags pop up and when nothing pops up then I’m like okay you have zero anything for this. But I type in Anishinaabe and that comes up and I can understand how things are centred already.”

To solve this issue, he suggested including standardized lists or examples of identity as well as open text boxes to help people come up with types of identity that could be listed.

At the same time, he questioned the value of these categories for community members using the Transgender Media Portal rather than just academic researchers:

“As large as the trans umbrella is, so are we pathologized and put into these categories and highly studied. Do we have to continue that? The idea of identity and putting things in those terms is great, but I think that it is still very academic and slices of a person. How can this be useful to our community instead of just adding to academia?”

Recommendations

The negative themes identified by users entering records were: an intimidating layout and lengthy process, confusing terminology, and unclear or missing instructions and examples. Furthermore, one user expressed skepticism about identity categories more generally, although three users were positive about the database’s handling of identity categories because of its flexibility and intersectionality. Both design changes and content changes will be necessary to address these negative experiences. We propose the following solutions, in order of priority.

3.1 Redesign field sections as tabs to have less visual clutter

Hiding most of the fields from view when contributors first arrive at an empty record may reduce users’ initial feelings of being overwhelmed by the amount of content that could be filled out. Tara expressed her satisfaction with the way the records already have some fields hidden using closed accordion sections and arrows that, when clicked, expand the section to reveal hidden fields. While we want to hide lower-priority fields from new users, we also want to keep them easily accessible for more advanced users, to encourage more details to be entered.

Re-organizing the sections from accordions to tabs is an effective way to simplify the page while keeping it short and easily accessible. While the current accordion view requires users to scroll down the page to view the section headings, a tabbed design would keep all section headings clearly visible to the user as they fill out the record, all while keeping their contents hidden. This would permit advanced users to see what other types of information they can enter at all times.
A tabbed organization of the field section would also permit some instructions to remain visible throughout the entire process of filling out a record. One instruction that would be useful in this space is the explanation that not all fields are required to be filled in. This instruction would help prevent contributors from becoming overwhelmed while filling out a record. As Savannah explains, “[it] would be really helpful to make it clear what fields are necessary and make it clear that the majority are entirely optional.” This text can also be integrated into the instructions and examples that guide the user through the contribution process if necessary.

3.2 Add definitions, instructions, and examples on three different levels

Using three different levels to give definitions, instructions, and examples will help users know where to find the type of information they are looking for. Level 1 should be included on all fields, with levels 2 and 3 being used for areas where users reported greater difficulty such as those listed above.

**Level 1:** Brief (1-2 sentences) instructions underneath each field title, including the definition of the uncertain terms listed.

**Level 2:** More detailed (3-5 sentences) instructions to the side of the field-entering area, including some examples.

**Level 3:** Link to highly detailed (short paragraphs) instructions, examples, and explanations in the form of an FAQ.

3.3 Weave a “thread of gratitude” throughout the contributor experience

Thane suggested adding an appreciation for the contributor’s work without being intrusive, which he described as “weaving a thread of gratitude” through the contribution process. As Jade suggested, this appreciation could appear as users hit “save” or “submit.” They explained that a message that said “thank you so much” or “this is going to help people in the community” would be useful. Alternatively, Thane suggested that statistics about the number of people that were affected by the contributor’s efforts would be similarly impactful for him. We recommend adding a running total of the number of times pages added or edited by a contributor are viewed be added to the contributor’s dashboard. This “thread of gratitude” would ideally make contributing to the Transgender Media Portal more rewarding and less intimidating.

Another possibility for adding gratitude to the Transgender Media Portal would be to develop a personified or anthropomorphized character to express this gratitude to users, much like the owl used by Duolingo. This may add to the rewarding feeling of contributing to the TMP.

3.4 Share open vocabulary of identity terms with users

On Person records, allow users to access and browse through the existing vocabulary of identity markers within the database. At the same time, remind users they are free to add new ones to best match the terms people use to self-identify.

Ideally, this will show the flexibility and diversity of identity markers captured by the Transgender Media Portal. This feature may also be useful to add to the Browse and Search Results pages for individuals browsing or searching.

3.5 Ensure that fields are particular to the requested data type

Right now most fields are “text” (or “char” in database terms). For fields that should only be filled in with a certain type of data (e.g. dates, addresses, images), the field should require users to enter the correct kind of data. This will both reduce confusion for users and ensure more consistent data entry. For example, use an interactive calendar or number fields to help users fill out a date field, or allow images to be imported directly into the primary image field.

3.6 Create a way to save data while contributor is in the middle of filling out the record

Two users suggested adding a button to allow them to save as they filled out records. This may not only help prevent users from feeling overwhelmed, but could be useful for more detailed records, as well as users who may fill records out on the go. This would save their work as a draft, to be published when the user is satisfied with their work.

During the usability test focus group, Savannah said: “The site page for entries is pretty long. Maybe have a button to save your progress?” Similarly, Mikayla suggested that it would be helpful to have a save button in multiple places instead of only at the bottom of the page. If the record-entry page were to be redesigned as tabs as suggested, only one save button would be required since users would not need to scroll down the page. The most effective way of saving records, however, would be to implement an auto-save feature, which would automatically save users’ work as they filled out the record.
Positive Themes

Overall look and feel

Five users reacted positively to the overall look and feel of the mockups (design plans for the next stage of the database). They cited the colours, use of icons and images, and the placement of features and information as being positive aspects of the designs. The icons in the top menu bar, used to navigate to the TMP’s various browsing views, were seen as useful demonstrations of the scope of the project. Oliver stated: “I like these little symbols that show which is which because you might not know depending on names.”

Tara also valued the consistency of the layout across different types of pages. She emphasised how this consistency helped her locate information quickly and made the experience feel more intuitive.

