

Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship

on Misinformation and Disinformation Campaigns at Netlab/UFRJ

Our Project

Netlab is a research laboratory on Internet Studies and Social Media at the School of Communication (ECO), Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ) - Brazil, specialized in Online Disinformation Campaigns. We combine traditional social science methods and computational communication approaches. We understand that research into computational communication requires seamless integration of meaningful theoretical questions and background, powerful statistical tools and efficient computing algorithms. Researchers in our lab are working to unravel the intricate mechanisms behind burgeoning computational communication phenomena by collecting and analyzing online data on an unprecedented scale, bringing new life to old ideas, and new ideas to social life.

Main Topics

Netlab is seeking to appoint Post-doctoral Research Fellows to work on the interplay between misinformation, disinformation, news, and social media, with an emphasis on public opinion on at least one of these topics:

1. Civil society and social movements
2. Politics and elections
3. Climate change, land use, and environmental issues
4. Science and health

We welcome postdoctoral submissions that further the understanding, development, and application of computational methods in disinformation research. Computational methods include (but are not limited to) methods such as text analysis, topic modeling, social/semantic network analysis, online experiments, machine learning, visual analysis and agent-based modeling and simulations. Computational methods can be applied to “big data” and social media, or online behavior data, but can also be used to provide a more sophisticated understanding of “small data” or for theoretical explorations.

Selection Criteria

The successful candidates must have a completed doctorate degree in any area but with experience in a substantive field of social science, including communication and media studies, sociology, statistics, political science, economy and/or social data science. The ideal candidate must also have familiarity with existing academic work on misinformation, disinformation, public understanding of politics, science and technology, media manipulation and propaganda, news media, online platforms, and digital media.

Excellent written, editing, and verbal communication skills in English which demonstrate a potential to write and present at an international level are required. Portuguese and/or Spanish language skills are desirable. A record of published work on misinformation, disinformation and social media are very desirable, as well as a detailed knowledge of existing research on misinformation, public understanding of news, politics, elections, environmental issues and its relation to digital media.

How to Apply?

We have opened three postdoctoral positions. These are full-time, fixed-term appointments with a desired start date as soon as possible and no later than April 2021 for a one-year research fellowship. The individual appointed will be working with other researchers; postdoctoral fellows; Ph.D., master, and undergraduate students; and with the principal investigator behind the project, Professor R. Marie Santini, Head of the Netlab research team

Grant: R\$4.100,00 per month (one-year fellow). This is a full-time, one-year position with the option of a second-year extension based on demonstrated performance.

The closing date for applications is **11 pm on Monday, 12th April 2021** (GMT -3, Brazilian Standard Time). Candidates are required to send an email to netlab@eco.ufrj.br. All emails must use the subject title “**Netlab Post-Doctoral Research Fellow**” with the following documents attached (files in PDF format):

- A supporting statement: a cover letter explaining your interest in, and experience with, the Netlab research agenda (written in English). The candidate must choose and indicate in the letter one of the areas below to work with: 1) civil society and social movements; 2)



politics and elections; 3) climate change, land use and environmental issues; 4) science and health.

- A Research Proposal (written in English) as part of your application in a 2- or 3-page project. This proposal is not necessarily a commitment to what you will work on at Netlab, but serves as a way for the application committee to assess your ability to plan a research project.
- An up-to-date Curriculum Vitae with full academic records (in English).
- A writing sample of a research paper or working paper (preferably in English but can be in Portuguese or in Spanish).
- Reference letter (with contact information), preferably from an academic advisor, co-author, or research peer.

Postdoctoral Researchers Responsibilities

The duties of the researchers will be:

- To work with other team members and the PI on developing methodological approaches.
- To arrange and conduct empirical research and data collection.
- To work with colleagues on analyzing and interpreting the data.
- To interpret the results in light of contextual background provided by the wider project and other people's research.
- To liaise with other team members, the PI, and other partners on getting advice and input on the research design, data analysis, and conclusions.
- To develop academic publications and other project output based on the research done, working closely with other postdoctoral researchers and the PI to finalize output.
- To prepare a range of presentation materials suitable for external events, conferences, meetings, and workshops.
- To represent the project at external events/conferences, either with the PI, postdoctoral researchers, or alone.
- To develop ideas for further research (including ideas for generating research funds) and to present detailed research proposals to the principal investigator for future work in the Netlab area.
- To work with other team members, the project coordinators, the principal investigator and Netlab partners (such as technology developers, companies, start-up partners, etc.) on other aspects of the wider project, to



develop innovation and technology, and work with the rest of the Netlab staff as part of the everyday life of the laboratory.

- To teach undergraduate and graduate classes under the PI's supervision and coordinate internal workshops and study groups with Netlab staff.
- To organize and coordinate Netlab external events, workshops, Summer and Winter Schools (2021-2022).

The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and Netlab are Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Research Environments. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for the fellowships without regard to national origin, race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or social status.

Summary

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| Job title | Postdoctoral Research Fellow |
| University | Federal University of Rio de Janeiro |
| Division | School of Communication and The Brazilian Institute of Information, Science and Technology |
| Location | Netlab - Internet and Social Media Research Lab |
| Position modality | Remote work |
| Grant | R\$4.100,00 per month (one-year fellow). |
| Hours | Full time (40 hours per week) |
| Contract type | Fellowship |
| Reporting to | Dr. R. Marie Santini (ECO/UFRJ) |
| Research topics | 1) civil society and social movements; OR 2) politics and elections; OR 3) climate change, land use, and environmental issues; OR 4) science and health. |
| Principal Investigator and supervisor | Dr. R. Marie Santini (ECO/UFRJ). http://lattes.cnpq.br/8757803805826489 |
| Laboratory website | www.netlab.eco.ufrj.br |

Contact:

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