Data&Society

Data & Society Research Institute is seeking an early-career **Researcher**, with a background in social science, media studies, information studies, or science and technology studies to work with the Media Manipulation Initiative, providing original research and supporting project-related activities. ***This researcher will manage a project entitled the "Civil Society Intelligence Unit," a rapid response network that informs reporters, researchers, and civil society organizations of media manipulation and disinformation campaigns.*** We are particularly interested in hiring a dynamic researcher who can clearly communicate the ethical, political, social, and economic ramifications of technological change. Scholars with an interest in public engagement with civil society organizations and public knowledge projects are encouraged to apply. This is a two-year, full-time position with the possibility of renewal.

The Media Manipulation Initiative (MMI) examines how different groups use the participatory culture of the internet to turn the strengths of a free society into vulnerabilities, ultimately threatening expressive freedoms and civil rights. Efforts to exploit technical, social, economic, and institutional configurations of media can catalyze social change, sow dissent, and challenge the stability of social institutions. Broadly, this initiative takes a sociotechnical approach to understanding the social, political, and economic incentives to game information systems, websites, platforms, and search engines—especially in cases where the attackers intend to destabilize democratic, social, and economic institutions.

Responsibilities:
You will be a project lead on the "Civil Society Intelligence Unit" where you will be responsible for the following:
- Map and track the ecosystem of research subjects/internet communities who are developing techniques to manipulate algorithms and platforms.
- Manage and oversee the media manipulation listserve email community.
    - Actively build network through in-person and online interactions.
    - Research and write (or oversee production of) weekly briefings sent to a listserve.
- Publish institutional advisories and better practices documents as needed.
- Contribute to media advisories with partnership organizations.
- Engage with a network of disinformation researchers and collect feedback through phone calls, reports, and in-person meetings.
- Synthesize data collection into cohesive reporting strategies.
- Work closely with the media manipulation research lead on crafting an engagement strategy for public-facing research.
- Research and author short and long public-facing op-eds, articles, briefs, and primers.
- Perform long-term research projects resulting in primers and white papers.
- Write shorter, media-friendly op-eds, and articles.
- Partner with the communications team for external content related to the project.
- Provide commentary for journalists reporting on media manipulation.
- Advise journalists on best reporting practices.
- Attend events focused on disinformation and intervention and represent the organization.
- Give academic and conference talks on media manipulation topics.

Qualities of job candidate:
- You are committed to social change and are oriented to practical applications of research.
- You bring a unique and self-reflexive perspective to analyzing phenomena and ideas in the world.
- You are committed to understanding how different groups use the tools and technologies of networked communication to manipulate sociotechnical systems.
- Because this research project deals with extremist groups, the materials you will encounter during your research are very disturbing and will include violent text, images, and video. Content can be explicit, sexist, racist, or pornographic. You must be able to communicate with your manager when you need to be reassigned to other research. We will provide self-care trainings led by Equality Labs.
- You are capable of monitoring and capturing multiple streams of fast-moving data across numerous platforms and explaining this content to other researchers, knowing when to include or omit details.

- You are looking for a team in which you can grow and strengthen research and communication skills, while taking deep dives on specific topics. You pay attention to detail, but always keep an eye on the big picture.
- Most importantly, you are excited by team-based research and are eager to share ideas and create new public research that engages multiple audiences and stakeholders.

Qualifications:
- Ability to plan and execute a project with attention to detail.
- Excellent written communication skills with ability to conduct research using multiple methods.
- Experience with organizing small and medium-sized events, from scoping participants to organizing travel to helping to define structure and outcomes.
- Comfort with a range of actors, including journalists, civil society, government, tech industry, and academia.
- Working understanding of the current state of online manipulation and disinformation and how different groups and individuals use technology to influence public conversation.
- Education: Master's Degree, PhD preferred. (You must be finished with your degree by July 1, 2018.)

Practical considerations:
- This is not a remote position; you must work full time from the Data & Society office in the Flatiron section of New York City.
- You will be offered a generous benefits package, paid time off, and a budget for travel and projects. Additionally, we are able to provide relocation assistance if necessary.
- You must be eligible to work in the United States; we are unable to sponsor visas.

To apply, please submit the following to jobs@datasociety.net:
- Two-page cover letter describing relevant background, experience with collaborative research projects, and your interest in the Media Manipulation Initiative.
- Your Curriculum Vitae or resume.
- Submit two writing samples (e.g. dissertation chapters or articles).
- Names, affiliations, and contact information for three professional references.
- Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis beginning April 15, 2018, and the position should be considered open until filled.
- Please contact jobs@datasociety.net with any questions about the position; inquiries will not be held against your eligibility as a candidate.