Comprehensive filters

The filters in the mock-ups appeared to the right of the search results. They included four sections: “Gender category,” “Location,” “Other tags,” and “Admin options.” When filtering by gender category, users were offered the categories of “Trans,” “Two-Spirit,” “Nonbinary,” “Intersex,” and “Other gender-nonconforming” to choose from. Multiple or all categories can be selected. Below these categories was a checkbox, unchecked by default, labelled as “Display cis people.” The Location filter offered a dropdown to choose countries; the area for Other tags demonstrated that users could add additional auto-populated terms to their search; Admin options included a checkbox that allowed users to display hidden fields and records.

Tara reported that she enjoyed the way filters added nuance to search results. Similarly, both Jade and Mikayla reported positively on the filters offered in the mockups, and Mikayla specifically liked the filters offered for aspects of identity. Oliver stated: “I like the different search layouts that you can tweak based on what you’re looking for.”

Unchecked “Display cis people” checkbox

The unchecked “Display cis people” option mocked up in the filters area was received positively. Both Mikayla and Tara said that giving users the option to choose whether or not to include cis people was useful for users. Oliver specifically liked that it was unchecked by default. He stated: “I like the ‘display cis people button’ [...] It’s always the opposite, it’s like ‘here are all the cis people, do you want to see the trans people?’ [...] I like that there’s an option to just see trans filmmakers and films.” These responses were positive because the checkbox keeps the Transgender Media Portal centered on non-cis people and their work, but still acknowledges collaborations with cis people.

Figure 5. The filters displayed in the Search Results page mock-up.
Negative Themes

There were a number of areas where users expressed dissatisfaction with the design choices made in the record display mockups. These issues have now been addressed in more recent design iterations. It is still valuable to document these issues and the manner in which they have been resolved to prevent future features from having similar usability problems.

Unintuitive “expanded” and “condensed” icons

At the top of search results, there were two icons demonstrating two views: “expanded” or “condensed.” The “expanded” view showed fewer results with greater detail, while the “condensed” view showed more results with less detail. While Jade appreciated having the ability to toggle between expanded and condensed views, both Oliver and Tara found the icons that represented these views to be confusing. Oliver did not recognise the icons and asked the facilitator to clarify why there were two different mock-ups. While these issues may be due to an inability to interact with static mock-ups (versus the probing or testing possible within a live, “clickable” webpage), the users’ immediate confusion suggests poor usability.

★ Response: These icons have since been moved to the bottom of the section, and replaced with arrows and text that says “show more” and “show less” (see figures 8 & 9).

Small size of items and text

While Jade thought that pronouns and terms were good sizes, Savannah expressed concern for people who may need larger text for accessibility reasons. Oliver found that “[t]he film link is a bit small.” Thane connected size with user engagement, stating that “If it was bigger, it would be better... keeps you moving and engaged.”

★ Response: The mock-ups have since been adjusted to feature larger font sizes and greater spacing between objects and text. Furthermore, colours have been adjusted to be compliant with AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) required contrast levels.

Unintuitive “show more” and “show less” icons

When viewing content in a record, sections that contained a large amount of content (such as a large biography, for example) only displayed a limited amount of this content. A “+” icon near the title of the section was designed to allow users to expand these sections, which then became “−” icons to denote that they could be minimized again. Mikayla was confused by these symbols, and suggested that using “show more” or “show less” links would be more intuitive.

★ Response: Text has since been added to these icons for clarity (see figures 6 & 7).
Links to materials are not prominent

Under the “description” section, the film record mock-ups featured an “external links” section with an embedded video clip as well as links to other film databases (like IMDB) and the film itself. Thane, Oliver, and Mikayla were all uncertain how this section might help them view media content either embedded within the site, or through a link to an external website. Oliver: “The film link is a bit small... If I wanted to use it, I would need to know pretty much right away... can I find this only, do I need to order it? So that I could use it at a GSA meeting or something.”

Response: Although the Transgender Media Portal does not intend to host media content, recent mock-ups have since separated external links about the film from external links to the film (see figures 10 and 11).

Unconventional filter layout

Thane pointed out that filter options are most often found on the left side of search results: “The filters aren’t as intuitive on the right. Most sites have the filter on the left.”

Response: To keep with this convention, the Search Result page mock-ups have since been redesigned to display filter options on the left-hand side of search results (see figures 12 and 13 on next page).
Figure 10. The Search Results page in the mock-ups tested, which featured filters on the right-hand side of the page.

Figure 11. The updated mock-ups now feature the search filters on the left-hand side to fit with popular convention.
In the future, members of the public will be able to search, browse, and contribute to the TMP database. We asked our users what policies and procedures we should have in place in order to create a vibrant contributor culture and make sure we are treating filmmakers who get added to the database ethically and respectfully. Based on our users’ responses, we have five recommendations.

**Recommendations**

5.1 Include publicly-available information in a Person record in the TMP without asking that person’s permission but do send them a courtesy email with the chance to revise the content about them

Four users stated that contributors should be able to add information that is already publicly available to the database without asking the filmmaker’s permission. Savannah argued: “This is a general rule of thumb… there is an understanding that when you become an artist that puts work out into the public you are, on some level, suspending your absolute right to anonymity.”

Two users emphasized that filmmakers’ own websites should be prioritized as sources of information and that adding information from a filmmaker’s own website to the database should not require the permission of the filmmaker. They also suggested that contributors be instructed to prioritize this type of source.

However, Tara suggested that if the information is only from secondary sources, then it might be better to contact the filmmaker for permission:

“
It seems to me that if the information is in the public record, then it’s free. […] But I would be hesitant to take that information from somebody else’s website and I would have to seek out the person in that case. I feel more comfortable trying to find the person if the information was secondary because it implies that they didn’t release the information on their own."

