Media and Communication
2026 • Volume 14 • Article 11671
https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.11671

ARTICLE

Open Access Journal

Experimentation on TikTok, Standardisation on Reels? Party Short-Form Video Use in the 2024 UK General Election

Rosalynd Southern [1], Niamh Cashell [2], Liam McLoughlin [3], and Ploykamol Suwantawit [1]

[1] Department of Communication and Media, University of Liverpool, UK
[2] Department of Politics, University of Manchester, UK
[3] Department of History, Geography, and Social Sciences, Edge Hill University, UK

Correspondence: Niamh Cashell (niamh.cashell@manchester.ac.uk)

Submitted: 30 October 2025 **Accepted:** 5 March 2026 **Published:** 16 April 2026

Issue: This article is part of the issue "Communication in Election Campaigns: Staggering Changes or Same Old, Same Old?" edited by Viorela Dan (University of Innsbruck), Uta Russmann (University of Innsbruck), Philipp Müller (University of Mannheim), and Anne Schulz (University of Zurich), fully open access at https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.i508

Abstract

Campaign practices evolve alongside technological change. We examine one of the most salient current developments: the rise of short-form video on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram Reels—often termed the "TikTokification" of election campaigns (Gerbaudo, 2024). The adoption of short-form video may signal the arrival of Römmele and Gibson's (2020) "subversive" fourth era of campaigning, characterised by emotion, disruption, spontaneity, and the mimicry of authenticity. Here, we examine how the five main UK parties used short-form content during the 2024 UK General Election through a manual content analysis of all TikToks and Instagram Reels posted during the campaign period ($N = 887$). We find evidence of extensive but uneven adoption of short-form video across parties, with TikTok generating substantially higher reach and engagement than Instagram Reels. Whereas Reels were largely used to repurpose traditional campaign material, TikTok served as a site of experimentation, with parties more frequently deploying humour, memes, and in-app music. Leader-centred communication remained dominant overall, but traditional campaign functions were more pronounced on Reels than on TikTok. Thus, results suggest a compressed cycle of experimentation and standardisation. Furthermore, TikTokification occurred mainly on TikTok itself rather than diffusing across short-form platforms.

Keywords

elections; Instagram Reels; political campaigning; short-form video; social media; TikTok

1. Introduction

The rapid mainstreaming of TikTok has reshaped the social media landscape, introducing new challenges and opportunities for political communication and campaigns. Since its global launch in 2018, TikTok's short-form, algorithmically curated video format has driven a broader shift in social media towards visually oriented, algorithm-centred modes of communication, often described as the TikTokification of social media (Gerbaudo, 2024). This shift has implications not only for how voters consume content but also for how political actors communicate, campaign, and seek visibility in increasingly crowded and fragmented digital environments, making it an important site for the study of campaign change. Platforms such as TikTok de-prioritise overt political content (Hagar & Diakopoulos, 2023), privilege algorithmic distribution over follower networks, and reward content that aligns with platform vernaculars such as memetic communication, direct-to-camera delivery, and visual storytelling. This raises important questions about the extent to which political parties are effectively adapting to this new context, and what this signals in the context of cycles of digital adoption for campaigning.

This article examines how UK political parties adopted and used short-form video during the 2024 UK General Election. Using an original dataset of 505 TikToks and 382 Instagram Reels posted by the five major UK parties, it assesses the reach and content of short-form video campaigning during this election period and furthermore assesses whether parties followed familiar patterns of experimentation and standardisation seen with earlier waves of party adoption of digital technologies (Gibson, 2020). The findings show that parties engaged extensively with short-form video but adopted markedly different strategies by platform. TikTok generated substantially higher reach and engagement, and parties deployed several TikTokified features and affordances, as well as deploying TikToks as a channel for humour and memetic content. Despite Reels being a direct competitor to TikTok, few features that typify short-form video content appeared in the Reels here, and they were more often used to repurpose traditional media campaign material such as interviews clipped from broadcast news. The analysis reveals evidence of partial TikTokification of UK campaigns. It also suggests a compressed cycle of experimentation and standardisation compared to the waves of social media that have gone before, as, despite having only been adopted by parties for a relatively short period, there is substantial evidence that Reels had already settled into the standardisation phase, whereas TikTok was a site of experimentation.

