CALL FOR PAPERS FOR SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL
SOCIAL NETWORKS
ON
EMPIRICAL NETWORK DATA COLLECTION IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social network research, which encompasses Social Network Analysis (SNA), is rapidly gaining popularity across the Social Sciences and beyond – academics, practitioners, and policy-makers have taken great interest in the networked nature of societies and social processes. Whilst our (statistical) methods to analyse networks are improving steadily, acquiring quality network data that produces meaningful findings remains a challenge. Network data collection poses distinct issues related to ontology, reliability, and validity, to name but a few. Such data is also notoriously difficult to collect, entailing complex sampling strategies, network boundary definition issues, as well as navigating often difficult to access populations of interest. This component of social network research, data collection, has received much less scholarly attention than analysis, despite its pursuit by various researchers across a diverse range of contexts, employing innovative methodologies. This special issue focuses explicitly on data collection: theoretical considerations, ethical debates, best practices, context-specific challenges, and ways to overcome them – in and out of 'the field'.

The Special Issue on network data collection will present a series of articles exhibiting cutting-edge, inventive, and context-sensitive approaches to collecting social network data. Whilst presenting a breadth of methodological approaches employed in diverse contexts, featured articles will explore the challenges and practical insights garnered from the studies, proposing novel methodological advances in SNA data collection – theory and practice.

We invite proposals from interested applicants focusing on, but not limited to:

- Theory of network data collection including issues of ontology, reliability, and validity
- Low-technology and high-technology approaches to data collection
- Data collection in rural, underdeveloped, or conflict-affected areas
- Novel methods for web-based data collection
- Trials and tribulations of research design and data collection instruments
- Collecting network data on hard-to-reach or covert populations

Proposed submissions too oriented to SNA as distinct from data collection will not be accepted for inclusion in the Special Issue. However, papers focused on analysis involving, for instance, the reliability or validity of a particular type of data collection, certainly fall within the scope detailed above.

We are inviting prospective contributors to submit an expression of interest in the form of an extended abstract (500 words maximum) that should be received by **15 September 2018**.* Invitations to submit a full paper will be sent by **15 October 2018**. Invited contributors should be ready to submit a full paper by **7 January 2019**.

Expressions of interest should be sent to the guest editors, Prof. Garry Robins, Ass. Prof. David Bright, Dr Patrycja Stys, and Laurin Weissinger at networkdatacollection@outlook.com.

The papers will be reviewed following the normal editorial guidelines and procedures that apply to all papers submitted to *Social Networks* for publication.

* Contributors to the Workshop on Empirical Data Collection in Social Networks, held at Nuffield College, University of Oxord, 21-22 June 2018, do not need to resubmit extended abstracts.