

# Dr Simon D'Alfonso | Academic CV

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**Current Position:** Lecturer in Digital Health, School of Computing and Information Systems, the University of Melbourne

**Website:** <http://people.eng.unimelb.edu.au/dalfonso/>

**Google Scholar:** <https://scholar.google.com.au/citations?user=hXEZnsUAAAAJ>

**Bio Overview:** I am a lecturer in the [School of Computing and Information Systems](#) at the University of Melbourne, with my work being mainly in the areas of digital mental health, cyberpsychology, digital wellbeing and AI. I am affiliated with the University of Melbourne's [Centre for Youth Mental Health](#) in the [Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences](#), and the [Orygen](#) mental health institute, where I am head of computing in its digital mental health division [eOrygen](#). Via these affiliations, I lead the [Digital Technology and Artificial Intelligence for Mental Health research project](#) in the School of Computing and Information Systems. In this capacity I am currently leading several funded digital mental health projects.

## Research Areas

- Digital Mental Health, Cyberpsychology, Digital Wellbeing
- Expert Systems, Knowledge Representation
- Philosophy of Computing and Information

## Education

- 2009 – 2012: University of Melbourne, PhD (Awarded March 2013). Thesis Title: [Towards a Framework for Semantic Information](#)
- 2000 – 2004, 2006: University of Melbourne, Bachelor of Arts & Sciences. Majors in Philosophy and Computer Science.

## Academic Employment History

- 2020 – Present: Lecturer in Digital Health, School of Computing and Information Systems, the University of Melbourne.
- 2017 – 2020: Research fellow in the School of Computing and Information Systems at the University of Melbourne. This appointment has been supported by and in conjunction with my role at [eOrygen](#), where I lead computing research and development and manage technical infrastructure both locally and with our international partners in the USA, Canada and Europe.
- 2018 – Present: Fractional fixed-term lecturing appointment within the School of Computing and Information Systems at the University of Melbourne.
- 2013 – 2016: Research assistant in the Department of Computing and Information Systems at the University of Melbourne. Lead programmer of the [MOST](#) online therapy project.

- For a summary of my general professional IT employment history, see <http://simondalfonso.id.au/resume.pdf>

## Publications

Ranking: A\* - C (as ranked by CORE, ACPHIS or ERA) or quartile ranking for journals in psychology (as ranked by Scimago Journal & Country Rank).

# = among most significant

### Refereed Journal Articles:

Theme: Digital Mental Health, Cyberpsychology

- Ludwig, K., Browne, J., Nagendra, A., Gleeson, J., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Penn, D., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2020). [Horizons USA: A Moderated Online Social Intervention for First Episode Psychosis](#). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*. doi:10.1111/eip.12947
- McEnergy, C., Lim, M. H., Knowles, A., Rice, S., Gleeson, J., Howell, S., . . . **D'Alfonso, S.**, Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [Social Anxiety in Young People With First-Episode Psychosis: Pilot Study of the EMBRACE Moderated Online Social Intervention](#). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*. doi:10.1111/eip.12912
- # **D'Alfonso, S.**, Phillips, J., Valentine, L., Gleeson, J., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [The Ethics and Design Principles of an Online Social Therapy System](#). *JMIR Mental Health*. doi:10.2196/14866 [Journal standing: Leading digital mental health journal, top quartile psychology ranking, under the Journal Medical Internet Research collection with projected IF=2.96. My contribution: Conceived paper and led authorship. Paper description: An analysis of ethical and persuasive system design and notions of eudaimonic versus hedonic wellbeing in terms of social media and digital mental health platforms.]
- Valentine, L., McEnergy, C., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Phillips, J., Bailey, E., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [Harnessing the Potential of Social Media to Develop the Next Generation of Digital Health Treatments in Youth Mental Health](#). *Current Treatment Options in Psychiatry*, 1-12. doi:10.1007/s40501-019-00184-w [My contribution: Helped develop paper outline and contributed to writing.]
- McEnergy, C., Lim, M. H., Knowles, A., Rice, S., Gleeson, J., Howell, S., . . . **D'Alfonso, S.**, Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [Development of a Moderated Online Intervention to Treat Social Anxiety in First-Episode Psychosis](#). *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, 10. doi:10.3389/fpsyt.2019.00581 [Journal standing: IF=3.161. My contribution: provided consultation on the paper and was tech lead of the study on which it is based.]
- # Lederman, R., Gleeson, J., Wadley, G., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Rice, S., Santesteban-Echarri, O., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [Support for Carers of Young People with Mental Illness: Design and Trial of a Technology-Mediated Therapy](#). *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction*, 26(1), 4:1--4:33. doi:10.1145/3301421 [Journal standing: A\* ranking. My contribution: Analysed data, made contributions to the writing and provided information for the paper. Paper description: This paper is based on a pilot trial of the MOST mental health platform of which I am tech lead and via qualitative analysis of