Three users added that the Transgender Media Portal should implement a reactive approach over a proactive approach when informing artists of their addition to the database. However, two users suggested that we send an automatic email to artists when they are added to the database. This email would inform them that they have been added and allow them to review and update the record themselves or request it to be removed.

5.2 Vet new contributors solely by confirming their email address

Users emphasized that including a process to vet new TMP contributors could scare away potential contributors. Savannah noted that “if there is too much information required to register an account before a contribution can be made, that may disincentivize or scare me away from making an account.” Test participants suggested that new users simply be required to confirm their email addresses a means of verification.

5.3 Warn users that usernames are public

Oliver pointed out that the system should inform new users that their usernames will be public. For those wishing to remain anonymous while using the database, they should choose a username with no personal information attached.

5.4 Create transparent abuse reporting processes

Trans people regularly experience abuse in online spaces: from name-calling and threats of violence, to having private and/or incorrect information posted without consent (from deadnames and wrong pronouns to home addresses), having their accounts suspended, deleted, or shadowbanned without merit, and having their content be unfairly reported or algorithmically tagged as “adult” or “restricted” content. Some abuse reporting processes allow for bullying behaviour where trolls will have a site/user removed because they are a member of the LGBTQ2S+ or other marginalized communities.

All six users expressed that the Transgender Media Portal should be at once easy for newcomers to join but also have a robust and transparent abuse reporting process. One user suggested posting the TMP’s policies and abuse reporting process clearly on the website where they can be viewed by contributors, administrators, and guests.
Users also stated that it was important to know what happens once a report is filed and for it to be clear where in the process a given report was. Thane suggested “having a page that is very clear on what happens when something gets reported and maybe a status bar. Then people can know this is at this point. That kind of transparency is very important in our communities.” This is to ensure that the reporting process remains transparent and that users are aware that action is being taken.

However, users did not agree on what should happen if a page is requested to be deleted. Thane suggests that when a page is reported we could “have it come up, blur out the page and have a thing that says right now we’re dealing with a report and direct people to Google.” On the other hand, two different users suggested that the page need not be removed immediately. Jade originally agreed with Thane that the page should be removed but then changed their mind. "The only thing that comes up for me with that, because that was my first thought too, having that sort of zero tolerance as soon as there’s a report filed, take it down. I can also understand somebody abusing that to take down a certain person or a certain identity."

Mikayla suggested instead to:

“put a disclaimer at the top that says ‘someone filed a report about this, the information might be accurate but it’s under review.’ It’s kind of like a content warning because we don’t know what people will put because it’s kind of like a living document so people go into it with a heads up.”

All users agreed that the Transgender Media Portal should be transparent about the entire reporting process to ensure that both the reporter and reported understand their actions and the consequences that result.

Based on these suggestions, we recommend:

1. Posting the TMP’s policies and abuse reporting processes on the public TMP page.
2. When a user files a report, they should receive an email explaining the steps of the investigation.
3. If a page is reported, a warning will be posted on the top of the page indicating that it is under investigation.
4. Once the investigation is concluded, the page or content will either be deleted, revised, or left the same.
5. The user who posted the content will either receive a warning or be banned.
6. The person that filed the report will receive an email informing them of the results of the investigation.
## Positive Themes

### Focus on community engagement

Five users praised the current public-facing website for its commitment to community collaboration through its pages on Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) Trans Artists; Support Trans Artists; Sister Projects; and Bibliographies. They also appreciated the requests at the top of the pages inviting individuals to email the research team with any additional information and/or corrections. Further, Mikayla and Jade expressed a positive response to the Support Trans Artist page. Jade commented that “it shows there is community.”

A consistent theme throughout all the pre-test survey responses was that users hope that the Transgender Media Portal will be able to connect them to a plethora of trans-created media, giving them insights into what trans people are creating, and how they might compare their own experiences to them. Indeed, users were excited at the potential for community building and connection.

### Flexible & intersectional approach to identity

Five users appreciated the flexibility and intersectional ways in which identity is captured in the Person records in the database. Savannah stated that “It addresses identity in a very respectful and academic way. It was nice that it wasn’t a drop-down menu, it was a type-in-what-you-like sort of menu.” Further, Jade appreciated how the database instructs contributors to ensure they are gathering information that is true to how the person self-identifies. Jade stated: “I liked the note that was put in there about look[ing] for what the person is self-identifying [as]...it probably applies to mostly everything that was there.” Similarly, Oliver stated: “That process is really good because it is so specific and asks for information we might not automatically consider.”

### Focus on diverse voices

Oliver and Tara agreed that they believe the Transgender Media Portal fights against structures of oppression. Tara stated: “I think the project itself does that just because it enables so many diverse voices and this is what interested me most about it.”

All users appreciated the inclusion of a specific BIPOC page on the public website. Thane suggested also including a “why is it important to have a BIPOC page” section; and this sentiment was echoed by both Savannah and Jade. Jade also had a positive response to the fact that the first artists listed on the Support Trans Artists page were Black. Further, they said: “it was nice to see the term stud in there [in the Person record identity fields] because it is so specific to the Black community and encompasses more than just gender which was nice.” Mikayla also stated that the advisory board was well selected and represented a diversity of trans experiences as it is “important to have both transmasculine and transfeminine members.”

## Negative Themes

### Lengthy and laborious process of contributing

This negative response, described in more detail in Section 3, is important to the project’s anti-oppression aspirations, because most of the people entering data into the database after its public launch will be doing this labour for free and without being a part of the credited research team.

