

Dear colleague,

If you have already heard about this study, please disregard this message. We are trying to get the word out as broadly as possible. If you have not yet received this letter or heard about the study, please keep reading. 😊

Heidi Eldridge and Christophe Champod are undertaking an NIJ-funded study to establish a discipline-wide error rate estimate for palm impression comparisons and we are seeking participants. Here is some general information about the study that we hope will answer your questions. If you have more specific questions, please feel free to email [LPResearch@rti.org](mailto:LPResearch@rti.org).

The study is modeled after the well-known FBI/Noblis “black box” study that investigated the error rate for fingerprint (distal phalange) comparisons, but focuses only on palms. It will be done using a web-based interface, which you will access using a username and password that we will provide. This username will protect your confidentiality as you will communicate using this email address through an intermediary so that the researchers will never know who the usernames belong to. There will also be a background survey that covers demographics, experience, and agency policy before you begin.

**Latent print examiners and latent print examiner trainees are eligible to participate. International participants are welcome. Please tell your friends and colleagues.**

The study will be comprised of 75 palm comparisons, which will range between no value, very easy, and very challenging. You will have approximately 2 months to complete the trials and you will be able to save your work and come back at any time, so you can do a few comparisons here and there as is convenient for you. Based on the FBI/Noblis study (which had 100 difficult comparisons of distal phalanges and claimed an 8-hour approximate completion time), we are estimating that it will take 8-10 hours total to complete the trials.

We will be accepting participants on a rolling basis and will continue to collect data through the end of the calendar year. For this reason, people who sign up after November 1 will have less than 2 months in which to complete the study.

If you would like to participate, please send an email to [LPResearch@rti.org](mailto:LPResearch@rti.org) and we will send you a username and instructions to get started. If you work at one of the laboratories that donated the marks for the study, please notify us of which one it was when you sign up, so we can assign you a test set that does not include images from your own lab.

Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Heidi Eldridge  
Christophe Champod