participant interviews shows how our moderated online social therapy can provide support for carers of young people with mental illness.]

- Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Bendall, S., Koval, P., Rice, S., Cagliarini, D., Valentine, L., . . . Gleeson, J. F. (2019). [HORIZONS trial: protocol for a randomised controlled trial of a moderated online social therapy to maintain treatment effects from first-episode psychosis services](#). *BMJ Open*, 9(2). doi:10.1136/bmjopen-2018-024104 [Journal standing: IF 2017=2.413, top quartile. My contribution: tech lead and data analyst on the study.]
- Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Gleeson, J. F., Bendall, S., Penn, D. L., Yung, A. R., Ryan, R. M., . . . Nelson, B. (2018). [Enhancing social functioning in young people at Ultra High Risk \(UHR\) for psychosis: A pilot study of a novel strengths and mindfulness-based online social therapy](#). *Schizophrenia Research*, 202, 369-377. doi:10.1016/j.schres.2018.07.022 [Journal standing: IF 2017=3.958, top quartile. My contribution: tech lead and data analyst on the study.]
- Rice, S., Gleeson, J., Leicester, S., Bendall, S., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Gilbertson, T., . . . Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2018). [Implementation of the Enhanced Moderated Online Social Therapy \(MOST+\) Model Within a National Youth E-Mental Health Service \(eheadspace\): Protocol for a Single Group Pilot Study for Help-Seeking Young People](#). *JMIR research protocols*, 7(2). doi:10.2196/resprot.8813 [Journal standing: h-index=35. My contribution: provided consultation on the paper and was tech lead of the study on which it is based.]
- Rice, S., Gleeson, J., Davey, C., Hetrick, S., Parker, A., Lederman, R., . . . Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2018). [Moderated online social therapy for depression relapse prevention in young people: pilot study of a 'next generation' online intervention](#). *Early Intervention in Psychiatry*, 12(4), 613-625. doi:10.1111/eip.12354 [Journal standing: IF=2.923, top quartile. My contribution: provided consultation on the paper and was tech lead of the study on which it is based.]
- Santesteban-Echarri, O., Rice, S., Wadley, G., Lederman, R., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Russon, P., . . . Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2017). [A next-generation social media-based relapse prevention intervention for youth depression: Qualitative data on user experience outcomes for social networking, safety, and clinical benefit](#). *Internet Interventions*, 9, 65-73. doi:10.1016/j.invent.2017.06.002 [Journal standing: CiteScore=3.91, top quartile. My contribution: provided consultation on the paper and was tech lead of the study on which it is based.]
- **# D'Alfonso, S.**, Santesteban-Echarri, O., Rice, S., Wadley, G., Lederman, R., Miles, C., . . . Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2017). [Artificial Intelligence-Assisted Online Social Therapy for Youth Mental Health](#). *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00796 [Journal standing: IF 2016=2.321. World's most-cited multidisciplinary psychology journal. My contribution: Conceived and led authorship of the paper. Paper description: This paper establishes the project to bring AI and novel technologies into the Moderated Online Social Therapy system.]

