

RESEARCH THEME

Title of the doctoral research Information Design and Data Visualization for culture and society: tools, methods, interfaces

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Abstract

The rise of the so-called “data society” makes possible fundamentally new approaches for the study of human beings, culture and society. Everyday a huge amount of digital traces about social interaction, transaction, movements, collaborative projects are encoded in digital format and stored in server farms all around the globe. Furthermore, the increasing progress in computational tools, such as Artificial Intelligence, provide the ability to process large amount of data, and to identify and follow patterns. Both humanities and social sciences are today presented with new opportunities through these digital items, and in the last decade we have seen an increase usage of such data to enrich the study of social and cultural processes and dynamics.

At the same time, while this data mediation has become pervasive in our lives, concerns about its consequences and misuses started to rise, for example related to everyone’s privacy, mass surveillance programs, the impact of large-scale analysis on local communities, and the risk of algorithmic biases toward minorities.

Within these scenarios, new roles, perspectives and opportunities for design, especially communication and interface design, are emerging. The design of artefacts to access, observe and explore these new data emerges as a central issue in current research initiatives and agendas.

The DensityDesign Lab, part of Design Department, is looking for PhD research proposals that aim at understanding - and experimenting through the design practice - the contribution that communication design can bring to the definition of new research methods and tools for dealing with data, and at the same time inquiring the social consequences of data-driven designed artefacts.

Keywords Data Visualization, Data publics, Communication Design