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As an applied researcher with deep experience designing, testing, and deploying evidence-based solutions to complex social problems, I am an ideal candidate to serve as Staff Researcher at New_Public. I have expertise managing highly-collaborative applied research projects, including complex online experiments, large-scale RCT-evaluations, and long-term data collection projects using webscraping and cutting-edge machine learning and AI. This includes six years of experience managing a team of data scientists and engineers and ten years of experience with research and statistical computing.

While I do not have direct experience with user experience research, I am well equipped to help New_Public leverage the fracturing social media environment to improve the health of U.S. democracy. I have worked closely with civil society organizations and policymakers to co-design research and translate research into digital tools and programs to promote democracy, citizen engagement, and social cohesion. This required establishing long-term collaborations with civil society and media partners and using behavioral science research on civic engagement and social cohesion to drive behavior change.

As a post-doctoral researcher, I co-founded a high-profile project leveraging recent advances in big data and machine learning to forecast political instability for a public-facing early warning system. Managing a team of data scientists, engineers, and PhD students, I led the construction of a research infrastructure to continually update a large, highly multilingual media corpus and use fine-tuned transformer models to extract information from text. My lab used this data to publish more than a dozen commissioned policy reports, develop public-facing data dashboards averaging 150 hours of monthly active usage time, and attracted 1,200 unique users from 73 countries over a 10 month period, with more than 800 policymakers civil society groups signing up to receive our monthly reports.

The success of this project led to my promotion to the political science faculty at University of Pennsylvania as a Research Assistant Professor, where I manage three full-time data scientists, six pre-doctoral fellows, multiple affiliated faculty and PhD students, and a large pool of undergraduates. Since moving to UPenn in 2022, my research has received nearly \$3.5 million in funding from private foundations and federal agencies.

I also have 10 years of experience with survey research and statistical computing tools and strong knowledge of research design, network analysis, and machine learning. This includes a deep familiarity with randomized experiments (including complex online experiments and RCTs), observational causal inference (including difference-in-differences and synthetic control), and machine learning (including LLMs and forecasting).

I have conducted applied research that directly informed policy decisions. Working with the US Mission to Cambodia, I designed an RCT evaluation of a major program to improve the financial capacity of non-profits working as U.S. government partners. The evaluation provided rigorous evidence that the program was failing to accomplish it's goals and resulted in program's cancellation. In another project, I worked with the Agency for International Development to design a conjoint survey experiment answering important questions about the strategic behavior of non-profits receiving U.S. support to work in highly repressive countries. The findings informed the agency's

approach to soliciting grant proposals from local partners. In Ethiopia, I identified and recruited partners in Ethiopian civil society to co-design and rigorously evaluate an intervention to increase civic engagement and social cohesion in highly polarized settings. This resulted in a highly effective intervention that our partners are working to scale across the country.

As an academic, my research has focused on helping to build democracy and civil society in developing countries. Given the threats facing U.S. democracy, I am eager to work with an organization encouraging pluralism and democratic engagement at home. New_Public provides an incredible opportunity to contribute by helping local communities across America create more flourishing digital spaces. The ongoing fracturing of social media provides a tremendous opportunity to reimagine online communities and engineer networks that can build rather than erode societal trust. At New_Public, I hope to drive research that can understand social media fracturing and design products that build community.