

DCU Anti-Bullying Centre & DCU School of Law and Government

Children's online safety and protection of LGBTQ+ groups

Multi-disciplinary PhD (4 years, full time)

DCU Anti-Bullying Centre

DCU Anti-Bullying Centre (ABC) is a university designated research centre located in DCU Institute of Education with members drawn from across the university. In line with DCU's Strategy, the core mission of DCU Anti-Bullying Centre is to be a future focused and globally connected European centre of excellence for research and education on bullying and digital safety. Through scholarly outputs, education, and societal engagement, the Centre significantly contributes to DCU's research reputation and impact, while enhancing local and international engagement. The Centre comprises approximately 50 members who are engaged in research and education related to bullying and digital safety. The Centre hosts the UNESCO Chair on Bullying and Cyberbullying and the International Journal of Bullying Prevention. From 2018 to 2022 the Centre published 192 Scopus ranked papers, achieving a current combined Field Weighted Citation Index of 2.7. Members of the Centre are drawn from all five faculties of the university and are united by our purpose and the mutual support from our global community to achieve our aims. We take pride in our ethical way of working and the positive social impact our research has on tackling bullying and promoting digital safety. We believe our spirit will flourish because we are ethical, ambitious, collaborative, compassionate and committed to tackling bullying and digital safety for wellbeing in society.

DCU School of Law & Government

The School of Law and Government is a community of students and staff dedicated to studying the puzzles, problems, and opportunities of the contemporary world. The School was awarded *Law School of the Year Award* at the [Irish Law Awards 2021](#). We offer challenging programmes and undertake ambitious research across a wide range of subjects in law, politics, and international relations. The DCU Law and Tech Research Cluster is the branch of the DCU Law Research Centre specialising in law and new technologies. It represents the first research group in Ireland expressly designed to investigate, from an interdisciplinary perspective, the challenges that technology and innovation generate for law, both at the national and international levels. The Cluster is a founding member of the European PhD in Law, Data and AI (EPILDAI) network, composed of leading research universities around the world.

Background

Many countries around the world are considering regulating children's online safety by introducing obligations requiring social media platforms to filter and restrict access to specific types of content. The combined effect of the emergence of these new regulatory frameworks and the interpretation of these rules at platform level has been criticized for its capacity to potentially censor online content and discriminate against LGBTQ+

groups. Social media have proved to be a unique instrument to access, transmit and receive information within LGBTQ+ communities, especially in countries still discriminating against these societal groups. Preventing children from accessing these types of content has a profound impact on their education and personal development, and more generally risks representing a disproportionate compression of their fundamental rights.

The Role

We are looking for an excellent PhD applicant willing to work in this area from a multidisciplinary and/or comparative perspective. Applicants are required to possess at the time of application a bachelor's degree in an area related to the main PhD theme. Having completed a master's degree is a plus.

The selected candidate will receive an annual non-taxable stipendium of €22,000. EU full time fees will be covered. This role is part funded by the Equinix Foundation and the Law and Tech Research Cluster. The PhD will start in September 2024.

The applicant will be supervised by Prof James O'Higgins Norman, UNESCO Chair in Bullying and Cyberbullying and Director of DCU Anti-Bullying Centre, Dr Edoardo Celeste, Associate Professor of Law, Technology and Innovation and Coordinator of the DCU Law and Tech Research Cluster, and Dr Sinai Ascì, postdoctoral researcher at DCU Anti-Bullying Centre. The selected candidate will be based at the DCU Antibullying Centre and will also be a member of the DCU Law and Tech Research Cluster.

The selected candidate will be required to work full time on their PhD and to contribute to selected research and teaching activities in the context of DCU Antibullying Centre and DCU Law and Tech Research Cluster. The selected candidate will also be part of the European PhD in Law, Data and AI (EPILDAI) network and will have the opportunity to complete a visiting stay of 3-6 months in one of the partner universities.

The PhD candidate's specific duties will include:

- Undertake research leading to a PhD;
- Produce academic papers and reports throughout the course of the PhD;
- Identify and make funding applications for further research on related topics;
- Collaborate with colleagues in the Centre and the cluster;
- Attend meetings and produce reports.

In order to apply, please send your CV and a PhD proposal of maximum 3000 words to lawandtech@dcu.ie by 31 May 2024. The PhD proposal should illustrate your research question, state of the art, methodology and proposed timeline. Interviews will be held on 11 June 2024. Informal inquiries can be sent to lawandtech@dcu.ie.