2. The Rise of TikTok and the Implications for Campaigns

TikTok is a hugely popular short-form messaging app, which has caused a significant shift in the social media landscape (Stokel-Walker, 2021). TikTok debuted in 2018 after Chinese tech giant ByteDance bought out the Musical.ly app and combined it with Douyin. TikTok's rise was rapid due to several influencing factors, including its creator-friendly features and distinctive "For You" algorithm which is actively designed to learn user preferences and keep them on the app as long as possible (Guinaudeau et al., 2022; Stokel-Walker, 2021). Although social media had already begun to move towards algorithmic feeds by combining user follows with algorithmically-curated content (Guess et al., 2023), the For You feed was somewhat different in being largely focused on serving content to users top-down. The algorithm then learns from the user's activity on the site and shows content similar to posts they have previously lingered over or watched in their entirety (Chen et al., 2023). The Covid-19 lockdowns further hastened TikTok's popularity as people sought connection, meaning that TikTok grew from 11 million monthly active users in January 2018 to 92 million in June 2020 (Guinaudeau

et al., 2022). Thus, TikTok established itself as the new star social media app. In response, many established social media platforms raced to keep up with this shift in the social media landscape. Twitter (now X) launched its own For You feed, as well as expanded and improved video features (Peters & Clarke, 2023). Perhaps the clearest imitator of this was via Instagram, which became popular as a still-image picture app but which launched "Instagram Reels," their own short-form video feed, at the end of 2020 (Perez, 2020). This led to scholars and commentators referring to this shift in the culture of social media towards short-form video and For You style feeds as the TikTokification of social media (Gerbaudo, 2024).

Assessing the implications of this for politics, the rise of TikTok has posed some challenges for politicians and parties hoping to adopt and capitalise on this new, popular platform. Firstly, TikTok specifically de-prioritises political content (Hagar & Diakopoulos, 2023), creating an extra barrier to gaining the audience's attention. Secondly, producing content for short-form video is time-consuming and potentially resource-intensive, particularly compared to posting pictures and captions, which were the core content on more established social media platforms. There is a growing body of evidence that to be successful on a platform, campaigns must adapt to the format and style of that platform (Kreiss et al., 2017), meaning even eschewing content that matches the platform it is posted on will leave parties at a disadvantage. Thirdly, platforms like TikTok are distinct from other social media due to the reduction of defined social networks and communicative reciprocity, and a layout that favours broadcast models of communication rather than interactivity (Faltesek et al., 2023). This, combined with the de-prioritisation of political content, could make it hard for parties to gain a following. However, to temper this, it has often been the case that politicians and political parties have used platforms intended for many-to-many communication as broadcast platforms (McLoughlin, 2019) and indeed may prefer to communicate in this way (cf. Stromer-Galley, 2000).

There are also potential advantages for campaigns. Firstly, it is possible to gain "virality from nowhere" as Guinaudeau et al. (2022, p. 471) describe it, because the For You algorithm means parties can gain a potentially huge number of views on their short-form content even without a large following, so long as they can tap into popularity on a platform (see Moir, 2023). Secondly, it is one potential route to reaching the youth vote, due to the younger user base (Ofcom, 2025). Thirdly, older social media platforms appear to be stagnating or declining in political relevance. Twitter, once central to political communication, has become a damaged brand following Elon Musk's takeover, prompting many politicians to abandon the platform (Crowther, 2024). Parties are therefore incentivised to seek alternatives that allow them to reach new and growing audiences.

Fourthly, parties were in some sense already primed for the TikTokification of social media and have been moving towards incorporating cross-platform and visual elements in their social media campaigning. Political campaigns are now characterised by complex, visual, multi-channel strategies tailored to the affordances and user cultures of specific platforms (Chadwick, 2017; Esser & Pfetsch, 2020). This may be because campaigns are aware that visual content communicates information more rapidly, is more memorable, and generates higher engagement than text alone (Farkas & Bene, 2020; Grabe & Bucy, 2009; Muñoz & Towner, 2017; Steffan, 2020). Visuals also act as heuristics, particularly for low-information voters. For example, Ahler et al. (2017) show that candidates' visual appearance can influence voter decision-making, while visual strategies that enhance a candidate's image or diminish opponents are effective campaign tools (Farkas & Bene, 2020). Strong visual cues shape perceptions of ideology and voting intention (Dan & Arendt, 2021). These developments coincide with a longer-term trend towards the personalisation of politics (Kriesi, 2012).

