

DEADLINE / NOV 22, 2022 5:00 PM AOE

# 2022 Foundational Integrity Research request for proposals

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## About

Meta's integrity efforts are at the heart of the company's mission to give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together, because we want social technologies to be a place where people can express themselves freely, fairly, and safely around the world. Over the last few years, we have increased our investment in people and technology to minimize the effects of negative experiences people encounter on our platforms. The effectiveness of these efforts relies strongly on our partnerships with social scientists to conduct foundational and applied research around challenges pertaining to platform governance in domains such as misinformation, hate speech, violence and incitement, and coordinated harm.

In this request for proposals (RFP), Meta is offering awards to global social science researchers interested in exploring integrity issues related to social communication technologies. We will provide a total of \$1,000,000 USD in funding for research proposals that aim to enrich our understanding of challenges related to integrity issues on social media and social technology

Areas **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS** **HUMAN COMPUTER INTERACTION & UX**

Share

APPLICATIONS ARE NOW OPEN

## Application Timeline



**APPLICATIONS OPEN**

September 28, 2022



**DEADLINE**

November 22, 2022 at 5:00 PM AOE (Anywhere on Earth)



**WINNERS ANNOUNCED**

December 2022

Areas of Interest

authoritative content. In particular, we are interested in ways of reliably quantifying how these interventions can provide the most defense against harm. Interventions could include but are not limited to: institutional intermediaries such as fact-checkers, community leaders, community moderation or feedback, credibility signals, and techniques related to inoculation theory such as “prebunking”. We highlight the important need for causal evaluations to understand the relative impact of interventions on people’s attitudes, knowledge, and behavior.

- 2 **Information processing around sensational, hateful, divisive, or provocative problematic content:** We welcome proposals that explore the social, psychological, and cognitive variables involved in the consumption of “grey area” content experiences – sensational, provocative, divisive, hateful, misleading, polarizing, or biased information – received and produced on social media platforms. In particular, we are interested in understanding how people across different backgrounds, communities, and cultures interact with, are affected by, and decide to promote or share the spectrum of possibly problematic content. Studies that explicitly examine long-term exposure to these types of content or behaviors and their effects on people with deeper or longer engagement are encouraged. We are interested in understanding what aspects of the experience might help individuals engage more critically with or more consciously avoid problematic experiences. Measurement of perceptions and awareness of the prevalence or distribution of this content can be an additional impactful contribution.
- 3 **Violence and incitement, hateful and/or graphic content:** We welcome proposals that examine how people and organizations are leveraging social media to organize and potentially influence intergroup relations in their constituencies. We are interested in projects that probe the connection between online speech and subsequent consequences of both offline and online harms. In particular, research that explores deterrents to online and offline problematic behavior related to dangerous speech and harmful conflict. Projects that focus on actors, content, and behaviors related to sharing inflammatory, offensive, or dangerous content are encouraged. We are also interested in understanding this space in markets with limited institutions, developing media markets, and variations in levels of democracy in non-Western contexts, or in additional contexts where sudden conflict crises have introduced new challenges.

interested in cognition and susceptibility in the face of either simple or advanced manipulated multimedia (misleading synthetic “deepfakes” and simpler edited “cheapfakes”), particularly investigating the impact on people's attitudes and behaviors. Additional areas could include the dynamics of rumors, out-of-context imagery, impersonation of public figures/organizations, etc.

- 5 **Trust, legitimacy, and information quality:** We welcome proposals that examine social media users’ exposure to, interaction with, and understanding of qualities of information, especially their attitudes and interpretations of information quality, trust, and bias. We will also accept studies focusing on the dynamics and effects of information diversity, whether from the user audience or content producer perspectives. Work may also focus on social media companies’ own efforts to maintain information quality, trust and credibility signals, and perceptions of legitimacy, particularly during crises or other critical events.
- 6 **Coordinated harm and inauthentic behavior:** We welcome proposals that inspect information practices and flows across multiple communication technologies or mediums. In particular, individual, group, and community effects of information campaigns, inauthentic behavior, or coordinated activities across multiple communities, networks, channels, or platforms. Studies may in particular examine the impact of such harms on marginalized groups and communities.
- 7 **Digital literacy, demographics, and misinformation:** We welcome proposals that explore the relation between digital literacy and vulnerability to misinformation in communication technologies. Especially in some emerging markets, social media platforms have gained many participants among those new to the internet and populations with lower exposure to technology. We are interested in research that informs efforts to incorporate technology effectively and contextually into underserved geographical regions. This includes studies of individuals, small groups, and larger communities, but also wider inquiries into factors that shape the context for the user experience online.

