Nima Thing

nimathing1995@gmail.com — +49 17823 10545 — linkedin.com/in/nima-thing — github.com/nimathing2052

Profile Summary

Early-career computational social scientist studying how social media shapes perception, behavior, and online interaction, with a methodological core in social network analysis and machine learning. Recent work examines online hate and toxicity, attention dynamics, and the structure of online communities during political events. Engineering background in data pipelines and research infrastructure.

Research Experience

Computational Social Science Researcher (part-time) Berlin / Remote
logiq.media *Apr 2026 – Present (volunteer Jan–Mar 2026)*

- Lead developer of Elfbot (demo, video), a human-in-the-loop system for digital-trace analysis; surfaces coordinated-behavior signals (burst dynamics, account clusters) on Bluesky and X samples for human review, built around reproducible processing modules and auditable evidence trails.
- Joining the SHIFT (Shaping Informed Frameworks for Trust) project from April 2026 – a 13-country research effort mapping belief systems, trust drivers, and exposure pathways, then designing and A/B-testing interventions with partners.

Short-term Expert (Computer Engineer) Berlin, Germany
Weizenbaum Institute, Platform Algorithms and Digital Propaganda & University of Bern *Dec 2025 (4 weeks)*

- Built a longitudinal algorithmic-auditing web-scraping framework (Botasaurus, proxy support, parallelization, structured logging) for platform-research projects; delivered as documented, modular research infrastructure for use by social-science researchers – GitHub.

Research Assistant (Volunteer) Remote
DeepTrace: South Asia Deepfake Detection *Nov 2025 – Jan 2026*

- Established annotation guidelines and benchmarks for AI-generated visual content and deepfake detection in South Asian contexts; contributed to dataset-collection UI/UX design.

Selected Research & Projects

Master's Thesis: Beyond the Ballot – TikTok Virality and Political Engagement in Nepal's 2022 Local Elections
Hertie School, supervised by Prof. Dr. Simon Munzert *2025*
[Paper, Code]

- Built a multimodal ML pipeline (Whisper audio, CLIP video, metadata) over 28,165 political TikTok videos; multimodal sample of 2,964 (full-model AUC 0.800, 5×5 CV).
- Separated description, prediction, and association tasks to avoid conflating predictive accuracy with causal explanation; flagged a suggestive pattern of marginalized groups recurring as a vehicle for political attention.

Online Toxicity and Community Structure on Bluesky around a High-Profile Event *Sep 2025*
SICSS-Saarbrücken group project *[Slides]*

- Analyzed 156K posts combining zero-shot stance classification, Perspective API toxicity scoring, and Louvain community detection over an author like-network (46k nodes, 17 communities); mapped where toxic users concentrate.

Pre-Mobilization Structural Reorganization of Online Discourse before Nepal's Gen-Z Protests *2026 – Ongoing*
Independent research *[Draft]*

- Used SNA over event-anchored windows to show a Nepali Reddit cohort's network contracting, densifying, and turning inward (with bridging communities rotating) before posting volume spiked; paired with a Facebook hashtag co-occurrence analysis via Meta Content Library.

Mapping Elite Attention Ecosystems on Instagram: Gen-Z-Salient Political Attention in Nepal *Jan 2026*
Network Analysis Project *[Proposal, Slides]*

- Exploratory mapping of the attention network around Nepal's digital Gen-Z movement on Instagram via top influential activists.

Engineering Experience

Data Scientist/Engineer (Werkstudent) Bonn, Germany
Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Data Analytics & AI (Reference) *Apr 2024 – Jul 2025*

- Built end-to-end scoring and reporting pipeline (Microsoft Fabric lakehouse, Spark SQL, Power BI, DAX); reduced processing time by 99%.
- PoC for automated metadata ingestion and lineage (PyApacheAtlas, OpenMetadata, MS Purview); presented at WHH & Viadee workshop on data governance and compliance.

Earlier engineering roles. Quality Specialist (Werkstudent), Immobilien Scout GmbH, Berlin *(Ref.)*; Software Engineer, Verisk Nepal *(Ref.)* – test automation, A/B testing, and performance-testing tooling (Maestro, .NET Core/C#). *2019 – 2025*

Education

Hertie School, Berlin, Germany *Aug 2023 – Jun 2025*
Master of Data Science for Public Policy *(Degree)*
Main Fields: Data Science, Governance, Advanced Quantitative Methods
Core Subjects: Natural Language Processing, Data Structures and Algorithms, Machine Learning, Deep Learning
Awards: Data for Good Full Scholarship, Dieter Schwarz Stiftung *(Scholarship Talk)*

The Open Institute for Social Science, Nepal *2021 – 2022*
Postgraduate Diploma in Research and Writing (Social Science) *(Enrollment)*
Currently active in a Bayesian Statistics group analysing World Bank survey data with the same institute.

Tribhuwan University, Nepal *2014 – 2018*
B.E. in Electronics and Communication Engineering *(Degree)*

Skills & Languages

Quantitative & Empirical Methods: social network analysis (community detection, brokerage, centrality), stance and toxicity classification, topic modeling, multimodal feature extraction (CLIP, Whisper, OCR), reproducible research pipelines.
ML/NLP: Transformers (HuggingFace), DistilBERT, BERTopic, XGBoost, zero-shot classification, fairness diagnostics.
Programming & Tools: Python (PyTorch), R, SQL, Spark, Docker, Gephi, web scraping for research (Botasaurus, Playwright).
Languages: English (Fluent), Nepali (Native), Hindi (Professional), German (A2).
Certificates: Digital Governance (2025), Algorithmic Fairness (2025).

Academic references and access to private GitHub repositories available upon request.