Data&Society

Data & Society Research Institute is seeking an early-career **Researcher/Ethnographer**, with a background in social science, media studies, journalism studies, or technology studies, to conduct a one-year ethnographic study of media manipulation and/or platform news. *We are most interested in project proposals that illustrate how disinformation impacts communities and how responses are shaped by access to technology and power.* There is a knowledge deficit in the field of media manipulation. We lack a robust understanding of the digital harms associated with media manipulation as well as the strategies and tactics used to fight against it. Studies *could* include assessing the impact of disinformation in newsrooms or on media consumers, analyzing the long-term impact of disinformation on targeted communities or individuals, looking at how platform companies, regulators, and civil society organizations advocate for sociotechnical change, analyzing how community and ethnic media combat disinformation, *or get creative!*

This is a full-time, one-year position, with the expectation that you will be working remotely from a field site. We expect the position to begin September 1, 2018.

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:
- Choose a field site, preferably one you already have access to and design an engaged ethnographic study.
- Carry out your ethnographic research project and complete a 15k-20k word report to be published by Data & Society.
- Publish op-eds and blogs related to ongoing research.
- Manage a research project budget.
- Visit Data & Society once every two months to collaborate with the MMI team and share results in progress.
- Collaborate with other research organizations as directed by the Research Lead.
- Participate in conferences and workshops in your field.

Qualities of job candidate:
- You care about information quality and how disinformation is a threat to different communities.
- You are committed to social change and 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 technology and power shape our sociotechnical society.
- You are looking for a team in which you can grow and strengthen research and communication skills.
- You pay attention to detail, but always keep an eye on the big picture.
- You are persistent and considerate when working in your field site(s).
- You are persuasive when communicating the purpose and impact of your research findings.

Qualifications
- Ability to plan and execute a research project with attention to detail.
- Excellent written communication skills with ability to conduct research using multiple methods.
- Comfort with a range of actors, including 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: PhD or equivalent. (You must be finished with your degree by July 1, 2018.)

Practical considerations:
- 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.
- A 2-3 page project proposal that includes what, where, and how you will complete this ethnography.
- Your Curriculum Vitae.
- 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. Applications close on June 1, 2018.
- Please contact jobs@datasociety.net with any questions about the position; inquiries will not be held against your eligibility as a candidate.