



INSTITUTE FOR  
INFORMATION  
POLICY



UNIVERSITÉ DE FRIBOURG  
UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG



## **New Media, Old Money: Digital Technology, Social Media and the New Challenges to Campaigning and Democracy**

**A by-invitation experts' workshop to be held at  
The Embassy of Switzerland in the United States of America  
Washington, DC, September 27-29, 2015**

Electronic media have played a central role in politics almost since their introduction. The role of media in election campaigns is often seen as the origin of media and communication studies. The variety of political systems worldwide, the wide range of media systems that operate within them, and the extensive array of regulatory schemes that govern this association raise thought provoking questions about the role of media in democracy. The media-politics-capital triad has raised concerns about the effect of money on the health and fairness of political and media structures. The use of digital technologies and collaborative media has now become a critical part of these complex relationships.

Increasingly, political campaigns are built around digital strategies rather than on traditional broadcast ad buys. The internet offers many additional groups cheap access to the public sphere and new possibilities for information and discussion. Accordingly, much of the most “impactful” money is spent “online,” calling on expertise in building networks, conversations and communities using social networking platforms, combined with applications designed to amplify messaging as well as volunteers and users generating their own content. In addition, the ability to find, analyze and apply personal information from “big data” is becoming more important than market research and the focus has shifted to the development of comprehensive social media strategies for young, ethnic, gendered and special interest groups. Finally, legacy media and their traditional business models are affected by change as well, raising questions about implications of the internet for journalism and democracy.

As a result, any current understanding of campaign spending and political communication must incorporate not just traditional advertising, but equally spending on internet and social networking platforms and the use of information technologies to identify and reach voters through multiple platforms. The same “Old Money” is being used to try to gain influence, but new media offer new approaches both to enhance and conceal its effects. Moreover, the same media brands with the same powerful owners prevail online as well.

The Institute for Information Policy at Penn State, the Department of Communication and Media Research DCM at the University of Fribourg and the Journal of Information Policy, are pleased to announce this call for paper proposals. Authors of selected papers will be invited to present them during a two day (September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015) by-invitation workshop designed to bring together up to a dozen American and international experts and to be held at the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington, DC. The workshop will open with a reception on September 27<sup>th</sup>. Presenters at the workshop will be invited to submit their completed papers for review by the Journal of Information Policy ([www.jip-online.org](http://www.jip-online.org)). By focusing on the media-politics-capital triad, and taking place a year before the presidential elections in the US and only weeks before the national elections in Switzerland, the workshop is ideally suited to provide important insights not only for scholarly research but also for policy-makers in both countries.

Invited topics include, but are not limited to:

- The role of media in election and referendum campaigns
- The (democratic) need for regulation of media and campaigns
- The role of money in campaigning and political communication
- The role of money in media policy and regulation
- Commercialization of the media and its effect on political coverage
- Ownership structures of new and old media and their implications for democracy, political communication and media policy
- Changes of political communication and journalism due to digitization
- The strategic use of social media by political actors
- Comparative studies of media regulation, political communication and campaigns
- New metrics for campaign expenditures in the digital age
- Political campaign money spending in online campaigns
- Limitations on campaign spending
- Limitations on contributions; on sources of contributions; requirements for disclosure; regulation of spending by advocacy groups; by political parties; and by individuals
- The challenge of diversity of views and voices in the digital age
- Applying broadcast political speech rules be applied on the Internet
- Should social media, blogs, listserves and websites be subject to political speech rules?
- How have the larger changes in the economics of media affected political news and commentary?

Abstracts of up to 500 words and a short bio of the author(s) should be submitted to [pennstateiip@psu.edu](mailto:pennstateiip@psu.edu) by July 10, 2015. Please write "IIPFUWS: Your Last Name" in the subject line. Accepted presenters will be notified by July 25, 2015.