

PhD-Position at the Digital Democracy Centre for a project entitled “High choice platform environments and the spreading of intolerance”

Odense, Denmark

JOB DESCRIPTION

The interdisciplinary [Digital Democracy Center \(DDC\)](#) at The University of Southern Denmark invites applications for a 3-year position as PhD Student at the intersection of Digital Communication and Computer Science for a project on “High choice platform environments and the spreading of intolerance”. The project is situated between quantitative social sciences and computational social sciences. The successful candidate will work closely with Lena Frischlich, Peter Mayer and the head of the “AI, Cybersecurity, and Programming Languages” section at IMADA, Fabrizio Montesi, and the head of department at DDC, Claes de Vreese. The position is vacant from October 1st, 2024, or soon after. The position is located in Odense, Denmark.

Job description

We live in an age of high-choice platform environments. Presently, social media users have access to an increasingly diverse array of platforms, each with its unique socio-technological setup. For example, different “genres” of social media (e.g., videoblogs, social network sites, instant messengers etc.) differ regarding their technical affordances (e.g., their level of anonymity) or regarding how they handle artificial intelligence. Social media platforms can also differ in their self-presentation and moderation routines. Notably, users now have access to a growing number of alternative social media platforms positioned as alternatives to the mainstream in their respective context, such as BitChute versus YouTube or Truth Social versus X/Twitter versus Blue Sky. Initial research suggests that these varying socio-technological set-ups can create distinct opportunity structures for norm-violating “dark participation” including the spreading of intolerance.

The PhD project will explore the interplay between the socio-technological setup of social media platforms and the dynamics of intolerance. Potential areas of investigation include, but are not limited to, examining how specific affordances contribute to polarization, the role of short videos in propagating conspiracy myths, and how varying platform designs influence intolerance dynamics. Methodologically, one approach could involve conducting (semi-)automated content analyses to explore intolerance across selected platforms. Another approach might entail testing the causal effects of specific platform environments on intolerant behavior through mock-up social media platforms.

Applicant Qualifications

The ideal candidate will have...

- A background in either Communication studies or Psychology, respectively adjacent fields
- Initial experiences in quantitative social sciences and computational social sciences (e.g., through working with *R* or *Python*).
- A keen interest in research, particularly in intolerance and its antecedents and consequences (prior experiences with these topics is advantageous but not required)
- Fluency in English. Speaking Danish is advantageous but not necessary.

It is central that applicants have good interpersonal skills and are dedicated to taking part in the everyday professional and social environment at the Centre. The person we are looking for can work both independently and as part of a team and is willing to contribute to the overall supportive climate and the strategic objectives of the Digital Democracy Centre.

What we offer

The DDC offers a supportive, team-oriented environment characterized by interdisciplinary exchange and strong international networks. The DDC aims at being a leading research Centre around 'digital democracy' that advances an interdisciplinary, socio-technological perspective and conducts innovative research following a societally relevant research agenda. A key priority is to train and socialize a successful cohort of new scholars and to have a voice in public and policy discussions.

Further information can be obtained from Associate Prof. Dr. Lena Frischlich, email lefr@sam.sdu.dk.

Application, salary, etc.

Your employment as a Salaried PhD Research Fellow is governed by the agreement of 10 November 2015 on Graduate Employees in government appendix 5 – protocol on PhD Research Fellows. The scholarship runs for three years.

An application must include:

- Detailed CV
- A certified copy of your master's degree certificate including all examination results (or transcript of records and confirmation of graduation date)
- Application form (please see below)
- A proposed project description (max 3 pages of 2400 characters each, including spaces, notes, appendices, bibliography etc.)
- An abstract for the above project description of no more than 250 words

When applying for a PhD position, please fill in this [application form](#) which is also available on the [webpage of the PhD school](#). On the webpage you can also find the [guidelines](#) for preparing your project proposal.

All non-Danish documents must be translated into English.

Applications will be assessed by a committee. When the evaluation committee has submitted its report, the applicant will receive the part of the evaluation that concerns him/her.

Applications that are incomplete in relation to the above requirements will not be assessed by the committee.

Shortlisting and tests may be used in the assessment process.

The University wishes our staff to reflect the diversity of society and thus welcomes applications from all qualified candidates regardless of personal background.

As part of the overall assessment of the applicant's qualifications, an interview may be applied.

Applications must be submitted electronically using the link "Apply online". Uploaded files must be in Adobe PDF (unlocked) or Word format.

[Read the guideline for applicants](#)

Each field can only contain a single file of max. 10 Mb.

APPLY NOW

JOB INFO

- Job Identification1602
- Job CategoryPH.D.
- Posting Date 16. 04. 2024, 12:40 PM
- Locations Campusvej 55, Odense M, 5230, DK
- Apply Before: 25.04. 024, 11:59 PM
- Job ScheduleFull time