

Convocatòria del lloc: ECON-PSR-INDF-2022-10

Fons de finançament:

Funding institution: European Research Council (ERC).

Project: ERC Consolidator grant “The Implications of Selective Information Sampling for Individual and Collective Judgments” (2018-2024), H2020-2017-CoG-InfoSampCollect-772268. The project aims to understand how the information to which people are exposed (via their own behaviors, or AI systems that control what they see on social media platforms) affect their beliefs, preferences, and behaviors.

Principal Investigator: Prof. Gaël Le Mens: <https://sites.google.com/view/gael-le-mens/home>

Project summary:

The polarization of attitudes across social groups is at the root of crucial challenges faced by our societies such as the rise of nationalism or populist ideologies. With his ERC Consolidator Grant, Prof. Gaël Le Mens studies the mechanisms leading to such attitude polarization.

The project combines insights from psychology, sociology, political science and economics to understand how the way we sample information from our environments shapes beliefs and attitudes. This project is timely, because social media are quickly transforming how people access information. AI-based recommendation algorithms are making it easier for people to be exposed to news sources that agree with their opinions. And they can easily avoid information that questions or goes against their views. Prof. Le Mens and his team try to explain how these patterns of information consumption facilitated by social media, AI, and recommendation systems, affect individual and collective attitudes. Their results will help understand phenomena that range from the impact of fake news to the persistence of negative stereotypes toward social groups that are different from our own.

Project output

For examples of the kind of papers we aim to produce, see:

- [Measuring the Typicality of Text Documents using a BERT Classifier](https://osf.io/ta273/) (with Balázs Kovács, Michael Hannan, Guillem Pros Rius), working paper. <https://osf.io/ta273/>
- [How politicians learn from citizens' feedback: The case of gender on Twitter](#) (with Aina Gallego and Nicolas Schöll). Conditionally Accepted at *American Journal of Political Science*. Draft circulated under the title ‘Politician-Citizen Interactions and Dynamic Representation: Evidence from Twitter’. Barcelona GSE Working paper 1238 [\[link\]](#).
- [Evaluating Categories from Experience: The Simple Averaging Heuristic](#) (with Thomas Woiczuk), *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2021, 121(4), 747–773. DOI: [10.1037/pspa0000231](https://doi.org/10.1037/pspa0000231).

- [An Information Sampling Explanation for the In-Group Heterogeneity Effect](#) (with Elizaveta Konovalova), *Psychological Review*, 2020, 127(1), 47–73. DOI: [10.1037/rev0000160](https://doi.org/10.1037/rev0000160) [PDF]
- [How endogenous crowd formation undermines the wisdom-of-the-crowd in online ratings](#) (with Balázs Kovács, Judith Avrahami, & Yaakov Kareev), *Psychological Science*, 2018, 29(9), 1475-1490. Published online on July 25, 2018, [DOI](#), [PDF].
- [The few-get-richer: a surprising consequence of popularity-based rankings](#) (with Fabrizio Germano & Vicenç Gómez), *Proceedings of the 2019 World Wide Web Conference (WWW '19)*

Video Presentation of the Project: <https://youtu.be/LWQbdWsQwJA>

Host institution and job location

Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Department of Economics and Business
Carrer Ramon Trias Fargas 25, 08005 Barcelona

More information about UPF: <https://www.upf.edu/web/universitat> and the Department of Economics and Business: <https://www.upf.edu/web/econ>

Denominació de la oferta:

Full-time Research Assistant. Research field: data science/social science. Universitat Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Department of Economics and Business (Barcelona).
Positions available: 2.

Tipus de contractació:

Open-ended contract according to RD 32/2021, from 28 December 2021
(<https://www.boe.es/buscar/act.php?id=BOE-A-2021-21788>)

Funció a desenvolupar:

Under the supervision of the PI, the research assistant will assist the team in executing research for the project.

Successful candidates will work on tasks that mostly fall in the following two categories. (A given research assistant's tasks might not necessarily span the two categories and could focus on just one of these).

1. Programming and execution of **online** and **laboratory experiments** (with a collective and interactive component such that participants will learn the decisions of prior participants before making their own decisions). Most likely in oTree or similar tools. For this experience with Python is a plus.
2. Analysis of large archival datasets of text documents, such as tweets by politicians, reviews and ratings from online websites, via **Deep Learning** (BERT models, using Tensorflow or Pytorch). For this, experience with Python is mandatory.

Research assistants will also help organize scientific events such as workshops/conference, editing slides for presentations and perform other tasks to support the team members and their research activities.

Requisits:

Education

Bachelor or Master's degree in social science (economics, psychology, sociology, management, political science), data science, statistics, computer science or related field.

Skills

Knowledge of data processing and analysis.
Ability to program computer simulations.
Ability to program and run online experiments.
Ability to manage own work without supervision
Language: Fluent English (written and oral)

Specific requirements

Working knowledge of Python or equivalent (Matlab, Stata, R) or working knowledge of Javascript.

Retribució prevista:

34769 euros gross/year, depending on knowledge, skills and experience.

Grup i complement:

Group 1, level U, depending on knowledge, skills and experience.

Dedicació i jornada:

Full-time, 35 hours/week.

Job location: UPF Ciutadella Campus, Department of Economics and Business.

- EU citizens need a Spanish NIE number, Social Security number and a Spanish bank account.
- Non-EU students have to get a work authorization. The contract cannot be full-time.
- Non-EU citizens have to have a valid work permit.

Durada aproximada:

Approximately from mid September 2022 to April 2024. Contract duration, to be agreed with the Principal Investigator, may be from six months to 1.5 year.

Criteris de selecció:

The selection process will be carried out based on the candidates' CV. Information regarding their CV will be filled in on a Google Form. Chosen candidates may be required to perform a test and/or an online interview.

The rating criteria are the following:

- Education: holding a bachelor or master's degree in social science (economics, psychology, sociology, management), political science, data science, statistics, computer science or related field: 0-20 points.
- Candidate's suitability to the tasks to be performed according to previous experience in similar positions, knowledge, skills and technical requirements according the job description, i.e.: data processing and analysis, programming computer simulations, programming and running online experiments, ability to manage own work without supervision, fluency in English (written and oral), working knowledge of Matlab or equivalent (Stata, R, Python) or working knowledge of Javascript: 0-80 points.

The minimum score to be considered a candidate for this position is 60 points.
The candidate with the highest score in the selection process will be offered the job.

Comissió de selecció:

Selection committee:
President: Prof. Gaël Le Mens
Spokesperson 1: Prof. Daniel Navarro
Spokesperson 2: Prof. Rosemarie Nagel

Candidatures

Applicants should fill in the application form and upload their application documents at <https://forms.gle/W3yiJKV2paXcV8tV9>

More information

For questions regarding this position, please send an email to:
Mariona Novoa
Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Department of Economics and Business
mariona.novoa@upf.edu

Termini per presentar sol·licituds:

Applications should be submitted at the earliest opportunity, but no later than 25th August 2022 (i.e. twenty-five days after the publication of this job advertisement).

The list of admitted and rejected candidates will be published at <https://www.upf.edu/web/econ/research-project-positions> shortly after the application deadline. Reasons for rejection will be stated and rejected candidates will have five working days for remedial action.
If applicable, the date of the test and/or interview will also be announced.
The selection process will be completed with the publication of the chosen candidate.
Allegations can be submitted in the following five working days.