

<b>Department</b>	School of Computing
<b>Supervisors</b>	Dr Hanne Wagner
<b>Project Title</b>	Playful engagement with Politics in the time of misinformation
<p><b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p>Background: Education and knowledge have long been considered core factors in explaining why individuals engage in political and civic activities (Galston, W.A., 2001, Ashley, Maksl and Craft, 2017). The emergence of the notion of “fake news” and increased targeted misinformation however make it more and more difficult to distinguish between credible sources of political information and those promoting alternative content, with potentially malicious intent (Pennycook and Rand, 2021; Munger et al, 2022). Concurrently, media consumption and communication habits are changing, moving towards less traditional and more fast-moving methods of information exchange and increasingly into an end-to-end encrypted space, in which moderation and fact-checking become more difficult (Kamara et al., 2022, Kazemi et al., 2022).</p> <p>Aim: This project aims to investigate novel digital ways and strategies to improve political engagement and political literacy, especially with a gameful/playful approach. It will consider the most effective ways for distributing political knowledge in a changing world of media consumption and communication, while also asking how the credibility of information can be ascertained.</p> <p>Perspective applicants are encouraged to contact the Supervisor before submitting their applications. Applications should make it clear the project you are applying for and the name of the supervisors.</p> <p><b>Academic qualifications</b> A first degree (at least a 2.1) ideally in Computer Science, HCI, Digital Media and Communication, Political Science or Psychology with a good fundamental knowledge of user/human behaviour.</p> <p><b>English language requirement</b> IELTS score must be at least 6.5 (with not less than 6.0 in each of the four components). Other, equivalent qualifications will be accepted. <a href="#">Full details of the University’s policy</a> are available online.</p> <p><b>Essential attributes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience of fundamental user/human facing research methods</li> <li>• Competent in or willing to engage in multidisciplinary research</li> <li>• Knowledge of or interest in politics and political education as well as digital literacy</li> <li>• Good written and oral communication skills</li> <li>• Strong motivation, with evidence of independent research skills relevant to the project</li> <li>• Good time management</li> </ul> <p><b>Desirable attributes:</b> practical experience in qualitative and/or quantitative research methods, awareness of issues and problems surrounding misinformation, ‘fake news’ and moderation online</p>	
<b>Indicative Bibliography</b>	Ashley, S., Maksl, A, and Craft, S. (2017). News Media Literacy and Political Engagement: What's the Connection? Journal of Media Literacy Education, 9(1), 79-98.

	<p>Galston, W. A. (2001). Political knowledge, political engagement, and civic education. <i>Annual review of political science</i>, 4(1), 217-234.</p> <p>Kamara, S., Knodel, M., Llansó, E., Nojeim, G., Qin, L., Thakur, D., &amp; Vogus, C. (2022). Outside looking in: Approaches to content moderation in end-to-end encrypted systems. <i>arXiv preprint arXiv:2202.04617</i>.</p> <p>Kazemi, A., Garimella, K., Shahi, G. K., Gaffney, D., &amp; Hale, S. A. (2022). Research note: Tiplines to uncover misinformation on encrypted platforms: A case study of the 2019 Indian general election on WhatsApp. <i>Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review</i>.</p> <p>Munger, K., Egan, P. J., Nagler, J., Ronen, J., &amp; Tucker, J. (2022). Political knowledge and misinformation in the era of social media: Evidence from the 2015 UK election. <i>British Journal of Political Science</i>, 52(1), 107-127.</p> <p>Pennycook, G., &amp; Rand, D. G. (2021). The psychology of fake news. <i>Trends in cognitive sciences</i>, 25(5), 388-402.</p>
<b>Enquiries</b>	For informal enquiries about this PhD project, please contact Dr Hanne Wagner (h.wagner@napier.ac.uk)
<b>Web page</b>	<a href="https://www.napier.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/application-process">https://www.napier.ac.uk/research-and-innovation/research-degrees/application-process</a>