### Off-putting terminology

All users stated that they encountered terms on the website and in the database that they didn’t fully understand. Some criticized the language overall and particular terms for being too “academic”: see Section 2 and Section 3 for the specific terms and portions of the website that users found to be too academic. Several users described the project’s “academic” bent as being at odds with community activism and a diverse user base. This language could alienate those without academic training and/or those who are understandably skeptical of participating in formal academic research on trans lives.

### The whiteness of the research team

While users overall were positive about the project’s focus on BIPOC filmmakers and connections to community, Jade and Thane noted that they were cautious about the project because, in photos on
the public website, the current research team appeared to be exclusively white. Jade stated:

“When I go to websites I go to the About section and I want to look at who this is connected to and I notice that no one is Black even though Black people have been leading trans movements from the beginning. It’s about having people representative even in leadership and not just volunteers in a focus group or something. There’s already a hole in that [here] to me.”

Indeed, all six of the core research team members in 2019–2020 are white. Of the 11 people who have been core members of the research team since 2018, one is Black, one is Latino/Hispanic, and one is Indigenous (Anishinaabe), while the other eight are white. Of the six members of the Advisory Board, one is Black and one is of Indigenous (Mi’kmaq) and settler (French/Irish) descent, while the others do not specify their race in their biography.

Skepticism about categorizing aspects of identity

While five users gave positive feedback on the way identity is handled when entering a new Person record, one user expressed concerns about how the database separates and categorizes identity. Thane stated:

“As large as the trans umbrella is, so are we pathologized and put into these categories and highly studied. Do we have to continue that? The idea of identity and putting things in those terms is great, but I think that it is still very academic and slices of a person. How can this be useful to our community instead of just adding to academia?”

Thane questioned the act of categorizing people’s identities into terms in a database, asking “How do we retell somebody’s telling of their self?” As noted in Section 3, Thane also questioned the separation between the fields for Indigenous Affiliation and Race/Ethnicity:

“Why is Race/Ethnicity separated from Indigenous Affiliation? Because it doesn’t pop up when you have the tags pop up and when nothing pops up then I’m like okay you have zero anything for this. But I type in Anishinaabe and that comes up and I can understand how things are centred already.”

★ Recommendations

In the pre-test surveys, users expressed their hopes for what the Transgender Media Portal could offer: access to information about trans films and filmmakers; the ability to watch trans-made films online; connection to other trans folks, events, and community; a platform to benefit trans artists; and educational resources for the formal educational system and community justice/activist endeavors. Users also expressed a desire for a platform that de-centers whiteness and white stories, directs people to a plethora of BIPOC trans artists and content, prioritizes BIPOC knowledges and resistances, pushes back against the compartmentalization and pathologization of trans identities, and promotes accessibility in terms of language and user experience.

The TMP brings together community resources and research tools and its success will depend on a reciprocal relationship between researchers and participants to continue to build a network of active and engaged contributors, users, and filmmakers. Users want a tool that benefits trans people, especially trans People of Colour, who have long been over-researched and hyper-pathologized by academic institutions. Through an interactive and community-driven approach, the Transgender Media Portal has the potential to resist cis-centric and pathological representations of transgender lives, subjectivities, and experiences by tracing the lengthy history of trans-created media. Based on the aspirations outlined by these users, we recommend the following actions to address the negative themes identified.

6.1 Weave a “thread of gratitude” throughout the contributor experience

All participants agreed that the Transgender Media Portal is committed to community. As mentioned in Section 3, Thane highlighted the importance of sharing appreciation for the labour of those who will be contributing by entering records in the database. He explained to the TMP team that it is important to “weave a thread of gratitude, because at the end of the day, this is a database that is going to be created by community. By people sitting there and using their own time for the purpose of community-building and building a capacity, but the people who are going to be acknowledged and credited are y’all. I think it is also sharing that gratitude.”
Similarly, Jade expressed that they would appreciate moments of encouragement that made the act of contributing to the database feel like engagement with community and to feel connected to the project on a personal level. They stated:

“Yeah, even if at the end when you click save if there was a message that was like ‘thank you so much you’re adding to... this is going to help people in the community,’ [...] Even comments about ‘almost there’ when you read that on forms it’s like ‘Aha! So they do understand that this takes a lot of time.’”

Thane added: “Yeah, like... joke with me, have a conversation! I know you’re not a real person there, but still.”

Thane also proposed sharing information about the number of times particular content was viewed in order to show contributors the impact of their labour. He suggested: “add some stats or something, you know, like there were X number of people that clicked on… For me if I saw that... this saves lives. We are contributing to our own liberation.”

To weave a thread of gratitude through the entire Transgender Media Portal, we recommend:

1. Adding encouraging comments throughout the contribution process, including a message that appears every time the user clicks “Save”;

2. Adding information about how many times content edited by a contributor has been viewed to that contributor’s dashboard; and

3. Adding an engaging mascot to accompany the contributor in their editing and offer encouraging messages, like the owl mascot in the Duolingo language-learning app.

6.2 Rewrite inaccessible language

We recommend rewriting the language on the public website and in the database in order to make it accessible to everyday community members, not just researchers, filmmakers, and programmers. This should begin with defining or rephrasing the terms declared confusing in Section 2 and Section 3.

We recommend changing the title of the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page that appears in the menu dropdown to read “Filmmakers of Colour” instead. Also, it would be useful to add a paragraph at the top of that page explaining that the page includes BIPOC trans filmmakers.

Another possible solution is to separate sections of the website that require academic and professional training to understand from community-facing sections.

We also recommend completing further usability tests with each of our target user groups. This round of usability testing focused almost exclusively on community users, and the issues of terminology may be different for academics and film professionals, as these users will be looking for different kinds of information and keywords that signal what they are hoping to find.

