



**Universität
Zürich** ^{UZH}

IKMZ - Department of Communication and Media Research

Postdoctoral Researcher (3 years) in Political Communication Research with a Focus on News Audience Research 80 %

Start of employment 1 September 2025 or 1 January 2026 at the latest, temporary

The Political Communication Division, led by Prof. Dr. Anne Schulz, at the Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ), University of Zurich is seeking to fill the position of a postdoctoral researcher within the SNSF-funded research project "Amidst Abundant Negativity. Studying Negative News, its Social and Political Effects, and Solutions for Sustainable Consumption Across Time and Across Countries".

The project investigates negativity in the news and how negative news impacts mental well-being and political learning while exploring innovative solutions to keep audiences informed without compromising their mental health. Through a comprehensive approach, our team examines i) historical trends in news negativity across multiple countries (using novel approaches to computational text analysis), studies ii) the trade-offs between emotional well-being and political engagement (via web tracking and longitudinal surveys), and iii) delves into newsroom practices (qualitative interviews). Ultimately, our research iv) examines possible solutions to the discussed problems (using experimental designs).

Your responsibilities

Join our team as a postdoctoral researcher to co-lead key components of the project. Your role will involve:

- Developing the conceptual framework and designing data collection instruments, along with conducting data analysis, specifically:

i. Developing a computational text analysis tool to gauge negativity in the news

ii. Conducting a longitudinal survey study combined with web tracking to understand the effects of exposure to negative news on political knowledge, well-being and future news use/avoidance.

- Coordinating and collaborating closely with team members and project partners
- Leading efforts in producing publications and representing the project at conferences
- Facilitating research transfer
- Providing support for project-related management and administrative tasks

Your profile

- Educational Background: A strong doctoral degree (or near completion) in communication science or a related field (e.g., political science, psychology, social computing).
- Research Skills: Proficiency in computational text analysis methods, including large language models, and experience or interest in digital tracking. Strong programming abilities in R, paired with analytical skills and a track record of independent, internationally visible research.
- Relevant Experience: Familiarity with research and public discourse surrounding news consumption, well-being, news avoidance, and political knowledge.
- Motivation: A genuine enthusiasm for working on the project's topics, that is, interest in understanding negativity in the news and its individual level effects on political knowledge, well-being and future news use or avoidance.
- Language Proficiency: Mandatory fluency in English for research and publication. Additional knowledge of a language relevant to the project's regional focus (especially German) is a plus.
- Willingness to relocate to Zurich and travel internationally to engage with relevant scientific communities.

Information on your application

Please submit the following application documents in a single PDF file:

- Letter of motivation incl. a description of your research profile and your fit for the project (1 page).
- Detailed academic CV.
- List of scientific publications and conference presentations.
- Name and contact information of two academic references who can speak to your academic qualifications.
- Copies of degrees and relevant transcripts.
- Links to two publications

Deadline for applications: 11 May 2025

Notification of shortlisted candidates: 31 May 2025

Interviews: June/July

Earliest start date: 1 September 2025

Latest start date: 1 January 2026

We encourage interested applicants to apply as soon as possible. While we have set deadlines, applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis, and the position will remain open until a suitable candidate is selected. If no suitable candidate is found in the initial review round, later applications may still be considered

What we offer

Our employees benefit from a wide range of attractive offers.

Location

IKMZ - Department of Communication and Media Research

Andreasstrasse 15, 8050 Zürich, Switzerland

Questions about the job

Anne Schulz

Prof. Dr.

Questions about the application procedure

Pinar Tidin-Alpan

Administration Assistant / HR Officer

Working at UZH

The University of Zurich, Switzerland's largest university, offers a range of attractive positions in various subject areas and professional fields. With around 10,000 employees and currently 12 professional apprenticeship streams the University offers an inspiring working environment on cutting-edge research and top-class education. Put your talent and skills to work with us. Find out more about UZH as an employer!

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