

## Call for Papers

### Annual Conference of the Swiss Association of Communication and Media Research (SACM)

at Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, 20 and 21 April 2023

#### What Do We Pay Attention To? Digital Innovations in the Race for Attention

Attention is not everything, but without attention, everything is for nothing — at least in the social world. Attention is generally considered to be scarce and valuable, but at times it can also be undesirable, irksome, or even dangerous. Media directed the flow of attention even in the pre-digital era, but digitalisation has brought constant, rapid changes to strategies and the rules of play in the race for attention. Yesterday's winners may be tomorrow's losers. The 2023 SACM Annual Conference is dedicated to the question: "What Do We Pay Attention To?"

Three comments about this question: First, the question is intentionally posed in English because, unlike the German expression "Aufmerksamkeit schenken" (lit: "to give attention"), the English expression "to pay attention" refers to the economic nature of attention. Attention is a scarce resource that we wish to invest with careful consideration. Second, with the question of "what" (rather than "whom"), we emphasize the reality that communication is increasingly generated entirely by computers/artificial intelligence — at times without us even noticing. This development lends new relevance to attention research. Third, the "we" refers not only to the recipients, but also to us as communication scientists. Are we paying attention to the right things?

Against this backdrop, the term "digital innovation" is intended to include a broad spectrum of things. At first, "digital innovations" may bring to mind current IT trends, which not only draw a great deal of public attention, but which also redirect the flow of attention. This includes buzzwords such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, natural language processing, IoT software, distributed ledger technology, augmented reality, virtual reality (metaverse), and blockchain. However, a number of media practices ranging from TikTok videos to slow journalism may also be regarded as digital innovations. What all digital innovations have in common is that they generate new winners and losers in the race for attention.

Although a connection to the Call for Papers is not mandatory for conference submissions, the central question "What do we pay attention to" can provide a framework for dialogue within the diverse field of communication and media science. The question groups below provide some examples of related questions:

- *Journalism Research:* How can journalism continue to receive adequate attention in the future? How are digital innovations changing the profession? How do we report on digital innovations?
- *Media Education and Media Socialisation:* What are people, and especially adolescents, paying attention to? How are they coping with innovations (e.g. deepfakes, intelligent bots, AI-generated content)?
- *Media Policy, Media Structures and Media History:* How can and should media policy regulate digital innovations in the race for attention to ensure that democratic decision-making is upheld? How should media history classify current digital innovations?

- *Methods*: How can digital innovations be studied? Can digital innovations be used for content analysis? What are the best methods for using IoT software?
- *Organisational Communication*: How are digital innovations used in organisational communication? How are digital innovations, e.g. AI-generated texts and dialogues, changing media work?
- *Public, Reception, and Impact Research*: How do recipients react to digital innovations? What things do they pay attention to? And what are the effects?
- *Theory Formation and Theoretical Approaches*: How can the changing competition for attention be understood in terms of social theory? How is the field of communication science changing? How do AI-generated content and other innovations change our understanding of action, actor, or system theory? Which concepts in communication science need to be reconsidered?
- *Open Panel*: Contributions about current research without a thematic connection to the above topic.

Besides individual submissions, panel and specialist group proposals are also welcome. "Science Meets Practice" workshop proposals may also be submitted. The conference is intended for the community of experts in Switzerland and abroad. Submissions and presentations may be made in German, French, Italian or English. Visual aids (PowerPoint or similar) at the conference must be provided in one language other than the spoken language of the presentation to maintain accessibility for speakers of other languages. SACM membership is not required for submission or presentation.

Contributions may be submitted in three formats:

<b>Individual Submission</b>	<b>Panel, Expert Session</b>	<b>"Science Meets Practice" Workshops</b>
Extended abstract (2,000-4,000 characters incl. spaces, excl. works cited).  Short summary (500-1,000 characters).  Indicate relevant topic areas from the Call for Papers or the open panel (current research)	Description of panel (1,000 characters)  4-5 individual submissions (2,000-4,000 characters each) on a common theme.  Separate cover page for each panel with author information.	Abstract of workshop topic (1,000-2,000 characters).  Short summary of the individual submissions (500-1,000 characters each).  List of the presenters from research or applied media or design.  Name of a moderator for discussion during the workshop.
15-minute presentation (if accepted)	90-minute panel (if accepted)	45- to 90-minute workshop (if accepted)
Submit proposals at: <a href="https://www.hslu.ch/sgkm2023">https://www.hslu.ch/sgkm2023</a>		

Deadline for submissions: 20 November 2022

Results of review: 31 January 2023

### **Individual submission**

For individual submissions, we kindly ask that you write an extended abstract (length: 2,000-4,000 characters incl. spaces) about a 15-minute presentation. Indicate the subject area to which the contribution intends to make particularly strong reference. Please also submit a short abstract of your contribution (length: 500-1,000 characters) for the conference programme.