Figure 13. Left to right: Savannah, Mikayla, Jade, and Thane in a group discussion (photo by Kate Higginson, March 12, 2020).
6.3 Be transparent about the project’s limitations

When asked “How can we ensure that the Transgender Media Portal fights against structures of oppression, including settler-colonialism, anti-Blackness, ableism, and poverty, and doesn’t reinforce them?,” Thane responded that these aspirations may not be possible in the context of a state-funded university-housed project:

"I think putting together a database of trans media—you can do that. But to add on the burden of not reinforcing settler colonialism or perpetuating anti-Blackness or trans misogyny, I think it is okay to say ‘hey we are a digital trans media portal and that means you’re going to see who has access to create especially films. When you see gaps, we have this button and you can go give your money to people.’ [But] when you think about how do we decolonize this thing, when we talk about decolonizing gender that’s a whole lengthy process... [C]an anyone who is Black or Indigenous really be cis? Because being trans is still white supremacy. Do we have gender? It is a whole spiral. [I suggest] being upfront. Unless there is a clear way like a land acknowledgement that shows that you have done the work of sitting with an elder and doing the internal work of what it means to be making a database that has its own white supremacist roots in an academic institution that continues every day to contribute to the marginalization of the people you’re trying to help—I would say don’t do it if you can’t because then it never happens."

Thus, we recommend adding a statement to the public website about the project’s aspirations and limitations, given its situatedness in academic and state-funded institutions that continue to perpetuate and benefit from settler-colonialism, anti-Blackness, ableism, and transmisogyny. Remaining clear and transparent about the project’s scope and limitations is the most effective way to address this unease. The statement will also include our commitment to researching and implementing anti-colonial database practices.

6.4 Incorporate more BIPOC trans leadership at all levels of the project

We recommend taking additional steps to incorporate BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour) trans leadership at all levels of the project. While systemic racism at Carleton and in Canada means that there are disproportionately few BIPOC trans students at Carleton and that BIPOC trans leaders in academia are deluged with service requests, the project can nevertheless strive to do better.

The project should continue the actions already undertaken, namely that:

1. All positions be publicly advertised and job ads state that BIPOC trans candidates are especially encouraged to apply;
2. BIPOC trans candidates be prioritized in hiring;
3. There always be at least one Black and at least one Indigenous member of the project Advisory Board,
4. Recruiting BIPOC users be prioritized in the usability tests; and
5. BIPOC trans filmmakers be prioritized on the public website.

In addition, we recommend that the project:

6. Ensure that the Advisory Board has a majority (>50%) BIPOC leaders;
7. Prioritize BIPOC candidates for the directorship when it transfers from Dr Horak’s term;
8. Prioritize BIPOC-run software development companies and developers when grants allow us to hire professional support;
9. Specifically target BIPOC communities when recruiting new students to Carleton for Research Assistantships by sending the ad to relevant organizations including the Black Studies Association of Canada, the Native American Art Studies Association (NAASA), and the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA), BIPOC leaders and community organizations in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal; relevant departments at historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs); and asking members of the Advisory Board to share it with their networks;
10. Make additional efforts to share job ads with existing BIPOC trans students at Carleton, University of Ottawa, and Algonquin College students by circulating ads to the Black Student Alliance at Carleton, African Students’ Association of Carleton, Centre for Indigenous Initiatives, Ojigkwanong and Mawandoseg Centre and through word-of-mouth;
11. Apply for new grants that allow the project to hire people who are not current university students, thus widening the pool of potential BIPOC trans candidates;
12. Connect to Algonquin Anishinaabe community leadership in the territory where Carleton University is located;
13. Post a yearly report on the website assessing our success at these goals.

Usability Test Report Findings & Recommendations
Summary of Recommendations

1. What do People Want From a Transgender Media Portal?
   (No recommendations)

2. Public Website
   2.1 Rewrite academic language
   2.2 Add a living glossary
   2.3 Rearrange the layout of the homepage
   2.4 Add photos to the BIPOC Trans Filmmakers page

3. Database: Filling Out Person and Film Records
   3.1 Redesign field sections as tabs to have less visual clutter
   3.2 Add definitions, instructions, and examples on three different levels
   3.3 Weave a “thread of gratitude” throughout the contributor experience

4. Database: Record Display Mock-ups
   (No further recommendations)

5. Privacy & Contributor Culture
   5.1 Include publicly-available information in a Person record in the TMP without asking that person’s permission but do send them a courtesy email and the chance to revise the content about them
   5.2 Vet new contributors solely by confirming their email address

5.3 Warn users that usernames are public
5.4 Create transparent abuse reporting processes

6. Anti-Oppression
   6.1 Weave a “thread of gratitude” throughout the contributor experience
   6.2 Rewrite inaccessible language
   6.3 Be transparent about the project’s limitations
   6.4 Incorporate more BIPOC trans leadership at all levels of the project
On the whole, users found that the project met an important need in the trans community and that it prioritized diverse voices and community engagement.

Users praised the look and feel of the design and the flexible and intersectional approach to capturing identity in person records. However, they also found some of the language to be overly academic and off-putting, and the process of adding new records overwhelming and intimidating. They noted that there were no Black trans people in leadership positions on the project team, despite the long history of Black trans leadership in the trans movement. Implementing the recommendations in this report will ensure that the project remains accountable and useful to trans communities, including Black, Indigenous, and Person of Colour trans communities. Based on this experience, we also recommend conducting regular usability tests with the TMP’s target demographics throughout the lifetime of the project.

Figure 14. Left to right: Oliver, Chokly, Debney, and Horak introducing the usability test (photo taken by Kate Higginson, March 7, 2020).
Hello [NAME],

I am a research assistant working with Dr. Laura Horak, Associate Professor of Film Studies at Carleton University, who is researching the history of trans and gender variant filmmaking in Canada and the United States. As part of this project, we are creating a public online database of trans-made audiovisual work, tentatively called the Transgender Media Portal.

