

# Amazon Mechanical Turk 101

## What is MTurk?

- According to Amazon, “Mechanical Turk is a marketplace for work that requires human intelligence. The Mechanical Turk service gives businesses access to a diverse, on-demand, scalable workforce and gives Workers a selection of thousands of tasks to complete whenever it's convenient.”
- In essence, MTurk is a crowdsourcing platform that gives you access (for a fee) to a lot of people looking for short-term assignments, such as surveys.

## Definitions

- Requester: You, the researcher, are the requester. You request that Workers complete tasks for you.
- Worker: The Workers are participants in your research – they complete tasks on MTurk.
- HIT: HIT stands for Human Intelligence Task. Each time a participant completes a survey, they're completing a HIT.

## Who are the Workers?

- MTurk does not release official information about Workers.
- Some researchers have developed methods to find out more about the population of Workers, but these methods are complicated and provide a limited picture.
- According to one paper, there are about 7,300 active Workers, and a ~25% turnover rate every 3 months (Stewart, Ungemach, Harris, Bartels, Newell, Paolacci, & Chandler, 2015).

## Setting up an Account

- Setting up an account with MTurk is similar to creating an account on any website.
- You could link your preexisting Amazon account information with MTurk, but it's recommended that you create a new account for the sole purpose of working with MTurk.
- If you enter your lab name as the name on the account, HITs will be labeled with the lab name instead of your own. Creating a separate account also makes it easier to share login information with multiple people within your lab without worrying about personal information.