

# Allison McDonald

---

## Contact

**Email:** amcdon@umich.edu

**Website:** <https://amcdon.com>

## Research Interests

My research interests lie in the intersection of technology and society, particularly in the areas of privacy and security. I am interested in how technology and tech policy exacerbate marginalization and impact digital safety.

**Keywords:** Security; Privacy; Human-Computer Interaction; Digital Inequity

## Education

**University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor, MI 2016 – 2022 (expected)

*PhD, Computer Science*

*Advisors:* J. Alex Halderman & Florian Schaub

*Dissertation Title:* Privacy & Security for Marginalized Communities

**Europa-Universität Viadrina**, Frankfurt (Oder), Germany 2015 – 2016

As part of the Roger M. Jones fellowship, I spent one year taking courses in an International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law LLM program.

**University of Michigan**, Ann Arbor, MI 2010 – 2015

*Bachelor of Science in Engineering, Computer Science*

*Bachelor of Science, German*

**Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg**, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany 2012 – 2013

Academic Year in Freiburg study abroad participant.

## Affiliations

**Center on Privacy and Technology at Georgetown Law**, Washington, DC August 2019 – present

*Research Fellow*

**Center for Ethics, Society, and Computing (ESC)**, Ann Arbor, MI September 2021 – present

*ESC Researcher*

## Awards & Honors

**Distinguished Paper Award**, 2021

*USENIX Security Symposium*

Awarded for: “It’s stressful having all these phones”: Investigating Sex Workers’ Safety Goals, Risks, and Practices Online

**Service Award for Excellence in Climate, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**, 2020

This award recognizes the recipients’ commitment and action in working to improve the climate of the Computer Science & Engineering division.

**Best Student Paper Award**, 2020

*IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy*

Awarded for: Can Voters Detect Malicious Manipulation of Ballot Marking Devices?

# Allison McDonald

---

## **Best Paper Award, 2018**

*ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems*

Awarded for: Keeping a Low Profile?: Technology, Risk and Privacy among Undocumented Immigrants

## **Funding**

### **Facebook Fellowship, 2019 – 2021**

Provides two years of funding to computer science doctoral students conducting innovative and relevant research.

### **Rackham Merit Fellowship, 2016**

Provides funding for two years to selected incoming PhD students at U-M.

### **Roger M. Jones Fellowship, 2015**

Provides one year of tuition and living expenses to one graduating engineer at the University of Michigan in order to deepen an engineering education through studying the humanities at a European university.

### **Baden-Württemberg Stipendium, 2012**

Awarded for academic merit to fund international students enrolled in universities in Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

## **Publications**

### **Peer-Reviewed Conference Publications**

#### **“It’s stressful having all these phones”: Investigating Sex Workers’ Safety Goals, Risks, and Practices Online**

Allison McDonald, Catherine Barwulor, Michelle L. Mazurek, Florian Schaub, Elissa M. Redmiles

*30th USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security)*, August 2021

★ Distinguished Paper Award

#### **The Role of Computer Security Customer Support in Helping Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence**

Yixin Zou, Allison McDonald, Julia Narakornpichit, Nicola Dell, Thomas Ristenpart, Kevin Roundy, Florian Schaub, Acar Tamersoy

*30th USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security)*, August 2021

#### **The Annoying, the Disturbing, and the Weird: Challenges with Phone Numbers as Identifiers and Phone Number Recycling**

Allison McDonald, Carlo Sugatan, Tamy Guberek, Florian Schaub

*ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*, May 2021

#### **“Disadvantaged in the American-dominated internet”: Sex, Work, and Technology**

Catherine Barwulor, Allison McDonald, Eszter Hargittai, Elissa M. Redmiles

*ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*, May 2021

#### **Can Voters Detect Malicious Manipulation of Ballot Marking Devices?**

Matthew Bernhard, Allison McDonald, Henry Meng, Jensen Hwa, Nakul Bajaj, Kevin Chang, J. Alex Halderman

*41st IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy (Oakland)*, May 2020

★ Best Student Paper Award

#### **403 Forbidden: A Global View of CDN Geoblocking**

Allison McDonald, Matt Bernhard, Luke Valenta, Benjamin VanderSloot, Will Scott, Nick Sullivan, J. Alex Halderman, Roya Ensafi

*ACM Internet Measurement Conference (IMC)*, October 2018

#### **Quack: Scalable Remote Measurement of Application-Layer Censorship**

Benjamin VanderSloot, Allison McDonald, Will Scott, J. Alex Halderman, Roya Ensafi

*27th USENIX Security Symposium (USENIX Security)*, August 2018

# Allison McDonald

---

## **Keeping a Low Profile? Technology, Risk and Privacy among Undocumented Immigrants**

Tamy Guberek, [Allison McDonald](#), Sylvia Simioni, Abraham H. Mhaidli, Kentaro Toyama, Florian Schaub  
*ACM CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI)*, April 2018

★ Best Paper Award

## **Refereed Workshop Publications**

### **Designing Digital Literacy and Security Trainings for Latinx Immigrants in the United States**

Sylvia Simioni, Allan Martell, [Allison McDonald](#), Abraham H. Mhaidli, Tamy Guberek, Kentaro Toyama, and Florian Schaub

*3rd SOUPS Workshop on Inclusive Privacy and Security (WIPS'18)*, August 2018.

