The social dynamics of opinion formation and decision making under risk

Humans are an inherently social species. How we think, how we feel, what we believe, what decisions we make – in all of that, we are influenced by others, and we also influence others in turn. At the intersection of the Graduate School of Decision Sciences (GSDS) and the Centre for the Advanced Study of Collective Behaviour (CASCB), we are looking for 1-2 PhD students (E13, 65%) to study the social dynamics of opinion formation and decision making under risk. Applications can be submitted via the GSDS, and you’d be working with Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Gaissmaier, and/or Dr. Helge Giese, and/or Dr. Ariana Strandburg-Peshkin.

More specifically, we are interested how social exchange influences the propagation of information, the formation of opinions and beliefs, and (collective) decision making under risk. Social exchange and its impact will be studied as a function of a) the object of social exchange and its characteristics, b) the underlying mechanisms and incentives for social exchange, c) features of the involved individuals, and d) features of the social network, such as structure and heterogeneity. Methodologically, our approach is quantitative and involves (online) experiments with individuals and groups, observational (network) surveys, computer simulations, as well as statistical and cognitive modeling.

You will be working within a very strong research community that is both highly interdisciplinary and international. Candidates are expected to design and perform high-quality research, publish papers in refereed journals, and work in an interdisciplinary research environment. The requirements include a Master’s (or equivalent) degree in psychology or a related field (e.g., biology, computer sciences), a strong background and interest in methodology (experimental design, statistics, modeling, and programming with R, Python, etc.), and strong written and verbal communication skills. Knowledge of English language is mandatory; knowledge of German language is appreciated.

Here, you find how to apply to the GSDS (submission deadline: April 15th), and if you are interested in this specific project, please mention that in your motivation letter: https://www.gsd.uni-konstanz.de/application/how-to-apply/