We want this new tool to be useful for students like yourself and so I am writing to ask whether you would like to participate in our usability test and discussion of this new tool. The event will take approximately 2.5 hours including a 30-minute meal break and food will be provided. Here is a link to a survey with some options for dates and times. Please let us know at your earliest convenience.

Participants will use the online platform, participate in individual and small group discussions, and fill out surveys. We will use observations of and feedback from participants to improve the platform. We intend to audio record all discussions and video record a selection of participants using the online platform.

We ask that all participants maintain the confidentiality of the other participants. We will work to ensure that these recordings are not shared outside the research team without your explicit permission.

We will offer CA$100 to each participant, plus reimbursement for in-city transportation and food and refreshments during the event. Please understand that your participation would be voluntary, that you can end your participation at any time during the event with no negative consequences, and you have the right to confidentiality if you so choose.

If you are interested in being interviewed, please review the letter of information and consent form attached to this email. There will also be a hard copy for you to fill out at the event and we can discuss any questions you might have there. You will also have the chance to review and revise your consent form at the end of the event. On the consent form, you will have the option to allow recordings of yourself to be shared on the Transgender Media Portal and/or saved in The ArQuives in Toronto, if you like.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. (CUREB-A Clearance # 108914, clearance expires on: June 30, 2020.)

If you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact Dr. Andy Adler, Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A by phone at 613-520-2600 ext. 2517 or via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

If you would like to participate in this event, or have any questions, do not hesitate to reply to this email or contact Laura Horak at laura.horak@carleton.ca or (613) 520-2600, ext. 4010.

Regards,

Oliver Debney (he/him)

Transgender Media Portal | Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada | Unceded Algonquin Territory
2. Consent Form

Participant Letter of Information

Imagining Transgender: Trans and Gender Variant Filmmaking in the United States and Canada

Principal Investigator
Prof. Laura Horak, Associate Professor, Carleton University
laura.horak@carleton.ca, (613) 520-2600 ext. 4010

Research Team and Interviewers
Oliver Debney (research assistant)
Kit Chokly (user experience designer)
Kate Higginson (project manager)
Adam Milling (software developer)

Letter of Information

Purpose of Study
You have been invited to participate in a group usability test of a public online database of trans and gender variant filmmakers and their works, tentatively called the Transgender Media Portal. The purpose of this tool is to publicize films and videos made by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and other gender-nonconforming people, in order to write these works into our shared history and make them more available to today’s activists, artists, and the public.

Our Intentions
Dr. Horak and her research team will strive to be respectful and use good judgement in all decisions regarding study participants and the expertise and knowledge that they share with us. We strive to benefit trans and gender nonconforming communities by preserving and sharing the creative works made by community members. We will do our best to stay in ongoing conversation with these communities about how best to do this and to respond to any concern raised by participants as effectively as we can.

Inclusion Criteria
Individuals eligible to take part in a usability test are:

1. 15 years of age or older.

Exclusion Criteria
Individuals ineligible to take part in a usability test are:

1. younger than 15.

Your Participation in the Study
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a usability test. The usability testing will take place in an LGBT or arts community center or university and last around six hours. Participants will engage in activities such as: using the online platform, participating in group discussions, being interviewed by members of the research team, and filling out surveys. We will use observations of and feedback from participants to improve the online platform.

We intend to audio record all discussions and to video record a selection of participants using the online platform.

You will fill out a consent form before the event begins. After the event, you will have the option to review and revise the consent form. The consent form allows you to state clearly your wishes on how recordings of you can be used by researchers into the future and contains options for confidentiality.

Possible Risks and Harms
Out trans and queer community members who participate in the usability testing should not be exposed to any more risk through participating than they would experience in their everyday lives. For participants who are not out, there is a small risk of being publicly outed. The research team will mitigate this risk by asking participants to agree to maintain the confidentiality of fellow participants outside of the workshop setting. All participants will be given options in the consent form as to how their statements can be used and how they will be attributed. Finally, the research team will ensure the security of the recordings by storing them on an encrypted, password-protected computer, backed up on an encrypted hard drive that is stored in a locked office.
Possible Benefits
The project will amplify the voices of gender-non-conforming people who have been excluded from mainstream representation and provide a better account of the long history of trans creativity and artistic accomplishment. By exploring the conditions that have enabled trans artistic work in the past, it will point to ways to expand these opportunities. The project will also promote the careers of Canadian and U.S. trans filmmakers, encourage institutions to preserve these films before they are lost or destroyed, and provide today’s filmmakers access to a tradition of work.

Compensation
All participants will receive a stipend of $100. Food and drinks will be provided during the session. Compensation and transportation costs will be provided to all participants who show up to the session, regardless of whether they subsequently withdraw.

Your Rights as an Interviewee
If you have any ethical concerns with the study, please contact Dr. Andy Adler, Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board-A by phone at 613-520-2600 ext. 2517 or via email at ethics@carleton.ca.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Laura Horak (laura.horak@carleton.ca, (613) 520-2600 ext. 4010).

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Participant Consent Form

Project Title
Imagining Transgender: Trans and Gender Variant Filmmaking in the United States and Canada

Funding Source
Social Science and Humanities Research Council Insight Development Grant

Date of Ethics Clearance

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires

I _____________________________, choose to participate in a study on the history of transgender and gender variant filmmaking in Canada and the United States. The study investigates films and videos made by trans and gender variant people, including aesthetic strategies, circulation, and preservation, in order to write these works into our shared history and make them more available to today’s activists, artists, and the public. One part of the project is a public online database of trans and gender variant filmmakers and their works, tentatively called the Transgender Media Portal.

