

# How can we mitigate the psychological harms of deepfake technology?



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## WHAT DID WE DO?

Deepfakes are synthetic media that use AI to generate audio and video of a person doing or saying things they might never have done. They are highly realistic and can be created without any specialist training or equipment.

Funded by Lero, the Research Ireland Centre for Software, we conducted a 4-year multi-disciplinary study of the psychological aspects of deepfake technology. As well as exploring the potential benefits of deepfakes (in education, entertainment and play) we focused on two of the most pressing harms:

- The potential for deepfakes to spread political misinformation
- The abuse of women through non-consensual, explicit deepfakes



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Our findings have been communicated to policy makers and have been used to design world-first interventions. We have developed effective and free tools that:

- reduce deepfake abuse perpetration
- educate the public about deepfakes, without engendering blind scepticism

Deepfake technology, along with other forms of artificial intelligence, is constantly developing and becoming more accessible and more integrated into our lives. Our work has provided evidence-based methods to reduce the harms associated with this technology and is vital for building a future of responsible AI use. Key to this is the rejection of technophobic alarmist narratives that are not evidence-based.



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