ABOUT THE PROJECT

This position is part of a research project within the Digital Commons program funded by BPI in partnership with ISIR (CNRS, Sorbonne University) and make.org. Numerous international academic and industrial partners complete the consortium (Hugging Face, Genci, Mozilla, Berkman Klein Center, etc.) of the "democratic commons."

The "Democratic Commons" program brings together dozens of researchers and engineers over a two-year period in sociology, political science, natural language processing, and engineering to develop and freely share an evaluation model for AI biases applied to democratic debate spaces. The objective is to characterize these biases in this specific context, provide an evaluation model, and work on training LLMs that adhere to the stated democratic principles.

Beyond the demographic biases already well-documented in the literature, we will pay particular attention to the fidelity of language models to the opinions expressed by contributors on deliberative platforms. In such a context, large language models promise increased and simplified participation from a greater number of citizens. Conversational bots can, indeed, facilitate participation by summarizing lengthy debates, reformulating citizens' contributions if they are misaligned, or simply translating them to include contributors speaking different languages. However, these applications—given their application context—also call for great vigilance. The project specifically aims to guard against potential biases that these "translation" operations might have on participation and the quality of democratic debate by precisely characterizing them and proposing tools to measure them.

The successful candidate will join an interdisciplinary team of researchers, engineers, and designers at Sciences Po, working in connection with a team of political scientists at CEVIPOF and scholars in media studies at Médialab. They will naturally collaborate closely with the engineers and computer scientists of the project consortium.

POSITION 1

Position: Post-doc Fellow

Domain: AI & Politics (theory)

Discipline: Political theory / Institutions / Democracy

Expectations: The post-doc must have a strong background in political science with an expertise in political theory ideally connected to AI issues. As the research project aims at identifying political biases in some deliberative platforms, we are looking for applicants having studied the democratic issues (norms, ethics, principles) underlined by Gen AI models. Among questions that will be raised normatively, does (de-)politicisation of AI technology be appropriate—or problematic within a democratic context. The applicant must also have strong abilities to work with other disciplines (sociology, computational sciences, language sciences) and interests in the rise of new online democratic platforms.

POSITION 2

Position: Post-doc Fellow

Domain: AI & Politics (empirics)

Discipline: Political science, behavioural and social sciences

Expectations: The post-doc must have a strong background in social sciences with an expertise in empirical models using large datasets connected to Gen AI issues. As the research project aims at identifying political biases in some deliberative platforms, we are looking for applicants able to design empirical protocols (as experiments and row data) in order to measure the effect/impact of politically biased vs. non-biased Gen AI platforms. Important are the empirical skills (individual surveys and experimental approaches, strong skills in quantitative analysis techniques and a good knowledge of survey design). The applicant must also have strong abilities to work with other disciplines (sociology, computational sciences, language sciences) and interests in the rise of new online democratic platforms.

The 2 post-docs will be hosted by the CEVIPOF, a leading centre in the study of political behavior in France and in a comparative perspective. Research in the center is committed to theory-driven empirical research, drawing on a diversity of methods (qualitative, quantitative, experimental, formal, etc.), adopting a variety of lenses and promoting interdisciplinary approaches for an integrated research on democratic issues in the social sciences. CEVIPOF's research program seeks to measure patterns of (in)satisfaction with democracy emphasizing the role of trust (interpersonal or institutional) in vote choice, electoral decision, participation.

Moreover, the 2 post-doc will be associated to the inter-university team involved in the project. They will conduct their own research projects and help to build the community by organizing events, research meetings, and activities and to disseminate academic knowledge among relevant stakeholders outside academia.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The position is open starting from January 2025, for a duration of 18-24 months. The proposed gross salary between €3200 and €3700/month according to experience. The position includes comprehensive health coverage, 40 days of paid vacation per year, 5 RTT days, 50% coverage of public transportation costs, and meal vouchers.

Working language: French and/or English.

TO APPLY

Please send a CV and a cover letter detailing your relevant experiences and skills for the position, along with a link to your recent scientific articles (published or in progress) to the following addresses before January 1st, 2025. Interviews will follow for a position starting from January 2025):

Applications should be sent before January 1st by email to:
Prof. Martial Foucault: martial.foucault@sciencespo.fr

CONTACTS

Martial Foucault, Full professor of political science
Sciences Po
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Administrative Support:
Gina Sandanassamy, Administrative Officer
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