The researcher for this study is Dr. Laura Horak, Associate Professor of Film Studies in the School for Studies of Art and Culture at Carleton University (laura.horak@carleton.ca; 613-520-2600 x4010).

I consent to participate in the study:

- I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me, and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am receiving a copy of this consent form for my own records.
- I agree to maintain the confidentiality of other participants outside the workshop setting.

I understand that:

- My participation is completely voluntary and I can withdraw at any time during the event without any consequences. I can request that recordings of me alone be destroyed, but cannot ask for group recordings in which I participate to be destroyed. I will receive $100 and in-city transportation costs regardless of whether I complete the event or ask for recordings to be destroyed.
- I have the right to refuse to participate in any part of the activity.
- At the end of the event, I will have the opportunity to review and revise this consent form.

1. RECORDING (Choose all that apply)

- The researcher may audio record me during the event. Note that participants must consent to be audio recorded in order to take part in the group discussions.
- The researcher may video record me during the event.
2. PERSONAL IDENTITY (Choose one)

☐ Open: My identity may be revealed in the dissemination of material gathered at this event.

or

☐ Confidential: The “Imagining Transgender” research team will have access to my identity, but they may not divulge it or make it accessible to anyone. They will speak of me using my initials or an alias in any dissemination. I choose the following alias: ___________________________.

3. DISSEMINATION

My contributions to this event (e.g. speech or actions) may be presented in the following formats (Choose all that apply):

☐ Text
☐ Audio
☐ Video

Alternative option:

☐ The researchers may summarize my speech but not use exact quotations.

Recordings of my participation may be disseminated in the following ways (Choose all that apply):

☐ Public presentations (e.g. academic and community presentations)
☐ Written publications
☐ Online (e.g. Transgender Media Portal, The ArQuives online platform, etc.)

4. PRESERVATION (Choose all that apply)

☐ I agree that the Principal Investigator (PI) may save a copy of any recordings of me from this event for future research on trans and queer media history on an encrypted, password-protected computer, backed up on an encrypted hard drive, in perpetuity. The PI may share these recordings with the Imagining Transgender research team as well as future students and collaborators. Upon the death of PI, a member of the Imagining Transgender research team may take over the PI’s role.

☐ I agree that the recordings of me from the event may be archived at The ArQuives in Toronto (formerly known as the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives) for the benefit of our history. The ArQuives has agreed to enforce the access restrictions in #2 and #3.

Other comments or specific conditions indicated by the interviewee:

______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________
______________________________________________________

I consent to participate in the study:

I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am being given a copy of this consent form for my own records.

Participant

Name (in block letters): ______________________________

Pronouns: ___________________________________________

Email address: _______________________________________

Phone number: _______________________________________

Signature : __________________________________________

Date:   _____________________________________________

I have received and reviewed the consent form. To my knowledge, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent.

Researcher

Name (in block letters): ______________________________

Signature : __________________________________________

Date:   _____________________________________________
3. Director’s Introductory Script

I want to first acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin nation.

Welcome to the first Transgender Media Portal usability test (TMP for short). Let’s begin by introducing ourselves to each other. My name is Laura, I’m an Associate Professor of Film Studies at Carleton University and the director of the TMP and I use the pronouns she/her. (Each person says their name and pronouns, including participants.)

Accessibility: Feel free to take a break or stretch or move around anytime you’d like. There is an all-gender multi-stall bathroom just down the hallway from this room.

Why are we making this portal? Discussions of transgender film are usually dominated by representations of trans people, not representations made by trans people. The Transgender Media Portal aims to make audiovisual work by trans, Two Spirit, nonbinary, intersex, and gender-nonconforming people more available to artists, activists, festival programmers, researchers, instructors, and the public.

We want to: promote the careers of today’s trans filmmakers, call attention to older works so that they can be programmed and preserved, jumpstart research on these films, and provide artists with access to an innovative tradition of work.

We are planning to launch a collaborative database of trans filmmakers and their works in Fall 2022. You will be helping to test our pilot version of this database. In the meantime, we have also collected resources related to trans filmmaking on our website.

Today’s activities will last around two and a half hours. First, there is some paperwork. We will be going over the consent forms together to make sure we are all on the same page about what can and cannot be shared. You will also fill out a social media consent form and paperwork for today’s payment. We will be distributing the honoraria then. Then you will go to your computers and fill out an introductory online survey.

Next, we will be videorecording you while you explore the TMP website. We will ask you to explore the site and play around with some of its functions. After this, we will have around 20 minutes for a meal break.

Next, we will get together as a group to discuss the Transgender Media Portal. We have some discussion questions prepared, and we would love to hear what everyone has to say about how to proceed. Finally, you will complete a concluding survey and review the consent form to see if you want to change any of your selections.

Any questions before we get started?

Consent Forms: Hopefully everyone had a chance to read through the consent forms that were emailed to you along with your invitation. [Pass out hard copies of the forms. Read through the form together, allowing them to fill it out or make changes as they go along, and ask everyone to sign.]

We will review the consent form at the end of the day in case you want to make any changes.

We also have a consent form specifically to share little snippets on our social media. If you are not comfortable with this, please select the appropriate option on the form and sign.

We will now distribute the honoraria. You will each receive $100 for your participation. Once you have received your payment, you will fill out this form confirming that you got paid. The university requires that you write down your social insurance number on the form.

Introductory Survey: Now each person will fill out an introductory survey. Oliver has emailed each of the participants a Google Doc that you will use over the course of the evening. The first step is to open that Google Doc and click the link there that will lead you to the introductory survey.
4. Pre-Test Survey Questions

Name: 
Email: 
What is your age? 
How do you identify in terms of gender, sexuality, race/ethnicity, and any other relevant social categories? 
What pronouns do you use? 
What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If currently enrolled, highest degree received.) 
What is your profession? 
What is your connection to trans filmmaking, arts, and/or activist communities, if any? 
What would you like the Transgender Media Portal that we are creating to be able to do? 
For what reasons could you see yourself using a resource like the Transgender Media Portal (work/research/pleasure)? 
What kinds of things would you like to find out from a Transgender Media Portal?

