



THE INVISIBLE WORKFORCE: MICROTASKING

INVITATION TO JOIN A TWIG FORESIGHT PROJECT: SIGNALS SPRINT | SEPTEMBER 2019



WHAT IS A FORESIGHT PROJECT?

The research plan utilizes foresight methodology to develop a futures perspective on microtasking. The rationale for choosing foresight is to consider the consequences in the context of employment and workers. Since there is limited data on microtasking, foresight can reduce uncertainty.

Foresight's approach to reducing uncertainty consists of:

- Systematically considering plausible, possible, and at times improbable futures
- Understanding the implications resulting from these different futures
- Using the insights gained to improve present-day planning and decision-making

'There is
absolutely
nothing that
cannot be
done.'

BUCKMINSTER
FULLER



ABOUT THE PROJECT

- Microjobbers are people who are active on a microtasking platform and perform isolated tasks for small amounts of money.
- It's not uncommon to see tasks posted at 10 cents, although some offer more than \$15.
- Based on the revenues of platforms such as Amazon Turk and Figure Eight (combined \$120 million in 2015), microjobbing is a large workforce (@20 perM=2400 fte).
- We will explore implications and develop strategic perspectives that will reduce uncertainty and better equip stakeholders to consider microjobbing in a current and futures context.
- The project will support a better understanding of the issues and challenges that impact the industry.

AMAZON MECHANICAL TURK (HIGH)

Worker ID: A40BSGV193BVN [🔗](#) HITs Goal BETA Reward Goal BETA Hello, Cheryl May | [Sign Out](#)

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All HITs Your HITs Queue

HIT Groups (1-20 of 653)

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Requester	Title	HITs	Reward	Created	Actions	
SurveyComet	Compensation HIT for A3FKX13NFQZP0Q(~ 1 minutes)	1	\$16.00	4h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
SurveyComet	Make predictions about political events \$16. (~ 120 minutes)	2	\$16.00	7h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
SurveyComet	Compensation HIT(~ 1 minutes)	1	\$16.00	18d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
SurveyComet	Make predictions about political events \$16. (~ 120 minutes)	2	\$16.00	8/27/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Stephen Van Hedger	Makeup for Speech Perception HIT(~ 75 minutes)	1	\$11.25	19d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Stephen Van Hedger	Follow-Up to Speech Perception Study(~ 75 minutes)	6	\$11.25	19d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Olivier Klein	HIT for A1U3UUELW55W65	1	\$8.00	11d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Olivier Klein	HIT for A1U5BE8XJRKKW3	1	\$8.00	11d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Matthew Gallagher	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Cancer Survivors(~ 120 minutes)	1	\$8.00	12d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Compensation HIT for A36SM7QM8OK3H6(~ 1 minutes)	1	\$8.00	18d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Matthew Gallagher	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Cancer Survivors(~ 120 minutes)	1	\$8.00	8/27/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Flyer task, work with a supervisor using emails(~ 50 minutes)	15	\$8.00	19h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Flyer task, work with a supervisor using emails(~ 50 minutes)	17	\$8.00	2d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Flyer task, work with a supervisor using emails(~ 50 minutes)	9	\$8.00	2d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Matthew Gallagher	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Cancer Survivors(~ 120 minutes)	1	\$8.00	8/22/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Matthew Gallagher	Mental Health and Wellbeing in Cancer Survivors(~ 120 minutes)	1	\$8.00	8/21/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Flyer task, work with a supervisor using emails(~ 45 minutes)	5	\$8.00	5d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Florian Klonek	Flyer task, work with a supervisor using emails(~ 45 minutes)	2	\$8.00	6d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Julie Yeterian & Sunny Dutra	U.S. Military Veterans' Thoughts and Preferences about Mental Health Treatme...	1	\$7.50	7h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Leak	2 visual acuity experiments - second experiment!(~ 50 minutes)	4	\$7.00	3d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify

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AMAZON MECHANICAL TURK (LOW)

Worker ID: A40BSGV193BVN [🔗](#) **HITS Goal** BETA **Reward Goal** BETA Hello, Cheryl May | [Sign Out](#)

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All HITS Your HITS Queue

HIT Groups (1-20 of 738)

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Requester	Title	HITS	Reward	Created	Actions	
Shopping Receipts	Extract Data From Shopping Receipt	775	\$0.01	7s ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Shopping Receipts	Extract General Data & Items From Shopping Receipt	5	\$0.01	4h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Shopping Receipts	Extract General Data & Items From Shopping Receipt	478	\$0.01	2h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Ibotta Turk	Are these receipts the same?	3	\$0.01	23s ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Abhi Yerra	Find Company Name and Company URL in Notes	6	\$0.01	1h ago	Preview	Accept & Work
Madison Young	Collect Data from Vacation Rental Reviews	1	\$0.01	3h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Peggy Weissflog	Peggy offers: be my subsurveyor	1	\$0.01	5d ago	Preview	Accept & Work
Larby Amirouche	Please help me choose a domain for our company.	1	\$0.01	9h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
MLDataLabeler	Qualifying HIT for Semantic Segmentation Tasks - Up to \$2.00 Bonus!	1	\$0.01	8/21/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Ten Edu	Quick ONLY 10 multi choice for Small Business owners in Florida	1	\$0.01	4d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
CPHSS	Answer 2 questions about your smoking status.	1	\$0.01	8/21/2019	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Publishing	Collect data from a Craigslist Post	2	\$0.01	1h ago	Preview	Accept & Work
Amazon Requester Inc. - AV X-R	End Credits Identification (WARNING: HIT may contain adult content. Worker di...	21	\$0.01	7m ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Ian	Template Categorization	83	\$0.01	1d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Trey	Select the race that this person belongs to	24	\$0.01	1d ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Ing. Wolfgang Kanduth, MBA MP/	Describe the image (WARNING: This HIT may contain adult content. Worker dis...	2,961	\$0.01	17h ago	Preview	🔒 Qualify
Michael Benson	Find the general email address	658	\$0.01	3h ago	Preview	Accept & Work
Amazon Requester Inc. - Private I	Are these two products good substitutes?	68	\$0.01	2h ago	Preview	Accept & Work
James Billings	Market Research Survey	10,420	\$0.01	35m ago	Preview	Accept & Work
CopyText Inc.	Type the text from the images, carefully. Productivity and bonuses guaranteed.	26	\$0.01	3m ago	Preview	Accept & Work