### **An ISP-Scale Deployment of TapDance**

Sergey Frolov, Fred Douglas, Will Scott, [Allison McDonald](#), Benjamin VanderSloot, Rod Hynes, Adam Kruger, Michalis Kallitsis, David G. Robinson, Nikita Borisov, J. A. Halderman, and Eric Wustrow

*Proc. 7th USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI'17)*, August 2017

## **Reports**

### **APIs and Your Privacy**

N. Cameron Russell, Florian Schaub, [Allison McDonald](#), William Sierra-Rocafort  
February 14, 2019, Available on SSRN ([link](#))

## **Other Publications**

### **The web really isn't worldwide — every country has different access**

Allison McDonald

December 8, 2018, *The Conversation* ([link](#))

## **Talks**

### **Investigating Sex Workers' Safety Goals, Risks, and Practices Online**

Guest lecture in the Cornell Security Seminar. November 23, 2021.

### **Investigating Sex Workers' Safety Goals, Risks, and Practices Online**

Guest lecture in the Information Security Group at Royal Holloway University of London. October 21, 2021.

### **Investigating Sex Workers' Safety Goals, Risks, and Practices Online**

Guest lecture in Privacy Engineering course, Northeastern University. August 18, 2021.

### **Spyware and Digital Intimate Partner Abuse**

Invited speaker (w/ Yixin Zou) for the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center, University of Michigan. March 2021.

### **Uncertain Concern: How Undocumented Immigrants in the US Navigate Technology**

Guest lecture in "Information Privacy, Surveillance and Exposure," University of Michigan. February 11, 2020.

### **Keeping a Low Profile?: Technology, Risk and Privacy among Undocumented Immigrants**

Invited speaker at SUMIT 2018 Cyber Security Conference, Ann Arbor, USA. October 25, 2018.

### **Uncertain Concern: How Undocumented Immigrants in the US Navigate Technology**

34th Chaos Communications Congress (34C3), Leipzig, Germany. December 30, 2017.

# Allison McDonald

---

## Teaching

### **EECS 388: Introduction to Computer Security**

University of Michigan

*Graduate Student Instructor*

Fall 2018, Winter 2019

### **EECS 388: Introduction to Computer Security**

University of Michigan

*Guest Lecturer on Control Flow Hijacking*

Winter 2019, Fall 2019

### **Online Self-Defense: How to protect your privacy, identity and security when using technology**

Fall 2020

Co-instructor for a digital security class through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Michigan, an organization providing education for adult learners ages 50+.

### **Community Computer Security Workshops**

2016 – present

I design and lead computer security workshops, primarily for journalists, lawyers, activists, and community groups.

- Saline Area Senior Center, November 2021
- Knight-Wallace Fellows, February 2020
- Latinx community workshops, July 2018
- Latinx community workshops, November 2017
- Knight-Wallace Fellows, October & November 2017
- Clean Water Action, May 2017
- Knight-Wallace Fellows, April 2017
- Privacy and Technology Law Association, January 2017
- International Human Rights Law Master's Program, April 2016

## Work Experience

### **Center on Privacy and Technology at Georgetown Law, Washington, DC**

*Summer Fellow*

May 2019 – August 2019

### **Expedia, Inc., Bellevue, WA**

*Software Intern*

May 2014 – August 2014

### **University of Michigan, College of Engineering, Ann Arbor, MI**

*Computing Consultant*

January 2011 – May 2015

## Service

### **Program Committee Member**

6th Workshop on Technology and Consumer Protection (ConPro)

2022

### **External Reviewer**

ACM Conference on Human Factors in Computing System (CHI)

2018, 2020, 2021

Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (CSCW)

2020, 2021

Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies (PETS)

2020, 2021

### **Dissonance Event Series**

*Organizing Member*

September 2016 – present

Dissonance explores topics of security, privacy, law, and ethics by bringing together speakers from many disciplines and facilitating challenging discussions.

# Allison McDonald

---

## **ECSEL+**

*Co-Chair*

June 2019 – May 2021

*Treasurer*

June 2018 – May 2019

ECSEL+ is a group to support gender minorities in the Computer Science graduate program at the University of Michigan.

## **Computer Science Graduate Student Organization**

*Vice President and Treasurer*

May 2017 – May 2018

CSEG is the graduate student organization representing graduate computer science students at the University of Michigan.

## **LSWE-SUCCESS**

2015

Participated in planning a leadership camp in Kakata, Liberia. The camp was organized as a cooperation between the Graduate Society of Women Engineers at the University of Michigan and Liberian women in engineering and science higher education programs.