Visually-oriented platforms are particularly effective for projecting candidate traits such as competence, compassion, or ordinariness, as demonstrated in Grabe and Bucy's (2009) concept of "image bite politics," which remains relevant today (Muñoz & Towner, 2017; Steffan, 2020).

Finally, political campaigns increasingly embrace digital cultures and subcultures. Platforms host distinct vernaculars, memes, and folk cultures that shape engagement (Phillips & Milner, 2017; Theocharis et al., 2022). Memetic communication has long featured in formal campaigns (Wallsten, 2010), but has become increasingly mainstream, as seen in recent US and UK elections (McLoughlin & Southern, 2021), including the "meme wars" between the Conservatives and Labour in the run up to the 2024 UK General Election (Southern, 2026) and the "brat" and coconut tree memes which were incorporated into Kamala Harris' campaign in the 2024 US Presidential election (Southern & Leicht, 2024). Memes are central to TikTok culture (Zeng & Abidin, 2021), making short-form video a particularly fertile environment for this specific type of contemporary political campaigning.

There has been a small amount of scholarship assessing TikTok and political campaigning to date. Some suggest that candidates are beginning to fully inhabit the platform affordances and cultures of newer short-form platforms, perhaps seeing an electoral advantage in doing so. An analysis of the 2021 Peruvian General Election found examples where one presidential candidate had leaned heavily into the platform's culture, regularly posting video aesthetics native to the platform to appear as authentic to audiences (Cervi et al., 2023). The Canadian politician and leader of the New Democratic Party, Jagmeet Singh, had success in building an "influencer" profile through the creation of authentic memetic content on TikTok to maintain visibility (Moir, 2023). Similarly, Ada Colau, a candidate in the 2023 Barcelona Municipal elections, tapped into the vernaculars of TikTok's culture, using commonly found educational video formats and attempting to match her personal brand with the style and tone of the platform's culture in their campaign content (Cervi, 2023). Thus, the rise of short-form video has broad implications for campaigns and how they respond to this shift in social media affordances and cultures. Assessing how parties and politicians respond to the mainstreaming of a new digital communicative technology is a well-established literature. This shift in the social media landscape necessitates looking at this afresh. Thus, this article aims to do so by assessing the short-form content posted by the main UK parties during the 2024 UK General Election.

3. Political Campaigns and the Adoption of New Media

Assessing how short-form video is adopted by UK parties at this election allows us to test whether similar patterns of adoption and use to those that occurred in earlier eras of online campaigning hold for this new technology, or whether these patterns have changed over time. Gibson (2020, p. 30) documents an "experimentation" phase followed by a "standardisation and professionalisation" phase in relation to parties adopting new digital media tools in the past. When the internet first emerged as a means of communication, parties enthusiastically adopted websites. However, content on them was ill-thought-through and amateurish, with websites reusing traditional content as opposed to hosting interactive elements that cyber-optimists had been so hopeful about (Gibson, 2020; Gibson & Ward, 1998). Parties appeared to adopt websites because others did and took a scatter-gun approach before settling on strategies that worked (Selnow, 1998). The same experimentation phase was reflected in the "Web 2.0" era with the emergence of social media, where parties adopted apps such as Facebook and Twitter in a chaotic manner, including several gaffes (Al-Othman, 2015). In this era, there was a little more readiness to adopt these tools in the

manner to which they were meant to be used, with around half of candidates campaigning interactively on Twitter, for example (Southern, 2015).

However, this new era of digital tools also moved into a standardisation phase, whereby parties settled on not fully embracing interactivity but instead, as Jackson and Lilleker (2009) found, preferred a more cautious "controlled interactivity," or "Web 1.5" style campaigning. That is, not a full move towards incorporating the real interactive spirit of these social media platforms, but a halfway house between this and more top-down communication practices, showing that parties and politicians potentially moved through these phases more quickly with the second era of digital media. Here, we ask whether a similar pattern of adoption will occur with new short-form video platforms or whether a standardised approach may appear fully-formed in the era of short-form video. With parties now having been through two iterations of new digital tools becoming mainstream and thus, in theory, having a playbook for how to respond to this, this is a plausible scenario and would suggest a shift in attitudes and strategies among UK parties with regard to new social media tools.

