Influencer Regulations, Governance and Socio-cultural Issues in the Asia Pacific region
Special Issue of *Policy & Internet*
Co-edited by Crystal ABIDIN, Jian XU, Jonathon HUTCHINSON

Targeted CfP for papers on:
Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan

Influencer and micro-celebrity research has become a popular interdisciplinary research area across digital media studies and celebrity studies in the past few years, including a growing interest in the Global South (e.g. Abidin 2018, Abidin & Brown 2018, Hurley 2019, Hopkins 2019, Lukács 2020) and their growth on platforms outside of Silicon Valley (e.g. Guan 2020, Lin & De Kloet 2019, Song 2018). However, existing research in the field has still primarily focused on influencers and their types of labour (e.g. Abidin 2016, Duffy 2017, Duffy et al. 2021, Pham 2015, Raun 2018, Woodcock & Johnson 2019), their savvy around algorithms and machine learning (e.g. Bishop 2019, Bishop 2020, Carah & Dobson 2016, Cotter 2018), and various aspects of their follower relations (e.g. Berryman & Kavka 2017) and monetizing engagements (e.g. Gerhards 2019, Johnson & Woodcock 2019, Luvaas 2016, Zhang et al. 2019, Zou 2018), leaving the regulation and governance of influencers still an under-researched topic from the perspective of Social Science & Humanities (e.g. Chen et al. 2020, Cunningham & Craig 2019) considering socio-cultural issues. (For studies on Influencer governance from the perspective of Law, please see e.g. Goanta & Ranchordà 2020).

In this Special Issue, we consider the regulation and governance of influencers not only through the lens and framework of specific rules, laws, policies, and regulations that set norms on the practices of influencers, but also the broader social, cultural, moral, technical, industrial, and political factors and restrictions to which Influencers are subject in order to accumulate sustainable impact and income. Moreover, we understand the governance of influencers as a process wherein multiple stakeholders are involved in the influencer industry, including official regulatory bodies, digital platforms, influencers and their agencies, endorsed brands and fans, resolve conflicts over emerging problems to shape the practices, ethics, economy and culture of influencers. The need to examine these issues of regulation and governance is pertinent in the Asia-Pacific region considering that it presently contains the world's largest population of active social media users, the most vibrant and diverse digital economies and influencer cultures, as well as among the most dynamic and complicated internet regulations and policies.

The Special Issue advocates for a 'turn to regulation and governance' of influencer studies by taking influencers as a 'new subject' in the globally booming digital economy and culture. We are interested in papers that critically and subtly investigate various regulation and governing issues on influencers in the Asia-Pacific region, including but not limited to specific case studies of controversies, new enactments in regulation and law, concerns around advertorial disclosure and tax transparency, regulation and censorship of influencers' content creation, platform and/or state interventions into influencer management, influencer management systems, and various socio-cultural concerns on the regulation of topics pertaining to race & ethnicity, sex & sexuality, age & ageism, class & inclusivity, ability & accessibility, etc. The Special Issue will significantly

contribute to the growing field of Influencer Studies, especially in the Asia Pacific region. More broadly, it will also greatly contribute to the studies of internet regulations and governance, digital economy, digital culture and celebrity studies in the Asia Pacific and beyond.

Policy & Internet is one of the most prestigious journals in the field of internet and digital media studies, with a particular focus on the evolving relationship between the internet, digital technologies and public policy. It is an international multidisciplinary journal in a new and fragmented field. The potential audience for the Journal is therefore very wide. Please ensure that there is enough context to your argument that the paper can have value for people outside of your specific field or geographical region. Papers should be succinct, written in clear English, and closely and critically argued. A word count between 6,000-8,000 words is ideal. We are unlikely to accept papers that are mostly or entirely descriptive, or that lack depth, substance, critical assessment and clear contribution to the field. Papers in *Policy & Internet* are published Open Access. For further information, please see
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Expressions of interest via a 250-word abstract and 150-word bio for contributions on **Australia, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan** are invited by **09 August 2021** to A/Prof Crystal Abidin, Dr Jian Xu, and Dr Jonathon Hutchinson via email. The Editors will shortlist and respond to all contributors in the following week. Full papers are due in **mid-November 2021**.

Thank you.

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