Theme: Knowledge Representation, Philosophy of Information and Computing

- # **D'Alfonso, S.** (2018). [Truthlikeness and the Lottery Paradox via the Preface Paradox](#). *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 96(2), 391-397. doi:10.1080/00048402.2017.1372491 [Journal standing: one of the world's leading philosophy journals with an ERA=A\*. Paper description: a novel solution to the lottery paradox concerning probability and the logic of rational belief.]
- # **D'Alfonso, S.** (2016). [Belief merging with the aim of truthlikeness](#). *Synthese*, 193(7), 2013-2034. doi:10.1007/s11229-015-0825-y [Journal standing: One of the top journals in formal philosophy with an ERA=A\* and an IF=1.034. Paper description: an offshoot of a section of my PhD thesis, this paper is one of only a handful to consider this topic.]
- # **D'Alfonso, S.** (2014). [The Logic of Knowledge and the Flow of Information](#). *Minds and Machines: journal for artificial intelligence, philosophy and cognitive sciences*, 24(3), 307-325. doi:10.1007/s11023-013-9310-x [Journal standing: ERA=A and an IF=0.842. Paper description: fashioned from a chapter of my PhD thesis, this paper applies formal logical methods to refine a popular epistemological framework for information and knowledge.]
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2013). [Explicating a Standard Externalist Argument against the KK Principle](#). *Logos and Episteme*, 4(4), 399-406. doi:10.5840/logos-episteme2013442
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2011). [Supplementing Belief Revision for the Aim of Truthlikeness](#). *The Reasoner*, 5(9), 143-145.
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2011). [On Quantifying Semantic Information](#). *Information*, 2(1), 61-101. doi:10.3390/info2010061

#### Articles in Review:

- Lederman, R., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Wadley, G., Rice, S., Gleeson, J., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (n.d.). Ethical Issues in Online Mental Health Systems. *Proceedings of the 28th European Conference on Information Systems (ECIS)*. Marrakech.
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (n.d.). Artificial Intelligence in Mental Health. *Current Opinion in Psychology* [Invited review article for special issue on Cyberpsychology].
- Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Rice, S., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Leicester, S., Bendall, S., Pryor, I., . . . Gleeson, J. (n.d.). A Novel Multi-modal Online Service (MOST+) for Help-Seeking Young People experiencing Mental ill-health: a Pilot Evaluation within a National Youth E-Mental Health Service. *Journal Medical Internet Research*.
- Bailey, E., Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Robinson, J., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Gilbertson, T., Phillips, J., . . . Rice, S. (n.d.). An enhanced social networking intervention for young people with active suicidal ideation: Safety, feasibility and acceptability outcomes. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.
- Rice, S., O'Bree, B., Wilson, M., McEnery, C., Lim, M. H., Hamilton, M., . . . Álvarez-Jiménez, M. (n.d.). An interactive graphic medicine-enabled digital intervention targeting social anxiety in young people: The Entourage Project. *Clinical Psychologist*.
- Rice, S., O'Bree, B., Wilson, M., McEnery, C., Lim, M., Hamilton, M., . . . Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (n.d.). Leveraging the social network for treatment of social anxiety: Pilot study of a youth-specific digital intervention with a focus on engagement of young men. *Internet Interventions*.

### Refereed Conference Proceedings:

- Leins, K., Coghlan, S., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Gooding, P., Lederman, R., & Paterson, J. (2020). To Chatbot or not to Chatbot, Just the First Question: Potential legal and ethical issues arising from using chatbots for teens at risk of homelessness. *Ethics of data science conference 2020*. Sydney.
- **D'Alfonso, S.**, & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2019). [An Introduction to eOrygen](#). *4th Symposium on Computing and Mental Health at CHI 2019*. Glasgow.
- **# D'Alfonso, S.**, Carpenter, N., & Alvarez-Jimenez, M. (2018). [Making the MOST out of Smartphone Opportunities for Mental Health](#). *Proceedings of the 30th Australian Conference on Computer-Human Interaction*, (pp. 577-581). Melbourne. [Conference standing: B ranking. My contribution: Conceived and led authorship of the paper. Paper description: This position paper outlines the work that will be done as part of the Telstra-funded project "Smartphones at the service of youth mental health".]
- Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Gleeson, J. F., Rice, S., Bendall, S., **D'Alfonso, S.**, Eleftheriadis, D., . . . Nelson, B. (2018). 4.3 [ENHANCING SOCIAL FUNCTIONING AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY IN YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS \(FEP\) AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT ULTRA HIGH RISK \(UHR\) FOR PSYCHOSIS: A NOVEL ONLINE SOCIAL THERAPY APPROACH](#). *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, 44, pp. S4–S5. doi:10.1093/schbul/sby014.010
- Alvarez-Jimenez, M., Rice, S., Gleeson, J., Wadley, G., Lederman, R., & **D'Alfonso, S.** (2016). Moderated online social therapy in youth mental health: Seizing the opportunity. *Workshop on Computing and Mental Health at CHI 2016*. San Jose.

