

Simona Bisiani

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Areas of specialisation

Journalism and Media Studies; Computational Social Science; Text Mining

Current position

- 2022-now *Doctoral Researcher* in AI-Assisted Journalism, Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI, Centre for Vision, Speech, and Signal Processing, University of Surrey, UK
- 2023-now *Teaching Assistant*, "Topics in People-Centred AI", MSc in Artificial Intelligence, University of Surrey, UK. Module Leader: Dr Bahareh Heravi.

Work Experience

- 2024 School of Creative Arts and Industries, University of Canterbury, Kent, UK
Research Assistant, under Professor Agnes Gulyas. Written an industry report about salient findings from local media research with relevance to policymakers and industry stakeholders.
- 2024 Public Interest News Foundation, London, UK
Data Architect, Managing and maintaining the local media database architecture, integrating AI solutions, and developing automation scripts.
- 2023 School of Creative Arts and Industries, University of Canterbury, Kent, UK
Research Assistant, under Professor Agnes Gulyas. Collected local media articles and tested GIS tools to extract geolocations from the text.
- 2021-2023 DataJournalism.com, European Journalism Centre, Maastricht, The Netherlands
Lead Researcher, Created, analysed, visualised, and reported the findings of the world's largest data journalism survey, "The State of Data Journalism" survey, since the survey inception in 2021.
- 2022 Sheldon.studio, Bolzano, Italy
Data Journalist, for the projects: Disabled Data and EU Sanctions Tracker.

Grants, honours & awards

- 2022 Scholarship, Surrey Institute for People-Centred AI, University of Surrey
2022 Studentship, University of Surrey
2016 Best Student Award, Journalism BA Year 3, Robert Gordon University

Publications

JOURNAL ARTICLES

- 2023 Bisiani, S. and Heravi, B. (2023), "Uncovering the State of Local News Databases in the UK: Limitations and Impacts on Research", *Journalism and Media*, 4(4).
- 2023 Bisiani, S., Abellan, A., Arias Robles, F., and others (2023), "The Data Journalism Workforce: Demographics, Skills, Work Practices, and Challenges in the Aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic", *Journalism Practice*, 17(6).

TALKS

- 2024 Panel discussion with Philip Napoli, Agnes Gulyas, and Pedro Jeronimo organised by the European University Institute.
News deserts and local media state of play.
- 2023 Computation + Journalism Conference, ETH Zurich. [Link to talk](#)
Data Journalism Today: A Comparative Analysis of Two Consecutive Surveys.

INDUSTRY REPORTS

- 2024 Bisiani, S. and Mitchell, J. (2024). "UK Local News Map Report - April 2024". Public Interest News Foundation. London, UK

PAPERS IN PREPARATION

- Local Media in the UK. Industry Report. With Prof Agnes Gulyas.
- UKTwitNewsCor: A Dataset of UK Online Local News Articles for the Study of Local News Provision. With Dr Heravi and Prof Gulyas.
- PINF's Local News Directory: Leveraging Open-Source Intelligence and Semi-Automations to Improve the Sustainability of Public Interest News. With Joe Mitchell.
- LocalNewsMapper: A Novel Pipeline for Geographic Entity Recognition and Spatial Analysis in UK Media. With Dr Heravi and Prof Gulyas.
- Mapping the Decline: A Content-Driven Analysis of Local News Provision and Geographic Focus in UK Digital Media. With Dr Heravi and Prof Gulyas.
- A Conceptual Framework to Understand AI Artists' Usage of AI in Art-Making. With Dr Heravi.

Teaching

2023-now University of Surrey
Teaching Assistant, "Topics in People-Centred AI", MSc in Artificial Intelligence, University of Surrey. Module Leader: Dr Bahareh Heravi.

Reviewer

- MDPI, Journalism and Media
- Problemi dell'Informazione

Previous Education

2019-2021 MSc COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE, Linköping University
Thesis: *Blank spots, critical information needs and local journalism funding: measuring the impact of state financial support for local journalism on the critical information needs of citizens in Swedish journalistically fragile municipalities.*
Modules: Logic of Social Inquiry (Excellent), Statistics and Data Science I (Excellent), Behavioural Mechanisms in the Social Sciences (Very Good), Statistics and Data Science II (Excellent), Discrete Choice Modelling (Excellent), Social Network Analysis (Very Good), Agent-Based Modelling (Excellent), Digital Strategies for Social Science Research (Excellent), Inequality and Segregation: Theory and Measurement (Excellent), Visualizing Climate Change (Excellent), Computational Approaches to the Study of Cultural Markets and Social Dynamics (Excellent), Big Data: Social Processes and Ethical Issues (Excellent), Master's Thesis in Computational Social Science (Excellent)

2013-2017 BA(HONS) JOURNALISM, Robert Gordon University
Thesis: Impact of citizen journalism platforms on social capital in Aberdeen. Grade First Class (1:1).

Other Projects

2019-2021 Computational Social Journalism Blog
Co-founder, Blog focusing on the intersection of journalism and computational social science.

Media Appearances

2023 *Il Data Journalism in Italia e nel mondo con Simona Bisiani.* Interview on Data Journalism with Simona Bisiani. By DataNinja. Available on YouTube.

2021 *Webinar: Computational Social Science at Linköping University.* Webinar discussing computational social science. Available on YouTube.

Languages and Technical Skills

LANGUAGES

English (Fluent), Italian (Native), Swedish (Fluent)

PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES

R, Python, SQL, YAML, HTML, JSON

FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS

- Pandas, NumPy, SciPy, tidyverse, quanteda, scikitlearn (libraries)
- Ollama (Machine Learning)
- Jupyter Notebooks, Google Colab, Jupyter Lab, Positron, RStudio, Visual Studio Code, Excel, Google Sheets
- Tableau, Datawrapper, Flourish, ggplot2 (Data visualization)
- Git, GitHub (Version control)
- Slurm (HPC)