Weizenbaum-Institut e.V. - research group "Plattform-Algorithms and Digital Propaganda"

The Weizenbaum Institute, founded in 2017, researches the effects of advancing digitalization on our society. With its recommendations for action, it contributes to ensuring that the digital transformation is sustainable, self-determined and responsible. The Weizenbaum Institute is supported by a network of seven partners, including the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin, the Technical University of Berlin, the Berlin University of the Arts, the University of Potsdam, the Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems (FOKUS) and the Berlin Science Center for Social Research (WZB). The institute is financed by the Ministry of research, technology and space travel (BMFTR) and the state of Berlin. It is located in Berlin. For our research group "Plattform-Algorithms and Digital Propaganda" at the Weizenbaum-Institut e.V. we are looking at the earliest possible date for a

Student assistant (m/f/d) in Platform Algorithms and Digital Propaganda (Computational Analysis)

with 19 hours per week. The position is initially limited until 14th October 2027. Further employment will be sought. Would you like to research new forms of propaganda in the Digital Age? Are you interested in online content, social media, and search engines? Would you like to develop research skills that will help you in your career? Join us as a research assistant in the research group "Platform Algorithms and Digital Propaganda" at Weizenbaum Institute under the supervision of Dr. Elizaveta Kuznetsova.

City: Berlin; Starting date (earliest): 15/10/25; Duration: 2 years; Remuneration: TV Stud III; Closing date: 12/10/25

Working field

The research group "Platform Algorithms and Digital Propaganda" investigates the 'information ecosystem' on search engines and social media platforms to understand how algorithmic systems are designed and how the audience perceives them. We analyse the organisation of information filtering algorithms and their relationship with disruptive influence, such as Russian online propaganda. Moreover, we study how platforms reconcile market-driven algorithmic organisation with their role as de-facto gatekeepers of information and the social responsibility this entails.

The work of the research group is structured around the three elements of the information ecosystem: the online content, platforms' algorithms, and online audiences. To analyse these elements, we employ a mixed-method research design that combines qualitative and quantitative content analysis, agent-based algorithmic auditing, and qualitative interviews. The student assistant could potentially become a co-author on project publications depending on the type and extent of the contributions made.

- Participation in the regular meetings of the team;
- Contribute to the work of various projects in the research group in the form of

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research tasks (computational analysis, coding in Python and/or R, quantitative analysis in Excel, language processing, data visualization);
- Participate in and contribute to the organization of research activities and events at the Weizenbaum Institute, such as workshops and colloquia;

Requirements

The research assistant is ideally a (research) master's student who considers applying for a PhD and wants to get valuable research experience.

- Enrolment on an MA or equivalent course of study in Computer Science or related disciplines (e.g.,
  Data Science, Computational Social Science, Media and Communication Science or other disciplines).
- Relevant theoretical and/or applied understanding of media and politics, social media, and propaganda;
- Affinity and/or desire to learn digital research methods, for example, algorithmic auditing, social media analysis, network analysis, natural language processing, etc.
- Excellent oral and writing skills in English;
- Computational skills or an interest in acquiring them would be an advantage;
- Affinity for working in a group setting and collaborating effectively.

What we offer

- flexible working hours and the option of mobile working on a daily basis
- remuneration analogue to TV Stud III
- insight into current research and everyday scientific work
- close cooperation with the scientific staff
- inspiring academic and international working environment in the heart of Berlin (near Bahnhof Zoo) with broad, interdisciplinary networks in research, media and politics

Application

Severely disabled applicants with equal qualifications will be given preference. We value diversity and welcome all applications - regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic or social origin, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation. The Weizenbaum-Institut e.V. expressly encourages women and people with a history of migration to apply.

You can submit your application, consisting of

- Cover letter, describing your research interests, skills, and your fit to the research group;
- CV;
- Complete record of your courses, including grades and an explanation of the grading system;
- The names and contact information of at least two academic references (please do not include the letters themselves);
- A link to/ a copy of a written work product. Examples: thesis, course project, blog post, etc.

in our application portal by 12th October 2025. If you do not fit to all the criteria but nevertheless think that you could be a good fit to the group, we encourage you to apply. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Maite Vöhl from our HR team (personal[at]weizenbaum-institut.de) at any time.

We look forward to receiving your documents.

More information at https://stellenticket.de/198029/HTWB/
Offer visible until 12/10/25

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