NUS | Centre for Trusted Internet and Community

WELCOME to the second issue of CTIC's newsletter!

Misinformation continues to run rampant, creating polarisation and influencing the integrity of elections across the globe. It is becoming increasingly hard to detect because every falsehood is cloaked in partial truth. Fallacious rumours are impeding vaccine rates at a critical time. Faced with the lockdowns to halt the spread of COVID-19, humans have spent more and more time online, affecting their digital wellbeing.

Now is as important a time as ever to study the effects of misinformation and the internet on society. Through the combination of computer scientists, social scientists, and policymakers, CTIC intends to mitigate these issues by striving towards an accountable internet that enhances the health of our society. We hope this e-newsletter will provide our stakeholders with the opportunity to learn more about the research in CTIC and goals for the future.

We would like to thank everyone for their support and contribution to CTIC. We wish you all the best in the new academic year 2021/2022.

Stay healthy,

Mong-Li, Audrey and Sintia

*Centre director, Mong-Li Lee (middle) and
Deputy Directors, Audrey Yue (right) and Sintia Teddy-Ang (left)*

MEET OUR RESEARCHERS

*Interested in learning more about our Principal Investigators' research?
Meet Kokil Jaidka, Ozan Kuru, Mong-Li Lee, Wynne Hsu, and Natalie Pang.
Click on the links in the summaries to gain access to exclusive interviews with each of them.*

Dr Kokil Jaidka is interested in communication and self-expression on social media and their implications for the quality of discussions and more tangible outcomes such as participation in political or civic activities. By doing so, she provides a gateway to discerning the emotions of the online populace.
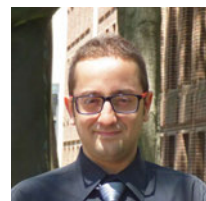
Through undertaking the study of trust, well-being, and social paradigms emerging on the Internet, she hopes that we can understand, hypothesise, and subvert future ill-effects of social media on mental and civic health.

To learn more about Dr Kokil Jaidka and her recent research, click here to access an exclusive interview.

Dr Ozan Kuru employs his interdisciplinary background to take a holistic approach in studying systematic information and quantitative statistical data in the areas of politics, health, and science.

His research recognises the inherent biases that individuals hold when processing information in the media and digital platforms, aiming to identify how these predispositions affect human judgement and ways to reduce their role in decision-making processes. By doing so, he aims to work towards a world where individuals can make educated decisions devoid of misinformation.

To learn more about Dr Ozan Kuru and his recent research, click here to access an exclusive interview.

Dr Wynne Hsu (right) and **Dr Mong-Li Lee** (left) exercise a pragmatic approach to mitigate the spread of misinformation by developing software and algorithms designed to assist individuals with critical information literacy. Their work aims to allow individuals to act proactively when seeking to halt the spread of misinformation and its effects on society.

Among many other accomplishments, they have developed an interactive system called LetsCheck that analyses claims related to COVID-19 for validity and a probabilistic graphical model called CLAP that can predict user decisions based on their past behavioural social networks.

In the future, they wish to work towards better understanding echo chambers on social media and strategies to prevent them. Click here to access an exclusive interview with them.

Dr Natalie Pang's research lies at the intersection of technology and society, and her research projects are organized under the themes of digital citizenship, digital well-being, digital humanities and data cultures in smart cities. She has most recently been researching the role of social networks in shaping digital well-being in an effort to bridge the gap between policy framework and practical implications to create support for digital well-being in communities.

With the knowledge that misinformation can be cloaked in truth, she delves into the role that legislation, critical literacies and algorithms can play to mitigate the spread of misinformation and advocates for an increase in critical information literacy. By doing so, she strives towards building digital communities that are embraced by concepts of well-being. Click here to access an exclusive interview with her.

EVENTS
Look out for the public webinars where we highlight the research of our Principal Investigators.

Upcoming CTIC-IPUR Webinar on inoculation against fake news using an online game

Speaker: Dr Catherine Wong

Date: Friday, 3 September 2021

Time: 1400 - 1530

In case you missed them, you can still access the recordings of our past webinars:

- Improving the digital health of platforms: APIs, AI and data governance by Dr Araz Taeihagh
- Understanding the uptake of vaccine (mis)information in institutional and social media platforms by Dr Ozan Kuru

News and Updates

❖ Congratulations to Dr He Bingsheng and his collaborators for winning the IEEE Transactions on Parallel and Distributed Systems 2019 Best Paper award, 9 December 2020.

❖ Congratulations to Dr Kokil Jaidka who was selected as one of eighteen new faculty worldwide as a part of AAAI New Faculty Highlights Program, 2-9 February 2021.

❖ CTIC is pleased to partner with DQ Institute to research digital well-being and establish indicators for a global assessment framework, 17 March 2021.

❖ Dr Chew Han Ei, Dr Natalie Pang, Dr Elmie Nekmat, and Dr Lee Mong Li work with the Ministry of Communications and Information to launch "Singapore Together Alliance for Action to tackle online harms, especially those targeted at women and girls", 21 July 2021