### **Panel, specialist group session**

The process for submitting a panel or specialist group session is identical: please write a panel proposal with four to five individual contributions for a 90-minute panel. The individual contributions should relate to a common panel topic. The description of the panel should not exceed 1,000 characters. Descriptions of 2,000-4,000 characters in length are also required for each individual contribution. Please complete a separate cover sheet for each panel containing all author details (a template is available on the conference website) to guarantee anonymity during the assessment process.

### **Assessment criteria for the review process**

Submissions for individual contributions, panels and specialist group sessions will be evaluated anonymously by at least two experts (peer review). All contact details must therefore be provided separately on a cover sheet. The provision of information which could allow conclusions to be drawn about the authors should also be avoided in the short extract.

The following assessment criteria apply: 1) Relevance of the topic, 2) reference to the conference topic, 3) theoretical foundation, 4) appropriateness of method/approach, 5) clarity of argumentation and 6) originality.

For panels: 7) Reference of individual contributions to a common topic.

### **Workshops «Science meets Practice»**

This workshop format should create a space within which direct exchanges can take place between communication and media researchers and media practitioners (e.g., journalists, PR professionals, spokespersons, bloggers, media managers).

If you would like to submit a workshop, please write a proposal that includes individual contributions from three to five people for a panel (45-90 minutes). The workshop topic should be outlined in an abstract (1,000-2,000 characters) that also includes those questions that are to be addressed by all participants as part of the workshop. For each individual contribution, a short abstract containing 500 to 1,000 characters and details of the participants from the worlds of science and media practice are required.

The submitted workshops will be selected according to a slightly adjusted procedure. The submitted proposals will be assessed with the help of a modified criteria list:

1) Relevance of the topic, 2) reference to the conference topic, 3) clear thematic link between the contributions from the field of media practice and communication and media research.

The workshop proposals will not be subjected to an anonymised peer review process and instead will be assessed by an organising committee. The workshop proposal should include the names of all contributors from the fields of science and media practice, including some keywords on their professional background. A presenter should also be specified for the discussion during the workshop.

The conference organising committee will, where necessary, also initiate its own workshops and contact the appropriate individuals for this purpose in a targeted manner. All contributions should be submitted via the submission link <https://www.hslu.ch/sgkm2023>

### **Best Paper Award funded by the Ulrich Saxer Foundation at the SACM Annual Conference 2023**

The aim of the prize is to promote the academic mid-level («Mittelbau») in communication and media research. The prize is awarded for a paper of outstanding quality ("Best Paper Award") that is submitted and presented at the SACM annual conference. A prerequisite for participation in the procedure is that the conference paper is submitted by a representative of the academic mid-level in first authorship. Professors may be co-authors of the paper (for further information see the regulations).

The formal criteria for participation are (translated extract from the regulations in German language):

- Candidates must present a paper of outstanding quality at the SACM annual conference.
- Candidates must belong to the academic mid-level. Persons who only hold a temporary professorship also belong to the mid-level.
- The prize can be awarded to an individual researcher as well as to a collective of researchers.
- All individual and collective contributions to the SACM annual conference, in which a representative of the academic mid-level is first author are automatically candidates for the selection procedure.
- The prize (including prize money) is awarded to the representatives of the academic mid-level. Professors who are involved in the submission of an excellent contribution are excluded from the prize money and are not allowed to mention the prize in their CV.

The complete regulations can be found on the SACM website under the menu item "Grants & Funding".

## Important information

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
Submission deadline:	20 November 2022
Information regarding review results:	31 January 2022
Publication of the conference programme:	17 February 2023
Online registration deadline:	6 April 2023
Get-together:	Evening of the 19 April 2023 with drinks reception
Annual conference:	20/21 April 2023

## Contact

Organising committee	Philipp Bachmann, Richard Moist, Olivia Rutishauser, Sonja Wüest
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