

SPRITE+ Newsletter: December 2023

Season's Greetings from the SPRITE+ Team

In our last newsletter of 2023, as well as our usual range of announcements, there are some new members of the SPRITE+ Team to introduce, and we have a new opportunity for early career researchers, as we'll be running a Mentor Clinic towards the end of January (see below for details).

SPRITE+ Team: Welcome and Thanks

Welcome to new members of the SPRITE+ Team:

- Claire Spencer, Programmes and Events Coordinator
- Justyna Kanno, Finance and Projects Administrator

Their profiles can be found towards the bottom of our [Meet the Team](#) page on SPRITEHub.

Zarine Khurshid, from ICL's Institute for Security Science and Technology is supporting our business engagement activities.

Massive thanks to [Ayushi Gupta](#) who finishes her graduate internship with SPRITE+ at the end of this month. Ayushi has been our Communications and Events Assistant since February, and her support has been essential to the successful running of our events programme. Ayushi's also been responsible for compiling the monthly newsletter and maintaining our social media presence.

SPRITE+ ECR Mentor Clinic

SPRITE+ will be running online career drop-in clinics for early career researcher Members and Expert Fellows to seek advice (one-to-one) from a member of the SPRITE+ Management Team about related issues. The first clinic will take place on Wednesday 24th January 2024 from 13:00 – 15:00 and will be hosted by Stacey Conchie. If you'd like to book a 20-minute slot, please send an email to Catherine Rhodes at spriteplus@manchester.ac.uk. If you have a preference for a particular timeslot, please indicate this in your email (options are: 13:00; 13:25; 13:50; 14:15 and 14:40). Places will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

(Please note, the University of Manchester has a closure period from 22 December to 2 January and the SPRITE+ mailbox will not be monitored during that period.)

News and Publications from the SPRITE+ Community

SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Carolina Are has a new paper on malicious flagging '[The assemblages of flagging and de-platforming against marginalised content creators](#)' published in *Convergence*.

SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Karen Renaud's new publications were incorrectly listed in the November newsletter, they are:

- Renaud, K. V., Warkentin, M., Pogrebna, G., Van der Schyff, K. (2023). '[VISTA: An Inclusive Insider Threat Taxonomy, with Mitigation Strategies](#)' published in Information and Management.
- Jacques Ophoff and Karen Renaud. 'Universal Design for Website Authentication' After age 60, it is more a case of preventing authentic people from using the site than anything else! From the 2023 Workshop on Human Centric Software Engineering and Cyber Security, co-hosted with the 38th IEEE/ACM International Conference on Automated Software Engineering from Mon 11 – Fri 15 September 2023 in Kirchberg, Luxembourg. <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/conhome/10298259/proceeding>.
- Partha Das Chowdhury and Karen Renaud, 'Ought' should not assume 'Can'... Basic Capabilities in Cybersecurity to Ground Sen's Capability Approach. New Security Paradigms Workshop, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1145/3633500.3633506>.

SPRITE+ Member Angela Daly and her collaborator Dr Riccardo Vecellio Segate have just published '[Encoding the Enforcement of Safety Standards into Smart Robots to Harness Their Computing Sophistication and Collaborative Potential: A Legal Risk Assessment for European Union Policymakers](#)' in the *European Journal of Risk Regulation*.

The team from the SPRITE+ funded project 'AI-COSA: trustworthiness of data and AI tools in COvid Safe workplace Apps' – Jacob Johanssen, Iman Jaja, Lamiece Hassan, Carl Adams and Mistale Taylor – have published an article based on the project: '[Developing on Shifting Sands: A Case Study of a Workplace Safety Monitoring App During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)' in the *International Journal of Communication*.

SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Irini Katsirea has a forthcoming book publication [Press Freedom and Regulation in a Digital Era](#).

The team from the SPRITE+ funded [DigiProPass](#) Project are continuing to publicise their work in the secure document trade press – the December edition of [ID & Secure Document News](#) will contain an article summarising their project findings, and they will be presenting outputs from the project at the [Optical and Digital Document Security](#) conference in April 2024.

SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Marie Oldfield has published: '[Dehumanisation and the future of technology](#)' at the International Conference on AI and the Digital Economy (CADE 2023); '[Technical challenges and perception: does AI have a PR issue?](#)' in AI and Ethics; '[Anthropomorphism and its Impact on the Implementation and Perception of AI](#)', Chapter 4 in Technology, Users and Uses: Ethics and Human Interaction through Technology and AI.

SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Wendy Moncur and co-authors have published '[Everyday digital traces](#)' in *Big Data and Society*. The paper advances understandings of personal data by exploring ordinary people's seemingly innocuous digital traces that are generated through everyday online interactions. The study conducted involved use of a co-designed, fictional persona called Alex Smith, which was

used to concretise and represent people's online information and to help participants reflect on data and digital traces. Key findings focus on: (1) how ordinary people cope with and manage everyday data; (2) the haunting effects and affects of peer-to-peer surveillance and (3) post-digital identities. We also offer a method that can be adapted for and used with different participant groups, which supports their awareness of cumulative functions of personal data and potential use by un/known actors.

SPRITE+ Member Mohammad Shojafar has recently published with Rahim Tafazolli and the University of Surrey (5G and 6G Innovation Centre): '[PASCOINFOG/PASFOG: Privacy-preserving Data Deduplication Algorithms for Fog Storage Systems](#)'; and '[Edge-AI Empowered Dynamic VNF Splitting in O-RAN Slicing: A Federated DRL Approach](#)'.

SPRITE+ Advisory Board Member Benoît Dupont is co-author of the paper '["Like aspirin for arthritis": A qualitative study of conditional cyber-deterrence associated with police crackdowns on the dark web](#)' in *Criminology and Public Policy*.

SPRITE+ Project Partner The Open Data Institute have launched a video Alan Warbuton's 'The Wizard of AI', available through: <https://theodi.org/news-and-events/news/wizard-of-ai/>. The AI-generated documentary explores the impact of AI on artistic and creative industries.

Job Opportunities and Studentship Announcements

QUB LINAS Doctoral Training Programme: 2024 Studentships

The QUB LINAS Doctoral Training Programme (DTP) seeks to develop a cohort of Doctoral Scholars who can address the implications of massive-scale data processing, artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) for both the actual operation of algorithmically driven public decision-making in wider society, and within science and engineering.

They have multiple studentships available and welcome applicants for October 2024 start.

The closing date for applicants is 31 January 2024. Details of the individual projects and how to apply can be found [here](#).

PhD Studentship: Can we have it all? Exploring the trade-offs to achieve trustworthy AI in future networks. Queen's University Belfast. Closing date: 31 January 2024. Read more [here](#).

Technologist in Residence, EPSRC NetworkPlus: Ecological Citizens: Tools, Technologies and Means to Enable Sustainable Digital Citizens.

The School of Design at the Royal College of Art seeks a [Technologist in Residence](#) as a key part of the Ecological Citizen(s) Network+ team. 'This is a great opportunity for a designer to use their skills and experience to make a difference. If you have an interest in the natural world, materials and the digital economy, we would like to hear from you. This is a part time role, working 7 hours per week. Application deadline 1 January 2024.

Research Assistant on Privacy and Security in Graph Neural Networks. The Department of Computing, Imperial College London, is 'looking to hire a Research Assistant (pre-doctoral) to work on the newly funded EU CHIST_ERA project GRAPHS4SEC (Graph Neural Networks for Robust AI/ML-driven Network Security Applications). The goal of GRAPHS4SEC is to leverage graph data

representations and modern GNN technology to conceive a new breed of robust GNN-based network security methods. The position is fully funded for three years and includes funding for equipment and travel. Depending on success, the position may be extended beyond the initial three years. You will also have time to develop your own research agenda towards a PhD Degree.' Closing date 15 January 2024. Read more [here](#).

Behavioural Science Fellowship with a focus on cognitive psychology. 'Applications are invited for a full-time behavioural science fellowship with a focus upon cognitive psychology and more particularly deception detection, jointly hosted by GCHQ and the University of Manchester. The fellowship will provisionally run between February 2024 and March 2025, with an expected extension to December 2025.