### Book Chapters:

- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2013). Truth. In P. Ilari (Ed.), *The Philosophy of Information: A Simple Introduction* (pp. 90-99). The Society for the Philosophy of Information.
- **D'Alfonso, S.**, & Kerr, E. (2013). Knowledge. In P. Ilari (Ed.), *The Philosophy of Information: A Simple Introduction* (pp. 100-114). The Society for the Philosophy of Information.

### Book Reviews:

- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2015). [Weathering the infostorm](#). *Metascience*, 24(3), 441–444. doi:10.1007/s11016-015-9997-9
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2014). [Quitting Certainties](#). *Philosophy in Review*, 34(1-2), 34-36.
- **D'Alfonso, S.** (2010). [Information: A Very Short Introduction](#). *Essays in Philosophy*, 11(2), 238-243.

### Media Articles/Apearances:

- [Would you use a robot therapist?](#) (2019) ABC Radio National Life Matters
- [Could your smartphone become your therapist?](#) (2019) The University of Melbourne Pursuit Magazine.

- [Digital Phenotyping: Smartphones as a Window into the Mind](#). (2019) Journal of mHealth.
- [From Social Media to Social Support](#). (2019) Jumpstart: The Entrepreneur's Magazine.
- [4 ways tech can help your mental health](#). (2017) The University of Melbourne Pursuit Magazine.

## Presentations/Conferences

- *The Digital Therapeutic Alliance and HCI*, University of Melbourne Interaction Design Lab Seminar, 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
- *Digital Health: Mental Health Apps*. [Ausmed Education Melbourne Mental Health Conference](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019. (Invited Speaker)
- *An exploration of young people's experiences of using a long-term digital mental health intervention*. 5th International Conference on Youth Mental Health, 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October 2019.
- Invited participant in the *Symposium on Artificial Intelligence & Mental Health: Global Contexts for Diagnosis, Treatment, and Social Impacts*. University of Ottawa, 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> September 2019.
- *Making the MOST out of Smartphone Opportunities for Mental Health*. Orygen Research Seminar, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019.
- *Digital technologies and AI for youth mental health*. University of Manchester Division of Psychology & Mental Health Seminar, 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2019.
- *Eudaimonic Wellbeing and the Ethics of Persuasive Design*. [Leeds Digital Festival](#), 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019 (Invited keynote speaker).
- *The Psychology and Ethical Design of an Online Social Therapy Platform*. SWARM symposium Melbourne, 30<sup>th</sup> August 2018.
- *Mental Health - Stories from the Trenches*. Peak15 Health Tech, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017.
- *Integrity Constraints and Truth for Belief Change*. RMIT Computer Science Department Seminar, 27<sup>th</sup> November 2015.
- *Revising our Beliefs Towards the Truth*. University of Wollongong Decision Systems Lab Research Seminar, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
- *A Framework for Semantic Information*. University of Melbourne Philosophy Postgraduate Seminar Series, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012.
- *The Logic of Knowledge and the Flow of Information*. Fourth Workshop on the Philosophy of Information, University of Hertfordshire, May 2012.
- *The Logic of Knowledge and the Flow of Information*. University of Melbourne Logic Seminar Series, 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011.
- *Conceptions of Information within Philosophy*. The Difference that Makes a Difference conference, Open University Milton Keynes, September 2011.
- *Agent-Relative Informativeness: Combining Truthlikeness Semantic Information Measures with Belief Revision*. University of Melbourne Logic Seminar Series, 8<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

- *A Logic for Agent-Oriented Relevance*. University of Melbourne Logic Seminar Series, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2010.
- *Knowledge and Information*. University of Melbourne Philosophy Postgraduate Seminar Series, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2010.
- *An Analysis of Informational Relevance*. Australasian Association of Logic Conference, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2010.
- *The Logic of Being Misinformed*. University of Melbourne Logic Seminar Series, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2010.
- *Knowledge and its Value: Some Reasons Why Knowledge Is More Valuable Than True Belief*. University of Melbourne Philosophy Postgraduate Seminar Series, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

