

Call for Evidence: Technologies for spreading and detecting misinformation

As part of a project investigating the ways in which technologies are shaping the information environment, the Royal Society has launched a review of the role of digital technology in spreading and detecting misinformation. To contribute to this review the Society is inviting written submissions that outline the current and near-term role of technology in creating, propagating and detecting misinformation. This will be used to identify key themes to support the development of further project activities.

It is not necessary to answer all questions. For the purposes of this set of questions, we take misinformation to be a general category, of which disinformation is the specific subset where misinformation is intentionally shared. Specific examples or case studies are especially welcome.

Propagation and impacts of misinformation

Q1. What impact have digital technologies had on patterns of information consumption? What evidence exists on their wider social impact?

Q2. How do digital technologies contribute to the spread of misinformation?

Q3. What tools exist to create synthetic text, audio or visual media, and what are the likely near-term future developments of these technologies?

Detection and tracing of misinformation

Q4. Which technologies can currently be used to identify or trace misinformation? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these technologies?

Q5. What technological advancements in the next ten years could improve the ability to identify or trace misinformation?

Q6. What role could these technologies play in building a trustworthy information environment?

Q7. Are there any current regulatory or policy barriers to the successful development or deployment of detection technologies?

Please email responses to science.policy@royalsociety.org by 14 August 2020.