Fellows will pursue a research project focused upon deception detection/credibility assessment, designed in consultation with colleagues in GCHQ and addressing needs of national security. Some of the research will assume a standard academic form and fellows will be expected to pursue its publication in relevant academic journals, suitable for submission in the Research Excellence Framework, subject to GCHQ approval. Some will be classified and intended for use by GCHQ and their partner organisations only and will be shared internally within the national security community. Fellows will therefore gain experience of two very different research environments and of negotiating the complexities of working between them.

Note: Postholders need to qualify for Developed Vetting security - the minimum requirement for a DV is British citizenship and to have lived in the UK 7 out of the last 10 years.'

Closing date 7 January 2024. Full details available [here](#).

The Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies is recruiting at the level of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Reader, in various specialist fields, including in AI and society, digital media and/or digital methods, and digital health and society. Closing date 22 January 2024. Further information available [here](#).

Other Opportunities

The Institute of Cyber Security for Society (iCSS) at the University of Kent is organising a **CyberAnything Competition** and welcomes submissions from UK residents. This competition welcomes anything or everything that are cyber-related in our daily lives. Submissions can be photos, drawings, short videos, infographics (flyers and PowerPoint slides), essays, poems, and even 3-D printed objects and hand-crafted artefacts. Submitted artefacts will be judged for a number of cash prizes up to £80. More details on the Competition and how to submit can be found at the following page: <https://research.kent.ac.uk/cyber/2023-24-cyberanything-competition/>.

The Institute of Science and Technology, a professional body just celebrating 75 years, has this year launched the novel, global **Professional Accreditation for AI Practitioners**. SPRITE+ Expert Fellow Marie Oldfield is the lead of this initiative. For more information visit istonline.org.uk or contact office@istonline.org.uk

Sprite Expert Fellow Charles Weir, Louise Dennis and Hazel Taylor are starting a **new project exploring the less obvious infrastructure risks from changes in the computing world:**

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/security-lancaster/research/interlinked/>.

Press Release: [The Digital Europe Programme makes €84 million available to strengthen AI and cybersecurity](#). A new series of calls for proposals by the European Commission for the Digital Europe Programme.

The Royal Academy of Engineering and Government Office for Science have launched their **2024 Intelligence Community Postdoctoral Research Programme**, aimed at early career postdoctoral researchers across a range of disciplines. It offers a diverse choice of national security topics. For the call, full list of topics and how to apply: <https://raeng.org.uk/ukicpostdoc>. Deadline 23 April 2024. The Academy aims to provide additional support to applicants from groups that are persistently underrepresented within UK engineering through the grant application process through an access mentoring scheme, see: <https://raeng.org.uk/access-mentoring>.

Calls for Papers / Proposals

The Automation Generation: The Societal Implications of AI, ML and Big Data. The QUB LINAS Doctoral Scholars have issued their Call for Papers for next year's conference, taking place on April 22nd, 2024. This is a great opportunity for interdisciplinary discussion and networking in this exciting research area. [LINAS \(canva.site\)](#). Abstract deadline 16 February 2024.

Human Factor in Cybercrime Conference. 29 September – 1 October 2024, Montreal. 'This conference has become a cornerstone in fostering collaboration, sharing groundbreaking research, and exploring new frontiers in cybercrime. Whether you are a seasoned researcher, early-career scholar or a Ph.D. student, the Human Factor in Cybercrime Conference provides a unique platform to engage in meaningful discussions and network with peers who share your passion.' Abstract deadline 30 April 2024. [Further information](#).

Upcoming Events

ICO Workshop on privacy enhancing technologies

20 February 2024, The Clarendon Charing Cross Hotel, London
Read more and apply to attend [here](#).

PETRAS - We Are Connected - Are We Protected?

Wednesday 21 February 2024, 10:00-19:00 – County Hall, London
Register [here](#).

NCSR+ - 2nd National Conference on Societal Resilience

4-5 March 2024, University of Manchester.
Read more and register [here](#). Early-bird rates until 22 December 2023.

Contact Details

Email us with your news (e.g., jobs, studentships, events, conference calls, calls for funding, publications, consultations) on admin@spritehub.org, alert us on X (formerly Twitter) by including [@SPRITEPlus](https://twitter.com/SPRITEPlus) in your tweet or reach out on [LinkedIn](#).

The newsletter is usually published on the last Wednesday of each month. The deadline for including your news item is the second-to-last Friday of each month.

Learn more about [benefits of SPRITE+ membership](#).

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