Doctoral Researcher

in Computational Social Sciences

The médialab at Sciences Po is hiring a doctoral researcher to work on the role of science and politics in the sharing of misinformation

About médialab and Sciences Po

The médialab is an interdisciplinary research laboratory of Sciences Po in Paris. It brings together sociologists, engineers, designers, and computer scientists, who carry out thematic and methodological research exploiting and questioning the place taken by the digital transformation in our societies. The médialab is highly committed to developing the field of computational social sciences.

About the project

This position is part of a project on the role of science and politics in sharing misinformation, funded by the McCourt Institute. The goal of the project is to connect descriptive insights into the diffusion of misinformation with experimental results on the causes and mechanisms that give rise to observed diffusion patterns. This project specifically targets personal messaging-based platforms to ask questions such as how misinformation spreads through private and public channels? In doing so, it focuses on the role played by two traditional institutions—politics and science—asking, for example, to what extent their involvement fosters or dampens the sharing of (mis)information? The project will be developed inside the médialab, but in interaction with other projects and researchers from Sciences Po and in exchanges with partner institutions abroad. The doctoral researcher will be enrolled in the Doctoral Program in Sociology at Sciences Po.

Key research themes of the position

The doctoral researcher is expected to develop research in the following themes intersecting at the project:

- **Misinformation:** We are interested in improving the understanding of factors that shape the sharing of (mis)information as well as other behavioral reactions to it.

- **Diffusion dynamics:** We are also interested in models of information circulation and studying possible mechanisms to foster/curb it; a particular focus will be laid on the role of social and cognitive mechanisms.

- **Politics and science:** We are interested in the role of political and scientific institutions and actors in shaping information credibility and consumption in a digital society.

- **Experimental design & theory:** We are interested in scholars able to address theory driven questions and design experimental protocol to test them. This may include theoretical perspectives from sociology, political science, cognitive science or communication studies.

Profile and skills

The doctoral scholar should have experience in or strong interest to learn about experimental research in the social sciences. This includes the design and implementation of (online) experiments as well as the analysis of their results. It is helpful if the researcher is able to conduct data analysis of social and media platform data, involving network modelization and text analysis. As part of this position, the doctoral researcher will be given the opportunity to develop his/her own research/ideas broadly related to the above project. Intellectual curiosity and breadth is valued highly in this regard.

We encourage students with a background in the social sciences (*e.g.* sociology, political science, cognitive science) and computational and modeling skills to apply. Applicants with a background in natural sciences and technology (e.g. engineering, computer science, and mathematics) are welcome to apply if strong interest exists to become proficient in the social sciences. The candidate must have a real interest in developing team work. Candidates must be proficient in English; proficiency in French is a plus.

The position

The doctoral researcher will join médialab at Sciences Po in Paris and work with researchers, software engineers, designers, and data scientists. This is a good opportunity to learn a wide range of data science tools in the domains of machine learning, network and text analysis, with applications to political and social analysis. The doctoral researcher is expected to profit from exchanges with other ongoing projects, including teams in Switzerland (University of Bern) and the US (Duke University). This position is fully funded by the McCourt Institute for 36 months, starting **October 2022**.

To apply

Send a cover letter detailing your motivation and relevant skills for the position, a brief (1 page) summary of your own idea for a PhD project, and a CV including all the information you deem relevant (for example publications/drafts if any, experience, relevant courses, code repositories) to recrutement.medialab@sciencespo.fr (starting the subject of the email with "[SPSM]") to receive full consideration. Review of applications will commence on **May 16, 2022**; later applications will be considered until the position is filled.

For inquiries about the position do not hesitate to contact us at:
achim.edelmann@sciencespo.fr
jeanphilippe.cointet@sciencespo.fr

As part of its gender equality policy, Sciences Po and the médialab encourage women to apply.