In addition, assessing the adoption of short-form video informs our knowledge around campaign evolution. It has been widely established that there have been three broad areas of political campaign evolution, which Norris (2004) outlined as the "pre-modern," "modern," and "post-modern" campaign eras. More recently, however, leading scholars have argued that campaigns are entering a fourth era, although debate over this remains. Scholars who argue we are in a fourth era point to social media as one of the key driving forces propelling us into it. Römmele and Gibson (2020) attempted to firm up what a fourth era resembles in terms of characteristics and how it differs from the post-modern era. They posit that there are two elements to it—the "scientific" and the "subversive." The scientific here largely refers to data-driven forms of campaigning when "digital technology and data occupy a central role to such an extent that it becomes part of the DNA or 'operating system' on which the campaign functions" (Römmele & Gibson, 2020, p. 600). In terms of the subversive element, this has been less explored in the campaign literature, but several aspects Römmele and Gibson outline as subversive refer to content regularly seen on and which have come to exemplify the content found on TikTok. Römmele and Gibson (2020) suggest that responding to viral trends in real time and spontaneously (or at least seemingly spontaneously) can be a boon for campaigns. Furthermore, they emphasise the role of emotions, disruptive elements of communication such as trolling and content that mimics the authenticity of citizen-made content (amateurish, quickly made, memetic), as features of campaigns that would be considered subversive, and is the type of content regularly found on TikTok. Evidence here of the widespread adoption of new short-form video affordances, features, and platform cultures in campaigns, or, in the parlance outlined above, TikTokification of campaigns, would provide more evidence for a shift to this era.

Research on the rise of TikTok and the history of campaign change, therefore, leads to the following questions:

> RQ1: To what extent did UK parties adopt short-form video during the 2024 General Election, what levels of reach did it generate, and how did patterns differ by party and platform?
>
> RQ2: How did parties use short-form video to (a) perform traditional campaign functions (leader focus, policy communication, mobilisation), (b) post original content rather than repurposed content, and (c) adapt to platform-specific cultures and affordances?

RQ3: Do these patterns indicate (a) a familiar cycle of experimentation and standardisation in line with earlier waves of digital campaign adoption, and (b) evidence of TikTokification consistent with the fourth era of campaigning?

4. Data and Methods

The analysis draws on an original dataset comprising every TikTok and Instagram Reel posted by the five main UK parties (Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats, Green Party of England and Wales, and Reform UK) during the election period (23 May–4 July 2024), yielding a full sample of 887 posts (505 TikToks and 382 Reels). Engagement metadata (views, likes, comments, shares) were recorded manually between 4–7 December 2024 after concerns about inaccuracies in the TikTok API (Pearson et al., 2025; see also Appendix 1 in the Supplementary File). Although this may slightly inflate figures beyond the campaign period, post-peak engagement typically declines sharply (Bhattacharya et al., 2017), making these data a broadly reliable estimate. The same procedure was applied to Reels for consistency.

The videos were subject to manual content analysis by four coders. The coders were all trained extensively by the lead author, and regular adjudication meetings occurred. In these meetings, discrepancies, edge cases, or difficult-to-code cases were reported, adjudicated, and collectively decided upon by two coders and the lead author. Furthermore, 10% of the fully coded dataset was then coded by a fifth coder and subject to inter-coder reliability tests. Krippendorff's alpha scores were calculated to assess intercoder reliability (see Appendix 2 in the Supplementary File). The lowest intercoder reliability was observed for the variable "presence of mash-up/montage/duet" ($\alpha = .663$). As detailed in Appendix 3 in the Supplementary File, this reflects definitional boundary cases within a heterogeneous and rapidly evolving content format. Findings based on variables with $\alpha < .80$ should be interpreted with caution (Krippendorff, 2018); we acknowledge this limitation and interpret these results conservatively in the results section (see Appendix 3 for further detail on this).

