

# Ishita Gopal

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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## EDUCATION

### Pennsylvania State University

Ph.D. (Dual Title) Political Science & Social Data Analytics 2023 (expected)

Dissertation: Political Activism in the Age of Digital Media

Committee: Bruce Desmarais (Chair), Kevin Munger, Jodeph Wright

Fields: Social Data Analytics and Comparative Politics

MA Political Science

2020

### University of Warwick

M.Sc. Economics

2015

### Miranda House, University of Delhi

B.A. (Honours) Economics

2014

## RESEARCH INTERESTS

*Methods:* Machine Learning, Natural Language Processing (NLP), Network Analysis, Causal Inference, Inferential Statistics, Computational Social Science

*Substantive Topics:* Human Behavior, Communication, Activism on Digital Media

Public Policy Diffusion, Environmental Policy

## LANGUAGES

Python, R, SQL

## PUBLICATIONS

2023

**Ishita Gopal**, and Bruce Desmarais. “The network science of public policy diffusion” *Forthcoming in the Oxford Handbook of Methodological Pluralism*.

2021

Kevin Munger, **Ishita Gopal**, Jonathan Nagler, and Joshua Tucker. 2021. “Accessibility and Generalizability: Are Digital Media Effects Moderated by Age or Digital Literacy?” *Research Politics*, 8(2).

2021

Taegyeon Kim, Nitheesha Nakka, **Ishita Gopal**, Bruce Desmarais, Abigail Mancinelli, Jeffrey J. Harden, Hyein Ko, and Frederick Boehmke. 2021. “Attention to the COVID-19 pandemic on Twitter: Partisan differences among U.S. state legislators” *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 47: 1023-1041.

## UNDER REVIEW

**Ishita Gopal**, Taegyeon Kim, Nitheesha Nakka, Frederick J. Boehmke, Jeffrey J. Harden, and Bruce A. Desmarais. “The National Network of U.S. State Legislators on Twitter.”

**Ishita Gopal**. “Targeting and the Timing of Online Censorship: The Case of Venezuela.”

<b>WORKING PAPERS</b>	<b>Ishita Gopal.</b> “Digital Activism and Offline Repression: Telegram and Belarus.”	
	<b>Ishita Gopal</b> and Bruce Desmarais. “Legislative Support for Environmental Policy Innovation: An Experimental Test for Diffusion through a Cross-State Policy Network.”	
	<b>Ishita Gopal</b> and Joseph Wright. “Polarization and Democratic Backsliding.”	
	Frederick J. Boehmke, Bruce A. Desmarais, <b>Ishita Gopal</b> , Jeffrey J. Harden, Samuel Harper, Taegyeon Kim, Johabed Olvera Isaac Pollert. “COVID-19 Policy Diffusion and Legislative Twitter Connections.”	
<b>WORKING BOOK PROJECT</b>	Bruce A. Desmarais, <b>Ishita Gopal</b> , Jeffrey J. Harden, Frederick J. Boehmke. “Network Inference for Social Research.”	
<b>CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS</b>	“Detecting Coverage of Social Unrest on Telegram.” <i>Presented at</i> Political Methodology (PolMeth), 2021; Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA), 2022.	
	“The Network Science of Public Policy.” <i>Presented at</i> American Political Science Association (APSA), 2021.	
	“Modeling State Legislator Networks on Twitter.” <i>Presented at</i> Political Networks (PolNet), 2021; Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS), 2021; Political Methodology Europe (PolMeth EU), 2021.	
	“Targeting and the Timing of Online Censorship: The Case of Venezuela.” <i>Presented at</i> Politics and Computational Social Science (PaCSS) and Political Networks (PolNet) Joint Conference, 2020; Political Methodology (PolMeth), 2020.	
<b>AWARDS &amp; FELLOWSHIPS</b>	<b>Princeton University</b>	
	Princeton Dissertation Scholars Program (\$6000)	2022-23
	<b>Pennsylvania State University</b>	
	C-SoDA Predoctoral Fellowship	2021-22
	Program in Comparative Politics Fellowship	Spring 2021, Fall 2022
	Summer Graduate Research Award (\$4000)	Summer 2020
	Best Political Science Master’s Essay Award (\$1000)	2020
<b>INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>University of Warwick</b>	
	Winner of Nudgeathon, <a href="http://bit.ly/10TkLsg">http://bit.ly/10TkLsg</a>	2015
	Teaching Assistant, Advanced Methods for Text as Data	Fall 2019
<b>SERVICE</b>	Reviewer for journals: PLOS One and Journal of Quantitative Description	
<b>PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE</b>	<b>Data Science Intern</b>	
	<i>Aware HQ</i>	Summer 2022
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designed and deployed a classifier to detect credit cards on digital workspaces and help companies remove sensitive data from their platforms. Built the ML pipeline in AWS SageMaker.</li> </ul>	

- Used deep learning (EfficientNets) for transfer learning on hand labeled data. Defined performance metrics and achieved an AUC of 0.90.
- Sourced the data using Bings API, wrote scripts to interact with S3 and automated data preprocessing and storage tasks.

### **Doctoral Researcher Researcher**

2018 - Present

*Center for Social Data Analytics (C-SoDA), Penn State*

- Studying political activism in the context of social media and digital technologies. Using computational methods for social research, with a focus on Natural Language Processing (NLP), network analysis and experiments to understand political communication and behavior.

### **The Energy & Resources Institute, New Delhi**

*Research Associate - Modelling and Scenario Building Group*

2016 - 2018

- I used stacking and scenario building exercises to study the impact of varying levels of 'new' renewable energy adoption on future fossil fuel consumption in India. I was presented this work at the International Summer School on Energy Systems, Germany 2017.
- I used time series methods for demand side forecasting of electricity consumption across states and within agriculture, industrial and residential sectors in India for the Energy Transmissions Commission (ETC), India - which provides policy assessment support for the Government of India's de-carbonation goals.

## **REFEREES**

### **Dr. Bruce A. Desmarais**

Professor,  
Department of Political Science,  
Pennsylvania State University.  
[bdesmarais@psu.edu](mailto:bdesmarais@psu.edu)

### **Dr. Joseph Wright**

Professor,  
Department of Political Science,  
Pennsylvania State University.  
[jgw12@psu.edu](mailto:jgw12@psu.edu)

### **Dr. Kevin Munger**

Assistant Professor,  
Department of Political Science,  
Pennsylvania State University.  
[kmm7999@psu.edu](mailto:kmm7999@psu.edu)

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