# TWITTER DATA FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

# Social Science Research Institute

# Request for Proposals

Proposals are invited for pilot projects aimed at using Twitter data in social science research. The past decade has witnessed the skyrocketing growth of social media data, including social networking services (such as Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn), e-commerce sites, and other types of online interactions, all of which are rich sources of data. Of these sources, Twitter arguably offers one of the most rapidly growing and accessible Big Data sources. As such, Twitter data provide significant opportunities for social scientists to study social problems and advance social sciences.

The Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) seeks interdisciplinary Penn State teams to develop innovative research programs using Twitter data that address questions with a social science component and involve social scientists. In addition to a clear social science focus and an interdisciplinary team, SSRI seed funding prioritizes projects that provide the foundation for competitive proposals for external funding.

PIs and teams are encouraged to discuss their plans with SSRI’s Computational and Spatial Analysis (CSA) Core faculty and staff prior to submission. Direct inquiries to Guangqing Chi at [csa-info@psu.edu](mailto:csa-info@psu.edu).

# Eligibility

Penn State faculty members (tenure track, research faculty, clinical faculty) who hold an appointment at any Penn State location are eligible to submit a seed grant proposal as a Principal Investigator (PI) and/or to be part of an interdisciplinary research team. Community organizations, state agencies, and investigators from other institutions may be collaborators, but not PIs.

The following types of proposals will NOT be considered:

* Single-investigator proposals,
* Proposals that do not include a social scientist,
* Proposals that do not include a substantive social science component/question.

# Resources Available

# Teams are encouraged to use the Twitter resources and infrastructure available through SSRI’s CSA Core. The Core has collected geo-tagged tweets for the entire world since 2013 and has so far accumulated ~40 TB of data. The data can be used for a variety of research topics, including trajectory analysis (e.g., activity space, exposure, and accessibility to resources related to quality of life, such as health, education, and income), hot-spot analysis, sentiment analysis (e.g., mood), trend topic analysis (e.g., for or against a political figure or issue, cyberbullying), and social network analysis (e.g., influence of social ties, sentiment analysis, and dissemination patterns of events and information). Twitter data can also be used for enriching surveys and can be linked to contextual data and data collected by mobile or wearable devices.

**Timeline for Letters of Intent and Proposals**

October 8, 2018 Call for proposals released

November 5, 2018 Letters of Intent due by 5pm Eastern Time

December 17, 2018 Full proposals due by 5pm Eastern Time

February 1, 2019 Seed grant funding decisions announced

March 1, 2019 Funding available

**Submission Instructions**

Funding is available through this seed grant solicitation via the SSRI’s Level 1 and Level 2 mechanisms.

**Letters of Intent** (LOIs) for both Level 1 and Level 2 applications are required. Please complete all sections below and email the document as one PDF file to: ssri-seed-grant@psu.edu by November 5, 2018 at 5pm. LOIs must be single-spaced, in Times New Roman font size no smaller than 12-point type, left-aligned with one inch margins. LOIs should not exceed one page.

1. Title of Proposal
2. Names and affiliations for all investigators
3. Level of funding (Level 1 or Level 2) sought
4. 3–5 Descriptive Keywords
5. Specific aims
6. Overview of project activities

**Full proposal instructions** for Level 1 and Level 2 proposals are on the submission form.

**Review Criteria**

* Strong rationale for the project, including its innovation and potential impacts
* The project’s contribution to use of Twitter data to address human and social problems
* Well-articulated plan of activities
* Rigorous methodology
* Team composition, including investigators who range in seniority and experience, come from different disciplines and include social science representation
* Potential of the pilot research to lead to external funding

**Project Reports**

Investigators are expected to provide an annual project status update and a brief (one page) final report upon completing the project. These materials allow us to track and report outcomes as well as monitor the success of our seed grant program.

If changes are needed in the project team, description, design, or budget during the course of your projects, requests should be sent to ssri-seed-grant@psu.edu with the specific details of these changes.