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Newsletter - April 2023

Dear Participant,

It's hard to believe we're heading into May next week! ! In the first part of this year, we saw strong growth on Connect. We expect that growth to continue throughout the year as more and more researchers learn about Connect and start running their projects with it. What this means for you is that there should be more projects and more opportunities to earn money.

One way we're growing Connect is by hitting the academic conference circuit. In February we attended a conference for experimental psychologists in Atlanta and last week we attended a conference for industrial and organizational psychologists in Boston. We set up shop, handed out over 1,200 donuts (combined), and told anyone who would listen about Connect's excellent data quality, which is thanks to you! Following the shows, we had hundreds of new researchers create accounts, and we have more shows lined up for the spring and early summer.

With all the growth on the researcher side of Connect, we're also working on some developments to improve the participant experience. In the coming months you can expect an expanded researcher ratings system, new payout options, an optional ID Verification program, and continued activity on our Connect Reddit board. Some details about each of these developments is below. And, if you have ideas about how we can improve your experience on Connect, let us know! Drop a note in our suggestion box or send us an email.

Thanks for being a part of the Connect community!

Expanded Researcher Ratings

As promised last year, we've expanded the rating system at the end of each project. Instead of giving you the opportunity to just rate the project, our new categories allow you to rate elements of the researcher and your interaction with their project.

For example, two of the new categories allow you to rate the fairness of the researcher and how well the project compensated you. The feedback system still provides an opportunity for open-ended comments but the total ratings provided by participants will now be part of each researchers' profile. This means that each researcher will have a reputation that participants can use when deciding whether to participate in a project or not.

Current:
The current rating system allows participants to give one rating and open ended feedback.

Coming:

The expanded rating system allows participants to rate the user experience, fairness of the project, accuracy of the time estimate, and quality of the compensation. All ratings contribute to a researcher's reputation.

