Tuğrulcan Elmas

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AI researcher and educator working on large language models and AI-generated media detection. I teach Computational Social Science and Text Technologies in Data Science (~200 students each per year) at the University of Edinburgh, ranked 22nd in the world for Computer Science & Information Systems (QS World University Rankings by Subject), and teach in English and Turkish.

POSITIONS & EDUCATION

Assistant Professor, School of Informatics, University of Edinburgh · Co-Director, SMASH group — 2024 – present
Fellow, Generative AI Lab, University of Edinburgh — 2025 – present
Postdoctoral Scholar, Observatory on Social Media (OSOME), Indiana University Bloomington — 2022 – 2024
Ph.D., Computer Science, EPFL — *The Role of Compromised Accounts in Social Media Manipulation* — 2022
B.S., Computer Engineering (minor in Philosophy), Bilkent University; exchange at NUS — 2017

TEACHING & AI EDUCATION

- **Computational Social Science** (2026–) and **Text Technologies in Data Science** (2024–), ~200 students each per year; CSS nominated for a University of Edinburgh Teaching Award; materials open at opencourse.inf.ed.ac.uk/css. Also Evidence, Argument and Persuasion in a Digital Age (EFI); Intro to OOP; courses at EPFL (2018–2021).
- **Organiser, SICSS Edinburgh 2025** (Summer Institute in Computational Social Science). Book chapter on teaching coding with generative AI, *Teaching Programming Across Disciplines*. Supervising seven current/incoming lab members; four alumni.
- **Public education:** Turkish YouTube channel on AI, LLMs and social media research; panellist at AMLD 2025 (EPFL); invited talks at Bilkent, Johns Hopkins SAIS, Scotsman Data Conference 2024; Turkish national TV and radio.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- **How AI Models Manage Epistemic Authority: A Taxonomy and Comparative Analysis of Responses to User Disagreement.** Alnasser, Çetinkaya, Zhao, **Elmas**. **EMNLP 2026**
- **Humans Cannot Detect AI-Generated Media But Communities May — For Now: Collaborative AI Detection in r/RealOrAI. Elmas**. **Preprint**
- **Evaluating Image Forgery Detection and Propaganda in Manipulated Images of the Russian Trolls Campaign.** Mohammed, Çetinkaya, **Elmas**. **IEEE Internet Computing 2026**
- **ChatGPT vs Teachers vs Students: Generative AI Discourse in Education Communities on Reddit.** Yüce, Dai, Owens, **Elmas**. **ICWSM 2027**
- **Density-aware Walks for Coordinated Campaign Detection.** Gopalakrishnan, Hossain, **Elmas**, Sariyuce. **ECML PKDD 2025**
- **Large Engagement Networks for Classifying Coordinated Campaigns and Organic Twitter Trends.** Gopalakrishnan et al. **ICWSM 2025**
- **State & Geopolitical Censorship on Twitter (X): Detection & Impact Analysis of Withheld Content.** Çetinkaya, **Elmas**. **CIKM 2025**
- **Ephemeral Astroturfing Attacks: The Case of Fake Twitter Trends. Elmas**, Overdorf, Özkalay, Aberer. **IEEE Euro S&P 2021** (covered by *The Atlantic*, *The Next Web*)
- **Misleading Repurposing on Twitter** (**ICWSM 2023**); **Characterizing Retweet Bots** (**ICWSM 2022**); **Shorts vs. Regular Videos on YouTube** (**WebSci 2024**).

SERVICE, GRANTS & AWARDS

- **Program Co-Chair, ICWSM 2027.** Advise BBC fact-checkers on verifying suspected AI-generated images and video.
- University of Edinburgh committees: Ethics, Teaching, Board of Studies. Program Committee: ICWSM, WebSci, CySoc. Reviewer: Euro S&P, CIKM, ICDE, EDBT, EPJ Data Science, Online Social Networks and Media.
- **Generative AI Lab Seed Funding** (£2,500), *Can LLMs Give Relationship Advice?* · University of Edinburgh Teaching Award nomination (2025).

LANGUAGES

Turkish (native) · English (fluent) · French (B1)