

Welcome to the 1st Conference on Truth and Trust Online

The quest to improve the online media ecosystem, where the public seeks truthful information and trustworthy sources, remains important and is in need of concerted research. Manual efforts cannot scale to the demand, and many proposed automated solutions for content moderation and verification, including those presented in existing academic venues are detached from real-world needs faced by the users and the operators of these platforms.

The mission of the First Conference on Truth and Trust Online (TTO), is to bring together all parties working on automated approaches to augment manual efforts on improving the truthfulness and trustworthiness of online communications. TTO aims to be an annual forum for academia, industry, non-profit organizations and other stakeholders to meet and discuss the problems facing social media platforms and technical solutions to them. Key to this interaction is the openness on behalf of the media platforms about their problems and the focus of the academic proposals to address them in an impactful way. The intended outcomes of our conference are: a) **for academics to learn about the real-world problems that industry is facing** and how their proposed solutions can be more impactful; b) **for industry to improve their product safety** by brainstorming collective actions together with other stakeholders; and c) **for the public to gain insights into how their concerns on social media safety are being addressed.**

Bearing the above in mind the organising committee put together an exciting programme consisting of cross-disciplinary invited talks from both academia and industry, as well as peer-reviewed work submitted in response to our call for papers. The conference topics span a broad range of issues including: disinformation, misinformation, polarisation and propaganda, news credibility, hate speech, harassment, trust and credibility and image/video verification. This volume contains the contributed papers selected for presentation at TTO 2019 through a peer review process.

The call for papers was released in Spring 2019 and invited technical papers containing novel, previously unpublished material related to the topics of the conference. The call also invited talk proposals that would give a broader overview of academic work on a certain topic, or present hands-on experience from addressing the TTO challenges in the real world. The call encouraged submissions by researchers across different disciplines including journalism, social science, political science and computer science. To enable a thorough review process, allowing at least two reviews per submission, a programme committee (PC) of forty-four reviewers with a track record of research in the conference topics and a range of backgrounds was chosen. The programme co-chairs and their close collaborators were prevented from submitting papers to the conference in order to avoid conflicts of interest and to ensure programme integrity. The template for contributed papers was modelled on that of the 57th Annual Meeting of the Association for Computational Linguistics (ACL) and was shared as a latex template on Overleaf. All authors were asked to make sure camera ready versions adhered to this template. The management of submissions, invitations to PC members and communication with authors and PC members happened using the EasyChair system.

TTO 2019 received 32 submissions, consisting of 17 technical papers and 15 talk proposals. The programme committee (reviewers) was asked to judge technical talks and talk proposals based on different criteria; for technical papers the criteria were appropriateness, originality and technical quality while for talk proposals another important factor was the coverage and breadth of the proposed content. In deciding which papers to include in the programme, the programme co-chairs considered scores and comments by reviewers as well as the range of topics of different submissions and the geographical diversity of authors. In this way 28 papers were

deemed as a good fit for the TTO programme. It was decided that the eight submissions that were judged by the reviewers and the program co-chairs to be the strongest (25% of all submissions) would be presented as 20 minute talks at the conference. The remaining ones would be presented as posters during two poster sessions on misinformation and disinformation (day 1) and trustworthiness and credibility (day 2) respectively. Out of the eight 20 minute talks, three had been submitted as talk proposals and the rest as technical papers. Out of these three, one of the talks would be presented as a poster with a recorded presentation as the authors were not able to attend. Out of the twenty papers accepted as posters ten had been submitted as talk proposals and ten had been submitted as technical papers. Two of these were retracted after acceptance and another would be presented via a poster and a recorded presentation.

Acknowledgments and the future

The programme co-chairs are grateful to the programme committee for their hard work and helpful comments which helped improve the published manuscripts. The publications chair, Kalina Bontcheva put a lot of effort in setting the template format for the contributed papers, compiling the proceedings and ensuring that TTO has a DOI and ISSN associated with it.

Last but not least, the local organisers at Full Fact and Facebook have put in an enormous amount of work without which the conference would not have happened. Special acknowledgements are due to Mevan Bebakar, Guillaume Bouchard, David Corney, Will Moy, Charlie Ross and Marzieh Saeidi.

It is very much the hope of the programme co-chairs that our experience will inform future editions of the conference and that this important and challenging area will attract more submissions at the intersection of academia, industry and the third sector. Our vision includes providing funding support for the annotation of new datasets relevant to the topics of the conference as well as the potential of hosting shared tasks on the basis of these datasets to foster the development of improved technical solutions.

We hope you enjoy TTO 2019 and look forward to future editions of the conference!

October 4-5th 2019,
London, BMA House

Programme co-chairs
Maria Liakata and Andreas Vlachos