post society

Grassroots Depolarisation

Research Questions

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1. What conversational structures, rules, and affordances can we design for online platforms that actively promote peace, depolarisation, and citizen inclusion rather than amplifying conflict and division?
   a. How do current conversational structures, rules, and affordances online exacerbate polarisation?
   b. How do anonymity or lack of accountability in online spaces contribute to negative, polarised behavior? How might these be balanced with identification and accountability while not infringing upon privacy and freedom of speech?

2. What are the core principles of civil conversation in offline contexts, and how can we implement these principles as technical requirements for a digital space?

3. To what extent can civil interactions be cultivated through the design and interaction mechanisms of a platform before external moderation or algorithmic interventions are required?
   a. Can basic features like response limits, necessary waiting time, or conversation prompts replace or reduce the need for moderation (by discouraging divisiveness and encouraging thoughtful reflection)?
   b. How does user behaviour change when online platforms encourage or discourage specific actions (e.g., using "like" reactions or initiating debates)?
   c. What role does platform structure (e.g., threaded conversations, open vs closed groups) play in fostering peace and inclusivity?

4. How can civility drive sustainable engagement, as opposed to engagement driven by clickbait, outrage, and polarisation?
   a. Which new metrics might measure depth of engagement, like the civility of comments or genuine user connections?
   b. How can platforms reward civil engagement without turning it into a shallow transactional activity?
   c. How can we shift platform dynamics to prioritise long-term trust and social capital over short-term sensational spikes?