

Antonis Papasavva

Personal & Contact Information

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Education

PhD in Discourse Analysis and Data Science

Sep 2019 – Present
(Expected Sep 2023)

Advisor: Emiliano De Cristofaro

University College London, London, United Kingdom

Thesis title: *A Comprehensive Study of the Extremist Narratives and the Role of Alternative Social Networks that Facilitate Radical Discourse*

Research Interests:

- Internet Measurement (extreme, fringe communities)
- CyberSafety
- Online Harms (toxicity)
- Natural Language Processing

Outputs:

- Developed custom API and HTML DOM-tree crawlers to collect and store large scale data from various online forums (using Python, PSQL, Git, and Linux/Bash)
- Fine-tuned pre-trained **NLP models** and **analysed data** providing insights and **visualizations** that led to **four top tier publications** (AAAI and ACM)
- Led **five research projects** and suggested methodologies, research proposals, and previous work.
- My research has been covered by **popular online press**, like, The New York Times, The Washington Post, New Scientist, WIRED, Zing, Bleeping Computer, etc.

MSc Data Science and Engineering

Sep 2016 – Jun 2019

Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

Transcript degree: 8.34 / 10

Thesis title: *A Privacy-preserving Architecture for Parental Control Tools for the Protection of Minors on Online Social Networks*

BSc Computer Science

Sep 2012 – Jun 2016

Frederick University, Limassol, Cyprus

Transcript degree: 8.75 / 10

Research Experience

Research Fellow

Dec 2017 – Dec 2019

Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

- **Technical Lead** of the implementation of a privacy-preserving parental control tool for the protection of minors in online social networks, under the **EU-funded project ENCASE** (Grant Agreement No. 691025)
- **Designed** architecture and **led development** of a parental control tool
- **Produced technical reports** for the EU Commission and **managed team of software engineers** to develop a system prototype
- **Grand Proposal Writing:**
 - H2020 Marie Curie RISE. **INCOGNITO:** IdeNtity verifiCatiOn with privacy-preserving credenTials for anonymous access To Online services. Total funding: 1.1M Euro. CUT funding: 373.6K Euro
 - H2020 Marie Curie RISE. **SECONDO:** a Security ECONomics service platform for smart security investments and cyber insurance pricing in the beyond 2020 netwOrking era. Total funding: 1.6M Euro. CUT funding: 289K Euro

- H2020 CYBERSECURITY. **CONCORDIA**: Cyber security cOmpeteNce fOr Research and InnovAtion.
Total funding: 16M Euro. CUT funding: 256K Euro
- H2020 Marie Curie RISE. **AERAS**: A cybEr range tRaining platform for medicAl organisations and systems Security.
Total funding: 1.4M Euro. CUT funding: 220K Euro

▪ Secondments:

- **Product Owner at LSTech, UK:** **May 2018 – Jul 2018**
Led a team of software engineers towards the development of a platform to protect minors from various threats while using social networks
Evaluated system requirements as the platform reached pilot phase
Analysed user interaction and experience surveys and adapted our system and interface requirements accordingly
- **Visiting Research at Telefonica I+D, Spain:** **Aug 2018 – Dec 2018**
 Analysed existing work on the detection of inappropriate content on YouTube which fed into subsequent project plans
 Annotated collected videos and analysed **annotators' performance**
 Contributed to **analysis of findings**, leading to a **top-tier publication**
- **Prototype Supervisor at Telefonica I+D, Spain** **Aug 2019 – Oct 2019**
Developed and implemented pilot plan for an EU-funded project
 Recruited beta testers and **managed bug reporting system**
Analysed pilot activity data, along with user-provided feedback to produce user engagement, interaction, and experience reports

Research Fellow

Feb 2017 – Apr 2018

Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

- **Research Associate** and **Software Engineer** of the EU-funded project **ReCRED** (Grant Agreement No. 653417), which focused on device-centric authentication and identity management
- Maintained **back-end and front-end services** for a pilot Android application for an EU-funded project on preserving user privacy during online authentication
- Recruited 200 beta testers for pilot application, **managed pilot activities, and analysed user experience data**

Selected Publications

1. *Papasavva A., Mariconti E.*
"Waiting for Q: An Exploration of QAnon Users' Online Migration to Poal in the Wake of Voat's Demise
Under Peer Review (2023)
2. *Papasavva A., Aliapoulios M., Ballard C., De Cristofaro E., Stringhini G., Zannettou S., Blackburn J.*
The gospel according to Q: Understanding the QAnon conspiracy from the perspective of canonical information
 16th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM 2022)
3. *Mekacher A., Papasavva A.*
"I Can't Keep It Up." A Dataset from the Defunct Voat. co News Aggregator
 16th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM 2022)
4. *Papasavva A., Blackburn J., Stringhini G., Zannettou S., De Cristofaro E.*
"Is it a Qoincidence?": An Exploratory Study of QAnon on Voat
 30th The Web Conference (WWW 2021)
5. *Papadamou K., Papasavva A., Zannettou S., Blackburn J., Kourtellis N., Leontiadis I., Stringhini G., Sirivianos M.*
***Disturbed YouTube for Kids: Characterizing and Detecting Disturbing Content on YouTube** (*Best paper runner-up)
 14th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM 2020)

6. *Papasavva A., Zannettou S., De Cristofaro E., Stringhini G., Blackburn J.*
Raiders of the Lost Kek: 3.5 Years of Augmented 4chan Posts from the Politically Incorrect Board
14th International AAAI Conference on Web and Social Media (ICWSM 2020)

Academic
Service

PC Member (Full track Conferences):

ICWSM 2018, ICWSM 2019, ICWSM 2020, WWW 2020, CSCW 2021, *ICWSM 2021, CSCW 2022, *ICWSM 2022, IEEE IC 2022, NDSS 2022, *ICWSM 2023, NDSS 2023, *WWW 2023, ICWSM 2024

PC Member (Poster, Demo, Dataset):

*ICWSM 2022, *ICWSM 2023

*Best Reviewer Mention

Teaching
Experience

Teaching Assistant

University College London, London, United Kingdom

- Software Engineering (MSc course) Oct 2019 – Dec 2019
- Computer Architecture and Hardware (MSc course) Jan 2020 – May 2022
- People and Security (MSc course) Jan 2020 – May 2020
- Security (BSc course) Jan 2022 – May 2022

Cyprus University of Technology, Limassol, Cyprus

- Advanced and Distributed Operating Systems (MSc course) Sep 2017 – Dec 2017
- Web Engineering and Internet Technologies (BSc course) Jan 2018 – Apr 2018

Relevant Skills

Programming ability in *Python, PSQL, C++, and Linux*

Libraries: *Matplotlib, NLTK, Word2Vec, Vader, SpaCy, Numpy, Selenium, BeautifulSoup, HTML requests, JSON, CSV, pickle, and many more*

Databases: *PostgreSQL, MongoDB*

Fluent in *Greek and English (PTE Overall Score: 78/90)*

Excellent *communication, organization, management, and leadership skills*

Honors & Awards

Scholarship

Given from the Frederick University for all eight semesters (Oct 2012 – Jun 2016) for having a cumulative GPA greater than 8

Scholarship

Given from the Cyprus University of Technology for my post-graduate studies (Sep 2016 – Jun 2019) for graduating my bachelor's degree with honors

Nationals Final Winner of the Microsoft Imagine Cup

Apr 2016

My team and I presented "ARGOS", a system which is consisted of "ERON" autonomous surface vessel and an autonomous drone for monitoring and automatically aiding swimmers in case of drowning