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Show Potential Jobs

⚙ JOB	⚙ JOB TITLE	⚙ LEVEL	▲ PAY / TASK	⚙ # OF TASKS	⚙ RATING
1433541	Help Us Find Linkedin/Glassdoor/Owler Websites - A		12 cents	205	● ● ● ● ●
1433542	Help Us Find Linkedin/Glassdoor/Owler Websites - B		12 cents	205	● ● ● ● ●
1358618	New Figure Eight Reconciliation Job		1 cents	1	● ● ● ● ●

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries



SIGNALS SPRINT

- Class presentation on September 18
- Then from September 19 to October 2, you will add several signals a day based on what you are experiencing, reading, and connecting with (your goal is a minimum of 8 signals).
- Anything can be a signal, from traditional media to a conversation you overhear on the bus.
- You enter your signals into a google form (link on last slide).
- The database of signals will be shared with you for your own research.
- The research team will present the rest of the process, which includes trends detection, drivers, implications, and strategic perspectives.

NICE TO HAVE

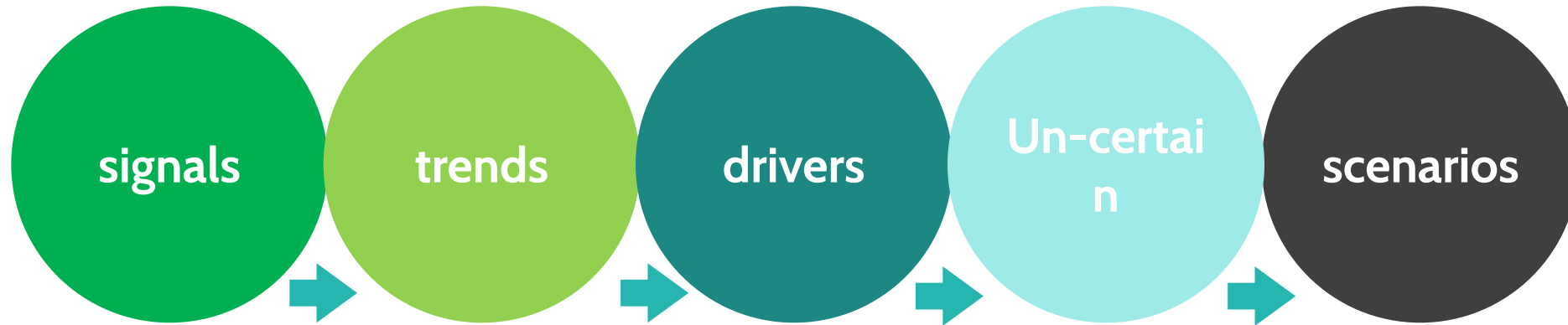
- We are launching a micro-site on microtasking platforms, so if a related topic piques your interest, we'd love a 500-word article for the site.
- We'd also be interested in posting the assignment you produce for your course.
 - If desired, posts can be attributed to you as author.
 - All micro-site content is CC BY-ND 4.0.
- You are also invited to be part of two three-hour workshops.
 - The first one is scenario building, week of November 2-9.
 - The second one is implications of scenarios, week of November 23-30.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- Unique research activity using a google form to co-create a microtasking research database.
- Access to the database of microtasking signals (links to resources, descriptions, categories) that can be used in your coursework.
- Deeper knowledge about the continuum of freelance work (from gigs to crowdsourcing to microjobbing).
- The opportunity to have your work published on the Toronto Workforce Innovation Microtasking micro-site.

AND ...

- **Experience working as a researcher on a foresight project.**



SIGNALS

Collect tangible specific evidence of change (including weak signals)

TRENDS

Detect patterns and change direction in signals

DRIVERS

The structure behind the trends (cause & effect)

UNCERTAINTIES

Unpredictable direction or effect of drivers

SCENARIOS

Important futures imagined with the critical uncertainties

HERE'S THE SIGNALS FORM

[https://forms.gle/BGPVeP9BC
DHEDZNZ7](https://forms.gle/BGPVeP9BCDHEDZNZ7)



Signal Collection Form

This form helps describe and systematically categorize change signals collected by the Microtasking Team.

* Required

5. Source of information *

Provide the source of the information. Should enable someone else to find that information.

Your answer

4. Description of signal *

Your answer

2. Category Classification of Signal *

Select one or more categories from the STEEP-V framework into which the signal fits.

Choose

3. Why is this signal relevant? *

Describe BRIEFLY the significance of this change signal

Your answer

6. Contact information

Provide any contact information available to the author(s) of the information: institution, email, phone #

Your answer

5. Descriptors/tags/keywords *

Provide tags, descriptors, and keywords for this signal that would help finding it when searching the database later. separate each with a coma.

Your answer

6. Status *

Describe the current status of the signal (emerging, strong, weak ...)

Choose

6. Anticipated Development

Any related events or developments planned (e.g. a related conference (name) is planned in (location) for next spring...)

Your answer

SUBMIT

EASY ONLINE POSTS

RESULT: CO-CREATED RESEARCH DATABASE



CONTACT

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