Read this first!

This package is just one example of a set of materials we’ve put together for researchers working in a project that involves user testing across countries (SURE\*). We’ve prepared similar packages for other cross-country projects, and are continually developing and refining the material.

Our aim with these packages is to provide researchers who have no previous experience in user testing with enough instruction and material that they might feel confident enough to carry out tests in their own settings.

Much of the content here is pretty generic so we don’t change it much from project to project. But the interview guides are quite project-specific. I have enclosed a few examples of interview guides from different projects, so that you can see what varies and what stays the same. The guides are very detailed, but that is so that someone can carry out the test even with limited previous experience. The best thing is to familiarize yourself with your own guide so that you don’t have to read it directly from the manuscript. The interview guides cover four main areas: user background, tasks (open and structured), direct questions, and feedback about the user testing itself.

If you have limited time, the “task” section should be prioritized, so that your data collection is based on actual observation.

There is also an example of a ppt feedback form, which involves pairs of users “testing” themselves.

The interview guide examples are all for testing out paper documents or paper prototypes, and the tasks reflect that. If you’re going to test a web site, I’d recommend you read up on this so that you can alter the guide appropriately (for instance, add navigational tasks). Start with some of the reference materials about how to carry out user testing that I’ve listed in a separate document.

This package of material is free for you to use and modify for your own purposes, provided that you give due credit to the sources. If you translate any of it, please let us know so that we can keep a copy on file for others to use.

Good luck!

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\* http://www.who.int/evidence/sure/en/