



NSF Convergence Accelerator's 2022 Cohort Phase 2 Award

Project Title

Co-Insights: Fostering Community Collaboration to Combat Misinformation

Awardee

Meedan

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PROJECT ABSTRACT

Co-Insights is a convergence of computational social science and ethnographic inquiry with a unique platform that enables community, fact-checking, and academic organizations to work together to respond effectively to harmful misinformation targeting minoritized communities. Initially, Co-Insights will focus on Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities. These communities are dramatically underserved by current misinformation interventions due to the variety of languages involved, use of alternative platforms, and limited understanding of the diverse social issues affecting the many groups within the broad umbrella of AAPI. This project focuses on detecting, mitigating, and preventing societal harms arising from misleading narratives, persistent stereotypes, and other patterns of deception. Its guiding principles are (a) co-creating research with community organizations as co-equals; (b) moving from a reactive to a proactive model that addresses entire categories of harmful information, rather than individual or specific claims; (c) utilizing state-of-the-art computational techniques to scale up manual efforts by domain experts; and (d) designing for sustainability.

Our combination of ethnography and discourse analysis from the social sciences with large-scale data mining and state-of-the-art machine learning approaches to claim matching holds significant promise to (a) scale up manual misinformation work, (b) identify and create taxonomies of misleading narratives, and (c) create data-efficient approaches to training machine learning models. The project will generate new insights into the misleading narratives affecting minoritized communities while advancing knowledge in communication, public policy, information retrieval, machine learning, natural language processing, and systems engineering. The project will create infrastructure for ongoing use-inspired research and the transfer of research into practice.