

Sahar Abdelnabi

PhD Candidate

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🏠 <https://s-abdelnabi.github.io/>

RESEARCH FOCUS

I am interested in the broad intersection of machine learning with security, safety, and sociopolitical aspects. This includes the following areas: 1) Understanding and mitigating the failure modes of machine learning models, their biases, and their misuse scenarios. 2) How machine learning models could amplify or help counter existing societal and safety problems (e.g., misinformation, biases, and stereotypes). 3) Emergent challenges posed by new foundation and large language models.

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Computer Science

2019 - ongoing

CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security, Germany
Advisor: Prof. Dr. Mario Fritz

M.Sc. in Computer Science

2017 - 2019

Saarland University, Germany
GPA: 1.2/1.0 (Thesis GPA: 1.0)
Advisor: Prof. Dr. Mario Fritz

M.Sc. in Computer and System Engineering

2013 - 2017

Ain Shams University, Egypt
GPA: 3.7/4.0

B.Sc. in Computer and System Engineering

2008 - 2013

Ain Shams University, Egypt

Miscellaneous

[CISPA Summer School on Trustworthy AI](#), 2022
[ELLIS Doctoral Symposium on “AI for Good”](#), 2022

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

PhD Candidate

2019 - ongoing

CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security, Germany

Research Assistant

2017 - 2019

Max Planck Institute for Informatics, Germany
Advised by Prof. Dr. Andreas Bulling

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

Quality Assurance Engineer

2013 - 2017

Mentor Graphics (Currently, Siemens EDA), Egypt

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant

2020- 2023

Saarland University, Germany
Classes: “Opportunities and Risks of Large Language Models and Foundation Models” seminar,
“Machine Learning in Cybersecurity”, “High-level Computer Vision”

Tutor

2017- 2019

Saarland University, Germany
Classes: “Image Processing and Computer Vision”, “Neural Networks Implementation and Applications”,
“Interactive Systems”

PUBLICATIONS

- [1] Kai Greshake*, **Sahar Abdelnabi***, Shailesh Mishra, Christoph Endres, Thorsten Holz, and Mario Fritz. “Not what you’ve signed up for: Compromising Real-World LLM-Integrated Applications with Indirect Prompt Injection”. In: *Neural Conversational AI Workshop, in conjunction with ICML*. *: Equal contribution. 2023.
- [2] **Sahar Abdelnabi** and Mario Fritz. “Fact-Saboteurs: A Taxonomy of Evidence Manipulation Attacks against Fact-Verification Systems”. In: *USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security)*. 2023.
- [3] Protik Bose Pranto, Waqar Hassan Khan, **Sahar Abdelnabi**, Rebecca Weil, Mario Fritz, and Rakibul Hasan. “Poster: Understanding the Effect of Private Data in Disinformation Propagation”. In: *the 19th Symposium on Usable Privacy and Security (SOUPS) Poster Session*. 2023.
- [4] **Sahar Abdelnabi**, Rakibul Hasan, and Mario Fritz. “Open-Domain, Content-based, Multi-modal Fact-checking of Out-of-Context Images via Online Resources”. In: *Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR)*. 2022.
- [5] **Sahar Abdelnabi** and Mario Fritz. “Adversarial Watermarking Transformer: Towards Tracing Text Provenance with Data Hiding”. In: *IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (S&P)*. 2021.
- [6] Ning Yu, Vladislav Skripniuk, **Sahar Abdelnabi**, and Mario Fritz. “Artificial fingerprinting for generative models: Rooting deepfake attribution in training data”. In: *International Conference on Computer Vision (ICCV)*. **Oral presentation**. 2021.
- [7] **Sahar Abdelnabi** and Mario Fritz. “What’s in the box: Deflecting Adversarial Attacks by Randomly Deploying Adversarially-Disjoint Models”. In: *the 8th ACM Workshop on Moving Target Defense, in conjunction with CCS*. 2021.
- [8] **Sahar Abdelnabi**, Katharina Krombholz, and Mario Fritz. “Visualphishnet: Zero-day phishing website detection by visual similarity”. In: *ACM Conference on Computer and Communications Security (CCS)*. 2020.
- [9] **Sahar Abdelnabi**, Michael Xuelin Huang, and Andreas Bulling. “Towards High-Frequency SSVEP-Based Target Discrimination with an Extended Alphanumeric Keyboard”. In: *IEEE International Conference on Systems, Man and Cybernetics (SMC)*. 2019.
- [10] **Sahar Abdelnabi**, Seif Eldawlatly, and Mahmoud I Khalil. “Epileptic seizure prediction using zero-crossings analysis of EEG wavelet detail coefficients”. In: *IEEE conference on Computational Intelligence in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (CIBCB)*. 2016.

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Reviewing

PC member of CCS’23 AISec Workshop, NeurIPS’23, ICML’23 Neural Conversational AI Workshop, ICCV’23, CVPR’23, ECCV’22, CVPR’22, IEEE TPAMI (2022, 2021), ICLR’21 Workshop on “Synthetic Data Generation – Quality, Privacy, Bias”

Talks

Compromising LLMs: The Advent of AI Malware

Black Hat USA, to happen in August 2023

Panel: Security of Generative AI and Generative AI in Security

Invited panelists at DIMVA, 2023

Not what you’ve signed up for: Investigating the Security of LLM-Integrated Applications

Privacy and Security in ML Seminars, 2023

How to Improve Automated Fact-Checking

Max Planck Institute for Software Systems, 2022

Multi-modal Fact-checking: Out-of-Context Images and How to Catch Them

UCL Information Security seminars, 2022

AWARDS

Academic Research Grant for Google Cloud research credits, 2023

Academic Research Grant for Google Cloud research credits, 2021

Saarland University scholarship for international students (DAAD STIBET III scholarship grant), 2019

IEEE Computational Intelligence Society (CIS) Outstanding Student-Paper Travel Grant for CIBCB, 2016

MEDIA AND PRESS COVERAGE

Podcasts and documentaries

ChatGPT: What happens when the AI takes over?
Y-Kollektiv Documentary, 2023

A dark side to LLMs
CyberWire Podcast, 2023

Deepfakes and Fingerprinting
CISPA tl;dr Podcast, 2022

Articles

Our work on “indirect prompt injection” has been featured in [Vice](#), [Wired](#), [Zeit](#), [MIT Technology Review](#), and others.

LANGUAGES

English (Bilingual)
German (Intermediate)
Colloquial Egyptian (Mother Tongue)

REFEREES

Prof. Dr. Mario Fritz
Faculty, CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security. Professor, Saarland University
✉ fritz@cispa.de

Prof. Dr. Thorsten Holz
Faculty, CISPA Helmholtz Center for Information Security
✉ holz@cispa.de