An example reputation summary for a researcher. This shows average ratings provided by participants across four categories.
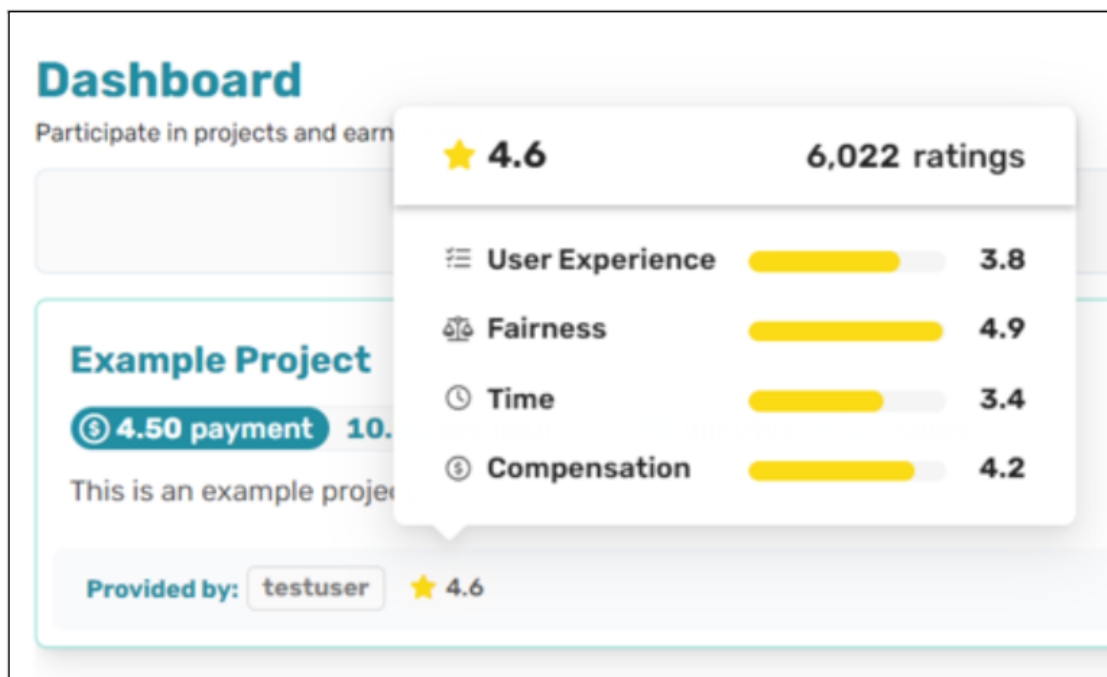
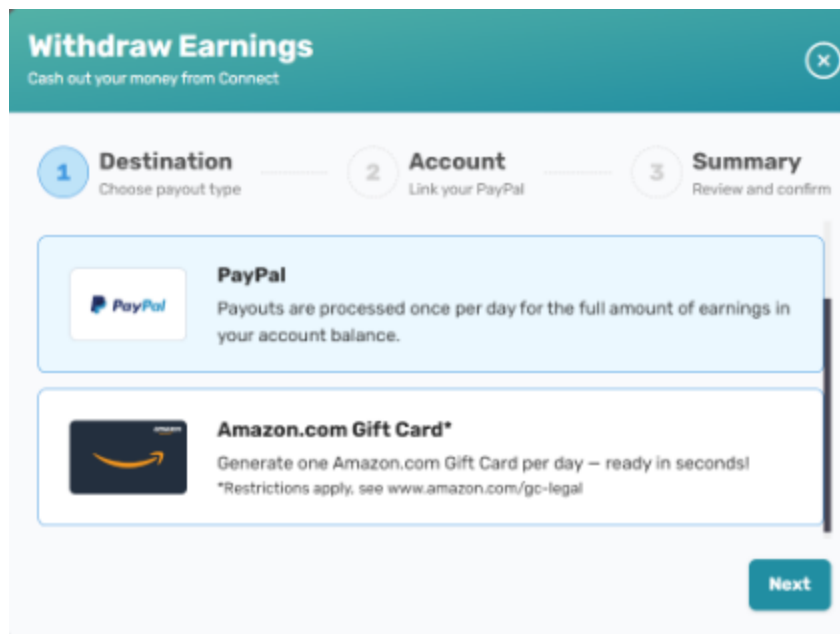Another big improvement to the rating system is that participants now have more opportunities for when to provide feedback. Currently, there is one opportunity to rate a project that occurs right after you submit it. In the updated rating system, participants can provide feedback anytime after a project is complete or even after a project is returned or timed out. Our hope is that this expanded rating system will reward good actors and serve as a check on anyone who tries to undermine the norms of Connect.

New Payout Options

Most participants know that in early April PayPal froze our account without warning. This action prevented participants from cashing out for 10 days. Fortunately, after extensive work by our team, we got PayPal to reverse the freeze. However, we know that this incident caused a lot of problems for participants, which is why we're looking to diversify cashout options.

Earlier this year, we introduced Amazon Gift Cards as a payout option within Connect. This means that, if you choose, you can have your earnings paid out as an Amazon Gift Card rather than to your PayPal account.

During the PayPal fiasco, our team put in tons of overtime working to facilitate cash outs as a direct transfer to a checking or savings account. This option is currently live but only in beta mode. In the coming months we will expand bank transfers as an option to everyone, but we need to ensure the system is working properly first.

Optional ID Verification

Another change to Connect is the option for participants to verify their identity using Stripe Identity. Instructions for how to do this are in our knowledge base, but here we want to focus on *why* you may want to take this step.

ID Verification is part of our efforts to combat survey fraud. We want Connect to be a source of the best data quality available anywhere online. Verifying your ID helps us ensure that the people participating in studies are who they say they are, which in turn increases researchers' confidence in the quality of data they gather. People who verify their identity may receive priority for study notifications or other complex projects in the future.

Reddit Forum

Finally, if you're looking for ways to connect with other participants, get help, or give advice, we want to make sure you're aware of our Connect Reddit space. We currently have over 1,000 members and it's a place where Connect community members can talk, troubleshoot issues, and get help from

CloudResearch employees who moderate the site. Check out the Reddit board
here.

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