## Teaching and Supervision

- 2019
  - Lecturer for [Database Systems & Information Modelling \(INFO90002\)](#) (SES average = 4/5).
  - Supervising two projects for the Master of Information Technology subject [Computing Project](#).
  - Undertook MSE Residential Academic Teaching Development Program.
  - Mentor at [Academy Xi](#).
- 2018
  - Tutored [Web Information Technologies](#) (QoCT score = 5/5).
  - Tutored [Foundations of Computing](#) (QoCT score = 4/5).
  - Tutored [Emerging Technologies and Issues](#) (QoCT score = 4.1/5).
  - Supervised two groups for the Master of Information Technology subject [Computing Project](#).
  - Worked as client with two teams for the subject [Software Requirements Analysis](#).
  - Worked as client with three teams for the subject [Masters Software Engineering Project](#).
- 2015: Tutor for [Database Systems & Information Modelling](#) at the University of Melbourne.
- 2012: Tutor for [Objects, Events and Knowledge](#) at the University of Melbourne. This appointment also involved some lecturing duties.
- 2010, 2011, 2013: Tutor for [Philosophy: The Big Questions](#) at the University of Melbourne.

## Funding/Grants

Funding Body and Scheme	Project Title	Year	Amount	Project Description	Role
Telstra Foundation Tech4Good	Smartphones at the service of youth	2018	450,000 AUD	A 2-year project to develop a smartphone app that uses	Chief investigator.

Challenge Round 2	mental health			personal sensing information to determine mental health context and deliver real-time digital therapy.	
University of Melbourne– University of Manchester Research Fund	Exploring therapeutic alliance for digital mental health	2018	9,850 AUD + 5692 GBP	Seed funding to travel, publish and host a symposium in collaboration with University of Manchester colleagues.	Chief investigator.
Victorian Government Medical Research Acceleration Fund	Using artificial intelligence and smartphone sensor technology to personalise and optimise the digital delivery of mental health therapy.	2018	193,494 AUD	Applying advanced algorithms, NLP and smartphone sensor data to enhance the social networking and therapy recommendation components of the Moderated Online Social Therapy (MOST) web platform.	Lead Investigator.
Telstra Foundation Tech4Good Challenge Round 1	Passive Sensing for Moderated Online Social Therapy	2018	20,000 AUD	A seed grant to vie for more funding to develop a smartphone personal sensing framework for the detection of mental health and delivery of digital therapy.	Chief investigator.
Movember Foundation	The Entourage Project	2018	200,000 AUD	Adaptation of the MOST online social therapy system for a cohort of youth with social anxiety disorder.	Tech lead and researcher.

## Professional Services, Memberships and Leadership



- Consultant to the [Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care](#), on developing national safety and quality standards for digital mental health services.
- Member of the [Association for Computing Machinery](#)
- Fellow of the [Melbourne Academy](#)
- Member of the Telstra Foundation Technology and Wellbeing Roundtable, an alliance of Australian organisations from across the corporate, not-for-profit, government and academic sectors with an investment in better understanding young people's everyday technology practices and promoting the positive potential of technology use for young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Referee for:
  - [Journal of Medical Internet Research](#)
  - [Frontiers in Psychiatry](#)
  - [JMIR Mental Health](#)
  - [Analysis](#)
  - [Synthese](#)
  - [Erkenntnis](#)
  - [Philosophy & Technology](#)
  - [Logique et Analyse](#)
  - [Journal of Logic and Computation](#)
  - [Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group](#)
  - [Journal of Affective Disorders](#)
  - Editor of the [Philosophy of Information section at philpapers.org](#)
- Conference organisation:
  - August 2019 - Organiser and chair of the symposium [“#digitalta2019: a symposium on the therapeutic alliance in digital mental health”](#), held at the University of Melbourne. Also, editor for [an accompanying special issue in the journal JMIR Mental Health](#).
  - November 2017 - Convened a workshop on AI and robotics in Australia for a delegation from Beijing on behalf of the Australia-China International Association.

## Awards, Prizes and Honours

- 2016: Winner of the [Health Informatics Society of Australia Hacking Health competition](#), as part of the Amelie.AI mental health chatbot team.
- 2014: Research Support Award from the University of Melbourne School of History and Philosophical Studies.
- 2009 – 2012: Australian Postgraduate Award (APA). Funding in support of PhD candidature.
- 2006: [Laurie Prize for Honours in Philosophy](#). This prize is awarded to the candidate who has been placed second in the first-class honours list in the final year of the pure honours course in Philosophy for the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the University of Melbourne.