
Call for Proposals: Special Issue on Digital Intersectionality and Marginalization in the Majority World

1 Introduction and Rationale

Trust & Safety (T&S) practices have largely been shaped by Western perspectives, often failing to address the unique challenges and requirements of the Global Majority. The core principles guiding policy frameworks on major online platforms are rooted in Western notions of free speech and individual agency, which frequently do not align with the diverse experiences of the Majority World. There is a growing consensus within industry research and practice for the urgent need to incorporate Global Majority perspectives into T&S research, policy, and practice to foster a more equitable and efficient digital ecosystem. Recent initiatives, such as dedicated sessions at TrustCon, the Journal of Online Trust & Safety's pilot grant program, and the launch of the Global Majority Research Committee by the Trust and Safety Foundation Research Coalition, underscore this increasing recognition. This peer-reviewed special issue aims to add to these initiatives, offering nuanced and contextualized insights into trust and safety issues through academic papers that delve into specific Majority World regions and their unique and diverse contexts. Researchers focusing on trust and safety topics in the Majority World often encounter significant challenges, including data scarcity, safety concerns, methodological limitations, language barriers, and restricted access to global discourse forums. This special issue seeks to address these limitations in a small way while simultaneously elevating awareness of the complex and often contradictory challenges of content moderation in the Majority World. As the Journal of Online Trust & Safety (JOTS) is uniquely dedicated to the T&S field, it serves as the most impactful channel to achieve these critical aims.

2 Scope and Topics

We invite original research papers from researchers based in academia, industry, civil society, or government organizations. This special issue will also consider strong and relevant commentaries related to this topic. Submissions should explore trust and safety topics within the Majority World context. While not exhaustive, topics of interest include:

- **Digital Marginalization and Vulnerability:** Examination of how marginalized groups (e.g., women, LGBTQ+ individuals, indigenous communities) experience online harm.
- **Socioeconomic Inequality and Digital Divide:** The impact of socioeconomic disparities on technology access and online safety.
- **Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Online:** The role of culture and language in shaping online discourse and trust.
- **Government Regulation and Policy:** The effectiveness of government policies and regulations in addressing online harm in the Majority World.
- **Tech Industry Practices and Corporate Responsibility:** The role of technology companies in promoting online safety and mitigating harm in diverse global contexts.
- **Community-led Initiatives:** The efficacy of community-based approaches to online safety and content moderation.
- **Intersectional Approaches:** The intersection of gender, race, class, and other social identities in shaping online experiences and harms.
- **Emerging Technologies:** The implications of AI, VR, and other emerging technologies for online safety in the Majority World.
- **Postcolonialism and the Digital World:** How historical colonial power dynamics continue to shape digital inequality and representation.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Cross-cultural comparisons of trust and safety issues.
- **Case Studies:** In-depth case studies of specific online harms and their impact on individuals and communities in the Majority World.

This special issue embraces a multidisciplinary approach, welcoming submissions from diverse academic fields, as well as contributions from industry, civil society, and government.

3 Submission Guidelines

The Journal of Online Trust and Safety is an **open-access** publication with no submission fees, ensuring wide dissemination of research. We plan for this special issue to include:

- 1 editorial introduction

- 5-6 full research articles
- 2-3 commentaries

All submissions will undergo a rigorous **double-blind** peer-review process. Each submission will be reviewed by at least two reviewers. Reviewers will include the guest editors, along with additional reviewers with extensive experience in T&S-related academic and industry research.

3.1 Initial Abstract Submission Guidelines:

- Abstracts should be a maximum of **300 words**.
- **Positionality Statement:** Authors are required to include a positionality statement (max. **150 words**) with their submission. This statement should highlight their relevant expertise or lived experience with the Global Majority that informs their research. This helps provide context for the work and supports the special issue's goals of centering diverse perspectives.
- **Initial Submission Standards:** For the initial abstract submission, there are no specific bibliographic or formatting standards required for both article and commentary submissions.

3.2 Full Manuscript Submission Guidelines (Upon Abstract Acceptance):

- **Original Research Papers:** Manuscripts should be between 6,000–8,000 words (including references, footnotes, and appendices).
- **Commentaries (shorter format):** Manuscripts should be between 2,500–4,000 words (including references, footnotes, and appendices).
- **Originality:** Submissions must not have been previously published, nor be under consideration by another journal. If an explanation is needed for concurrent submission or prior publication (e.g., a highly revised version of a conference paper), please add a "Comments to the Editor" section during submission.
- **Ethical Review:** Authors acknowledge that if the research qualifies for ethics review by an institutional ethics review body (e.g., IRB), each author's institution has formally approved or exempted their study.
- **Revision and Resubmission:** Authors acknowledge that if they are invited to revise and resubmit their manuscript, they will be asked to resubmit the manuscript using a template that the journal will provide.
- **Pre-analysis Plan:** If the manuscript includes a pre-analysis plan, authors must include an anonymized version of the pre-analysis plan linked either in the manuscript or included in an appendix.

- **Artificial Intelligence Policy:** Authors acknowledge the journal's policy on artificial intelligence. The journal generally prohibits the use of AI-generated text and citations in articles, and the use of AI-generated code for analysis. Exceptions may be made when the article's primary subject is generative AI. In such cases, the use of AI must be explicitly disclosed. When in doubt, authors should disclose the use of AI.

4 Timeline

- **CFP Published Online:** July 15, 2025
- **Abstract Submissions Closed:** October 31, 2025
- **Abstract Acceptance Notification:** November 30, 2025
- **Full Manuscript Submissions Due:** February 28, 2026
- **Manuscript Review Completed:** March 31, 2026
- **Revised Manuscripts Due:** May 15, 2026
- **Final Notification:** June 1, 2026
- **Special Issue Publication:** July 30, 2026

4.1 Guest Editor Biographies

The guest editors are a diverse and intersectional group representing technology platforms, academia, and industry think tanks, united by a commitment to advocating for marginalized digital communities through inclusive and equitable ecosystem practices. They are affiliated with the Trust and Safety Foundation Research Coalition's Global Majority Research Committee.

Sujata Mukherjee is currently Senior Director of Trust & Safety Product Management at Upwork. She co-chairs the Global Majority Research Committee at Trust and Safety Foundation and has 20 years of experience building trusted product experiences, leading research and scaling Customer Experience functions at big tech organizations like Google, IBM and Genpact.

Mona Elswah, Ph.D is a Lecturer in Digital Media Governance at the University of Exeter, focusing on issues related to content moderation, digital repression, and algorithmic bias. Prior to this, she was also a Research Fellow at the Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT), where she examined content moderation of low-resource languages. She was also a Research Associate at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford, and was previously a Research Fellow in Human Rights and Technology at Harvard University's

Carr Center.

Professor Crystal Abidin is a digital anthropologist and ethnographer specializing in vernacular internet cultures, influencer cultures, social media pop cultures, and digital media in the Asia Pacific. She is Professor of Internet Studies and Founding Director of the Influencer Ethnography Research Lab (IERLab) and the TikTok Cultures Research Network (TCRN) at Curtin University.