

# Social media data and real time analytics: Terms of reference



**07 February 2014**

**Big data has been announced as one of the Government's eight great technologies with priorities for funding and research. In June 2013, the Government published their "information economy strategy" outlining the pivotal role big data will play in rebuilding and strengthening the economy. This was followed in October 2013 by "Seizing the data opportunity: a strategy for UK data capability". The Science and Technology Committee has agreed to hold an inquiry into Social media data and real time analytics.**

[Inquiry: Social media data and real time analytics](#)  
[Science and Technology Committee](#)

Traditional data storage systems were not designed for real-time analysis but new technologies can now provide live information and data analysis can be accomplished in real-time. Social media data offers the possibility of studying social processes as they unfold at the level of populations as an alternative to traditional surveys or interviews. The data from social media is described as "qualitative data on a quantitative scale" and requires innovative analysis techniques.

The Science and Technology Committee has agreed to hold an inquiry into Social media data and real time analytics.

## The Committee seeks written submissions on the following matters:

- How can real-time analysis of social media data benefit the UK? What should the Government be doing to maximise these benefits?
- How does the UK compare to other EU countries in funding for real-time big data research?
- What are the barriers to implementing real time data analysis? Is the new Government data-capability strategy sufficient to overcome these barriers?
- What are the ethical concerns of using personal data and how is this data anonymised for research?
- What impact is the upcoming EU Data Protection Legislation likely to have on access to social media data for research?
- Is UK legislation surrounding the collection and use of data fit for purpose?

## Submitting written evidence

The personal information you supply will be processed in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 for the purposes of attributing the evidence you submit and contacting you as necessary in connection with its processing. The Clerk of the House of Commons is the data controller for the purposes of the Act. We may also ask you to comment on the process of submitting evidence via the web portal so that we can look to make improvements. If you have any queries or concerns about the collection and use of this information or do not wish your details to be used for the purpose of collecting feedback, please [email the Committee](#) providing your full name, address, and if relevant your organisation.

The Committee invites written submissions on these issues by midday on Monday 31 March 2014.

### Each submission should:

1. be no more than 3,000 words in length

2. be in Word format with as little use logos as possible
3. have numbered paragraphs
4. include a declaration of interests.

**Please note that:**

Material already published elsewhere should not form the basis of a submission, but may be referred to within a proposed memorandum, in which case a hard copy of the published work should be included. Memoranda submitted must be kept confidential until published by the Committee, unless publication by the person or organisation submitting it is specifically authorised.

Once submitted, evidence is the property of the Committee. The Committee normally, though not always, chooses to make public the written evidence it receives, by publishing it on the internet (where it will be searchable), by printing it or by making it available through the Parliamentary Archives. If there is any information you believe to be sensitive you should highlight it and explain what harm you believe would result from its disclosure. The Committee will take this into account in deciding whether to publish or further disclose the evidence.

Select Committees are unable to investigate individual cases.

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