



NSF Convergence Accelerator's 2021 Cohort Phase 1 Award

Project Title

FACT CHAMP - Fact-checker, Activist, and Academic Collaboration Tools: Combatting Hate & Abuse towards Minorities as well as Misinformation & Propaganda In Online Networks

Awardee

Meedan

Award/Contract

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Award Contract Type

R&D

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Principal Investigator

Scott Hale

scott@meedan.com

Co-Principal Investigators

Kathleen Jamieson

Shiri Dori-Hacohen

Keen Sung

Jonathan C Ong

NSF Funded Program

NSF's Convergence Accelerator

NSF Program Director

Mike Pozmancier

Trust & Authenticity in
Communication Systems
(Track F) Program Director,
Convergence Accelerator
mpozmancier@nsf.gov

PROJECT ABSTRACT

Developing a solution to curb misinformation is vital to ensuring the American public has factual information. Led by Meedan, the multidisciplinary team is developing FACT CHAMP or Fact-checker, Academic, and Community Collaboration Tools: Combating Hate, Abuse, and Misinformation with Minority-led Partnerships, a platform to identify and curb online misinformation to reduce racially targeted hate speech. Additionally, the platform is intended to streamline and facilitate collaboration between fact-checkers, non-profits, researchers, and community leaders—particularly to include minority groups. The solution will allow practitioners and community leaders to share misinformation data and research challenges securely with academics and will enable academic solutions to be more easily applied in practice.

FACT CHAMP requires a convergence of social science and computer science research and a wide range of non-profits, startups, industry, and academic partners. During phase 1 the team will conduct in-depth ethnographic use-inspired research in close partnership with Asian American and Pacific Islander communities, where racially targeted misinformation and hate speech surged in the wake of COVID-19. The team will also conduct three proof-of-concept activities to understand how they can best enable deep and meaningful collaboration between researchers, fact-checkers, and community leaders to combat hate, abuse, and misinformation. Through these activities, the FACT CHAMP team will improve their understanding of hate speech and misinformation, advance the detection research on misinformation and hateful content, and, most importantly, develop new tools and adapt existing tools to create a collaboration infrastructure aligned with the needs of the solution's stakeholders.

Using a multidisciplinary approach, use-inspired research, and innovation processes, the National Science Foundation's Convergence Accelerator provides an opportunity to accelerate solutions into practical application and to provide a positive societal impact.