Social influences on political identity in individuals and populations. (Ref. SoSS-2020-020)

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Human behaviour is strongly influenced by socially transmitted knowledge, beliefs and values. The three classic transmission routes – horizontal (between age peers), vertical (parents to children) and oblique (experts to novices) – have distinct consequences: vertically and obliquely transmitted behaviours and attitudes persist for many generations; horizontally transmitted ones for only one. Social media, a new channel, adds immediacy and accessibility and thus transforms transmission. Political identities are in flux, with rapid changes and unforeseen events engaging some and bewildering others. This project will investigate how and to what extent transmission routes influence political identity. Using quantitative (surveys, experiments) and qualitative (focus groups, interviews) methods, and possibly computer models, the project may address, among others: transmission routes of different aspects of political identity (attitudes, beliefs, behaviour); effects of route on adoption and onward transmission; variation with age, gender, background etc. This project may inform social interventions, civic engagement, and social media regulations.

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When submitting your application for this project area, please select the option ‘Psychology, PhD’ from the drop-down list on the online application system.