

Data Transparency Lab Call For Proposals

2016

The Data Transparency Lab is a collaborative effort between universities, businesses and institutions to support research in tools, data, and methodologies for shedding light on the use of personal data by online services, and to empower users to be in control of their personal data online. In order to support research in these areas, DTL will award 6-8 research grants to academic institutions worldwide. Such grants come in the form of a gross amount sum of 50,000 Euro that will awarded to successful applicants for pursuing research that will lead to the development of software tools for the following topics:

Topics

Privacy-related topics:

- Detection with quantification and attribution of tracking, including advanced fingerprinting methods
- Detection with quantification and attribution of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) leakage
- Detection with quantification and attribution of online behavioral targeting on advertising, search, recommendation, etc.
- Detection with quantification and attribution of location tracking
- Detection with quantification and attribution of cross device/platform tracking
- Software for comparing objectively the privacy leakage or transparency-related outcomes of other tools developed in the context of DTL or independently

Reverse engineering efforts for transparency:

- Reverse engineering advertisement placement, recommendation, etc.
- Reverse engineering online pricing (e-commerce, spot/surge pricing for cloud, transportation, accommodation and other services)
- Transparent-by-design ways to using data that protects privacy
- HCI challenges in demonstrating transparency/privacy results to users

Discrimination-related topics:

- Detection of geoblocking in e-commerce, content distribution service, etc.
- Impact of algorithmic personalization, algorithmic discrimination, personal filter-bubbles, & societal polarization, etc

The grants are aimed towards supporting fully or partly the work of a Principal Investigator (PI) and at least one PhD student or postdoc for a time duration of approximately a year.

Submitted proposal need to clearly describe:

- What will the produced software tool do?
- Who will benefit from using it (end user, regulators, data protection authorities, privacy / anti-discrimination activists)?
- What is the intended plan for recruiting users?
- What is the novelty & technical excellence of the proposal?
- Justify the technical expertise of the applicants in the area.

Successful applicants are expected to present their results in the annual DTL Conference, make their software available online (by the end of 12 months counting from the reception of the grant, at the latest), and acknowledge the funding source. Reporting obligations will be minimal and successful applicants will be eligible to apply for additional follow up funding to further curate their tool.

A list of awardees will be made public on DTL websites and the Principal PI will receive notification through the email address declared in the proposal. Note: If awarded a grant, a project abstract/overview proposal may be published on DTL websites, unless applicants request the contrary.

Program Committee

The following committee of experts will evaluate applications:

Committee Chairs	
Balachander Krishnamurthy	<i>AT&T Labs -- Research</i>
Nikolaos Laoutaris	<i>Telefonica Research</i>
Committee Members	
Ernst Biersack	<i>Eurecom</i>
Jeff Brueggeman	<i>AT&T</i>
John W. Byers	<i>Boston University</i>
Claude Castelluccia	<i>INRIA</i>
Augustin Chaintreau	<i>Columbia University</i>
David Choffnes	<i>Northeastern University</i>
Daniel Coloma	<i>Telefónica</i>
Emiliano de Cristofaro	<i>UCL</i>
Josep Domingo-Ferrer	<i>Universitat Rovira i Virgili</i>
Krishna Gummadi	<i>Max-Planck Institute for Software Systems</i>
Tristan Henderson	<i>University St. Andrews</i>
Marco Melia	<i>Politecnico di Torino</i>
Ionel Naftanalia	<i>IAB Europe</i>
Nick Nikiforakis	<i>Stony Brook University</i>
Chris Payne	<i>World Federation of Advertisers</i>
Chris Riley	<i>Mozilla</i>
Vincent Toubiana (<i>tentative</i>)	<i>CNIL - Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés</i>
Sara Watson	<i>Tow Center and Berkman Center</i>

Important dates for the submission/evaluation process are provided below:

- Call for proposals opening date: March 15th, 2016.
- Proposal Submission deadline: Apr 30th, 2016 (11:59 pm), Madrid (CEST) time.
- Notification of grants awarded: Early June 2016.

The application process must include:

-- A main description of up to 3 pages (9pt font) explaining succinctly the main idea, its relevance to DTL, what will be produced and the main innovation with respect to current state of the art in the area.

-- CV of Principal Investigator and main student (2 pages each).

Both documents should be submitted as a single PDF file along with the information of the applicants at the submission site of DTL at: <https://dtlresearch.tid.es/dtl2016>

More details about the submission and evaluation process can be found in the DTL Award Grants Handbook (<http://datatransparencylab.org/docs/handbook2016.pdf>), or contacting DTL at: grants@datatransparencylab.org