Successful proposals will demonstrate innovative and compelling social science research that has the potential to significantly advance the community’s understanding of the impact of technology on society. Proposals are encouraged with the following two emphases:

Comparative research and inclusion of non-Western regions that have experienced a growth in social media platform use, including South and Central America, Sub-Saharan and North Africa, the Middle East, and Central, South, and Southeast Asia. We encourage proposals from researchers, or collaborations with researchers, based in the country/countries being researched.

Meta research awards provide support for independent research projects designed to be shared with the larger scientific, policy, and industry communities. These awards will be made as unrestricted gifts to allow investigators the freedom to deepen and extend their existing research portfolios to study the social impact of online interaction and information technologies.

## Requirements

### Proposals should include

- A summary of the project (one to two pages), in English, explaining the area of focus, a description of techniques, any relevant prior work, and a timeline with milestones and expected outcomes
- A draft budget description (one page) including an approximate cost of the award and explanation of how funds would be spent
- Curriculum Vitae for all project participants
- Organization details; this will include tax information and administrative contact details

### Eligibility

- The proposal must comply with applicable U.S. and international laws, regulations, and policies.
- Applicants must be current faculty or employed in a role focused on research at an accredited academic institution, university, non-

by individuals residing in or affiliated with an academic institution, university, non-governmental institution, or non-profit located in a country or territory subject to comprehensive U.S. trade sanctions.

- Government officials (excluding faculty and staff of public universities, to the extent they may be considered government officials), political figures, and politically affiliated businesses (all as determined by Meta in its sole discretion) are not eligible.
- Applicants cannot be current employees or contractors at Meta or any of its affiliated brands.

## Budget and payment

- Award amounts will be provided at two levels, \$50,000 USD or \$100,000 USD.
- Payment will be made to the PI's host institution as an unrestricted gift. Overhead is limited to 5% for gifts.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Do you typically limit the salary of the PI in the gift?

Should proposals be double- or single-spaced? Is there any required/expected font?

What is the award cycle or when does the funding year begin and end?

Can you please explain the budget breakdown in more detail?

We are working as co-PIs. Is it possible to list both of our names as PI for an RFP proposal?

Can I have a co-PI from a different institution?

If a proposal is selected as a winner and has co-PIs from different institutions, can you split the award?

What are the terms and conditions if my proposal is selected as a winner and is awarded as a GIFT?

## Terms & Conditions

Meta's decisions will be final in all matters relating to Meta RFP solicitations, including whether or not to grant an award and the interpretation of Meta RFP Terms and Conditions. By submitting a proposal, applicants affirm that they have read and agree to these Terms and Conditions.

- Meta is authorized to evaluate proposals submitted under its RFPs, to consult with outside experts, as needed, in evaluating proposals, and to grant or deny awards using criteria determined by Meta to be appropriate and at Meta sole discretion. Meta's decisions will be final in all matters relating to its RFPs, and applicants agree not to challenge any such decisions.
- Meta will not be required to treat any part of a proposal as confidential or protected by copyright, and may use, edit, modify, copy, reproduce and

phone number, and email address of the applicant and other named researchers in the proposal may be collected, processed, stored and otherwise used by Meta for the purposes of administering Meta's RFP website, evaluating the contents of the proposal, and as otherwise provided under Meta's Privacy Policy.

- Neither Meta nor the applicant is obligated to enter into a business transaction as a result of the proposal submission. Meta is under no obligation to review or consider the proposal.
  - Feedback provided in a proposal regarding Meta products or services will not be treated as confidential or protected by copyright, and Meta is free to use such feedback on an unrestricted basis with no compensation to the applicant. The submission of a proposal will not result in the transfer of ownership of any IP rights.
  - Applicants represent and warrant that they have authority to submit a proposal in connection with a Meta RFP and to grant the rights set forth herein on behalf of their organization. All awards provided by Meta in connection with this RFP shall be used only in accordance with applicable laws and shall not be used in any way, directly or indirectly, to facilitate any act that would constitute bribery or an illegal kickback, an illegal campaign contribution, or would otherwise violate any applicable anti-corruption or political activities law.
  - Funding for winning RFP proposals will be provided to the accredited academic institution, university, non-governmental institution, or non-profit organization with which the primary investigator / applicant is affiliated pursuant to a gift or other funding model as specified in the RFP call. Applicants understand and acknowledge that their affiliated institution / organization will need to agree to the terms and conditions of such gift or other agreement to receive funding.
  - Applicants acknowledge and agree that by submitting an application they are consenting to their name, institution / organization's name and proposal title being made public on Meta's blog on the [research.facebook.com](https://research.facebook.com) website if they are chosen as an RFP winner or finalist. If an applicant is selected as a winner or finalist, they will then have the opportunity to provide written notification that they do not consent to the [research.facebook.com](https://research.facebook.com) blog inclusion.
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English (UK)

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