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● ツイッター、MITのソーシャルデータ研究に 1000 万ドル提供

【Reuters, 2014/10/01】

ツイッターは1日、人々がソーシャル・ネットワークを使うことでどのように共通の目標を達成できるかというマサチューセッツ工科大学（MIT）の研究に 1000 万ドルを提供した。

この研究は5年を予定しており、この間にツイッターやReddit その他のオンライン・フォーラムからの膨大な量のコンテンツを整理し、ジャーナリストや政策立案者、研究者がこれらの中から新たなパターンやトレンドを見出すことを支援するツールを開発する。

MITは、「Laboratory of Social Machines」と称する新しい研究所を開設。これまでのツイートのデータベースを運営するツイッターのウェブサイト「Gnip」のデータを活用する方針。

MITメディアラボのロイ准教授は、メッセージがどれほどオンライン上を伝わっていけるか、うわさや意見の起源は何か、といったことを理解できるようになりたい、と述べている。

（参考）本件報道記事

Twitter grants \$10 million to MIT for social data analysis, new tools

By Christina Farr

(Reuters) - Twitter Inc on Wednesday gave \$10 million to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for research that would explore how people use and achieve shared goals using social networks.

Over five years, the university's researchers will organize a vast quantity of content from Twitter, Reddit and other online forums and build new communication tools that journalists, policy experts and researchers can use to uncover new patterns and trends.

The new MIT lab is called the "Laboratory of Social Machines."

MIT will access data from Gnip, a Twitter-owned website that stores a vast

database of historic tweets. Twitter has previously awarded smaller sums of funding to academic institutions in a program known as "Twitter Data Grants", but the MIT grant is significant due to its size and scope.

There is an "openness" to the research, said Deb Roy, an associate professor at MIT's Media Lab, which is dedicated to projects at the convergence of technology, science and design. Roy said he has a close relationship with Twitter, in part because his former company Bluefin Labs was acquired by Twitter in 2013.

"Twitter has a special role to play in this concept of social change," said Roy.

Roy said he hopes to understand how far certain messages travel online, and the origins of rumors, opinions and ideas. The research could yield new tools for the press as well as people working on "gender equality and speech in the public sphere," he said.

"Twitter is seizing the opportunity to go deeper into research to understand the role Twitter and other platforms play in the way people communicate, the effect that rapid and fluid communication can have and apply those findings to complex societal issues," said Twitter chief executive Dick Costolo in a statement.

A Twitter spokeswoman said the company plans to invest more funding into academic research and stressed that the data will not be traced back to individual users.

(Reporting By Christina Farr; Editing by David Gregorio)

Source: Reuters, 2014/10/01

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