5. Usability Test Facilitator’s Script (May 12 Version)

Facilitator Instructions
Pay as much attention to what they do as to what they say.
Try not to answer any questions or explain how to do things unless the user gets really stuck. (You can answer these questions once the test is over.)
Do affirm their observations and suggestions.

Facilitator Script
I am [NAME] and I will be your facilitator. I will be reading the instructions, timing the tasks, and taking notes.

Remember, we are testing the site, not you! Please do not worry about hurting our feelings—negative feedback is probably the most helpful for us. As you complete the various tasks, please try to narrate what you are doing out loud. This will give us some insights into your thought processes so we can rework the site to be more intuitive and engaging. The video camera will be recording your speech and the movements of your cursor on screen. Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. Before we get started
   - Open your computer, open a browser, and bring up the Google Doc that Oliver sent to you.
   - Click the first link in the Doc—transgendermediaportal.org—in order to open the TMP web page in a separate browser window.

2. Explore the Transgender Media Portal Public Website
   - Your first task will be to explore the Transgender Media Portal public website. You will have approximately five minutes.
     - Go to transgendermediaportal.org
     - Click around and explore the site.
     - Let us know which parts seem most interesting to you.

3. Adding a new Person record
   - Now you will try adding information about a trans filmmaker to our pilot database. You will have around 15 minutes for this task.
     - Go to the Google Doc to see what filmmaker you have been assigned and open the website about them listed there in a new browser window.
Go back to the Google Doc and click “Login” (transgendermediaportal.com/user). Use the username and password on the Doc in order to log in.

When you are looking at the Transgender Media Portal homepage: Hover over the word “Database” that is one of the menu options toward the right of the screen and then click on “View Content.”

Search for your filmmaker to see if they already have an entry about them. To search, enter their full name in the “Title” field and click the button labeled “Filter.”

If they already have an entry, click on the “Edit” button that is to the far right of their name.

If they don’t already have an entry, click the blue “Add content” button and then click “Person,” which is listed toward the end of the list.

Using information from the webpage, fill out the fields that you are able to. If you can’t find the relevant information on this webpage, leave the field empty. Many fields will be empty. Remember to click “Save” at the bottom of the page when you are finished.

4. Adding a new Film record

- Now you will try adding information about a film to the database. You will have around 15 minutes for this task.
- Go to the Google Doc to see what film you have been assigned and open the website about them listed there in a new browser window or tab.
- Search for your film to see if it already has an entry. To search, enter the film’s title in the “Title” field and click the button labeled “Filter.”
- If it already has an entry, click on the “Edit” button that is to the far right of the title.
- If it doesn’t already have an entry, click the blue “Add content” button and then click “Film,” which is the last item on the list.
- Using information from the webpage, fill out the fields that you are able to. If you can’t find the relevant information on this webpage, leave the field empty. Many fields will be empty. Remember to click “Save” at the bottom of the page when you are finished.

5. Explore the design mock-ups

- Now you will explore our designs for what it will be like to browse the database and learn about individual films and filmmakers. These designs have not yet been implemented, so you will be looking at PDFs of what we hope the experience will look like. You will have five minutes for this task.
- Go to the Google Doc and click “Explore Design Mockups.”
- Read through the different kinds of pages and speak your thoughts about them out loud. Tell me what you like, what is confusing, and if there’s any other info that you would like to see there.

Thanks a lot! Your feedback is really helpful. [We take down the video equipment and set up the audio recording equipment for the discussion.]

6. Focus Group Moderator’s Script

Now it’s time for our group discussion! [invite everyone to the area we decide to all gather] We will be asking you some questions. There are no right or wrong answers. Please make sure to speak honestly and make sure everyone has time to speak, as well. We have a total of nine questions. We will be audio recording the discussion.

“We are now starting the recording. It is Thursday, March 12, 2020, and we are recording the group discussion of the Transgender Media Portal usability test. Can everyone briefly introduce themselves again?”

Reflecting on the Usability Test

1. What did you like about the public Transgender Media Portal website and what could be improved?
2. What are your thoughts on how identity is categorized, displayed, and shared in Person records?
3. Is there any other information in the Person or Film records that we should capture or highlight?

Privacy
One thing we are thinking hard about in this project is privacy.

4. What are your thoughts about privacy for the people listed in the database? Should we seek out permission from each person before listing them? If so, what should be done if there is no response to those who we have reached out to? How many times should we attempt to contact them? Similarly, what if they are deceased and we cannot seek their permission?

Contributor Culture
6. One of our goals is to enable people to contribute information to the database like Wikipedia. Who do you think would want to contribute to the database?

7. What should be the process of adding new contributors? How much should we vet potential contributors and in what ways?

Anti-Oppression
9. How can we ensure that the Transgender Media Portal fights against structures of oppression including settler-colonialism, anti-Blackness, ableism, and poverty and doesn’t reinforce them?

7. Post-Test Survey Questions

Name:

Once the TMP is launched, how likely are you to contribute information to it? (From 1 “Not very likely” to 5 “Very likely”)

Why or why not?

Once the TMP is launched, how likely are you to search and browse the database? (From 1 “Not very likely” to 5 “Very likely”)

Why or why not?

What do you like best about all the aspects of the TMP that you’ve tried out today?

What things are most in need of improvement?

Who else should we invite to do a usability test? (You can name particular people and/or types of people)

What do you think are the most important steps we should take to protect people’s privacy and security?