Three traditional campaign functions were coded, in line with the first part of RQ2: (a) dominant figure (leader, other party politician, opposition figure, or non-political actor, based on prominence in the video); (b) presence of a clear policy proposal (measured as present or absent; a proposal must be specific and clearly identifiable, for example "improve the economy" would not count here); and (c) presence of a call to action (measured as present or absent; for example "vote Labour"). Moving on to assess whether parties were trying to adapt their content to short-form video platforms in their campaign outputs, we assessed whether parties were producing original content for their outputs on these platforms or whether they saw them as a means to increase views on more traditional media or more established social media content in order to answer the second part of RQ2 and RQ3. Content was coded as (a) original (appearing only on TikTok and/or Reels and not on other platforms), (b) repurposed (previously published on other social media or traditional media), or (c) original infographic content produced for short-form platforms but not constituting a conventional video.

Finally, to answer the third part of RQ2 and RQ3, the presence of six features which are typical of short-form video platforms were coded (all as a binary): (a) the presence of a meme, (b) use of humour, (c) use of the walk-and-talk video format, (d) use of the in-app music feature, (e) slide shows, and (f) use of mash-up/montage/duets. See Appendix 3 for the full codebook.

5. Results

RQ1 addresses the extent to which parties adopted short-form video, their reach, and how patterns differed by party and platform. Assessing first the frequency of posting short-form videos by party, as highlighted in Table 1, there is a statistically significant association between the variables. The two largest parties, Labour and the Conservatives, posted on TikTok and Reels to a similar extent. The smaller parties, however, appeared to prefer one platform over another, with the Liberal Democrats and Reform posting more on TikTok, and only the Green Party favouring Reels. Labour were most active overall, posting 349 times across both platforms, significantly more than the Liberal Democrats, who were second most active at 206 posts, followed by Reform, the Green Party, and the Conservatives. This suggests that parties were not just "cross-posting" to both short-form video platforms. However, it is also clear that parties had different strategies for short-form video output and platform emphasis.

Table 1. Number of videos posted by party and platform.

	Conservatives	Labour	Green	Liberal Democrat	Reform	Total
TikTok	48	175	32	147	103	505
Reels	51	174	69	59	29	382
Total *N*	99	349	101	206	132	887

Notes: Pearson Chi-Square 77.15; $p = .00$.

As can be seen in Table 2, there was substantial engagement on short-form content across the campaign. Overall, all posts across parties and platforms received a total of over 164 million views and over 17 million likes. There were large differences by platform, however, with the majority of the engagement coming from TikTok. Shares were not available on Reels during the campaign, however TikToks from all parties received over 1.5 million shares. There were almost 400,000 comments across all posts, suggesting that party short-form videos can spark a considerable amount of political discussion. Despite Labour and the Conservatives posting on both sites to a similar extent, both parties received more engagement on TikTok. Reform and the Liberal Democrats both received more views on TikTok, reflecting their strategy of posting more frequently on this platform. Conversely, the Green Party were the only party to gain more views on Reels, where they preferred to post over TikTok. Interestingly, however, despite posting far less frequently on TikTok, they still received over 2 million views. This suggests that although TikTok attempts to deprioritise political content, there is a potentially extensive audience for party political content, and even minimal efforts can pay off for parties in terms of viewership.

Table 2. Engagement by party and platform.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform		Total	
	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels
Views	25,595,800	3,639,418	77,977,300	26,258,500	2,028,792	3,833,200	8,675,738	872,620	13,941,800	1,400,600	128,219,430	36,004,338
Likes	8,004,267	81,405	6,228,904	710,576	204,674	182,013	745,077	37,807	939,235	98,151	16,122,157	1,109,952
Shares	107,186	—	1,215,605	—	16,453	—	118,229	—	53,965	—	1,511,438	—
Comments	88,956	7,985	194,087	37,749	6,956	4,560	9,111	1,046	25,036	4,280	324,146	55,620
Highest viewed Reel/TikTok	5,100,000	984,000	5,300,000	4,600,000	404,100	371,000	2,600,000	77,900	994,100	112,000		
Highest liked Reel/TikTok	3,132,000	17,696	745,800	130,000	57,900	17,700	247,500	2,467	31,600	9,520		
Highest shared Reel/TikTok	50,300	—	312,200	—	7,470	—	19,600	—	7,362	—		
Highest commented on Reel/TikTok	27,300	1,151	13,500	3,788	1,571	501	2,201	270	2,278	443		

The data for the most popular individual video underline this. Individual posts captured wide attention, with both Labour and the Conservatives gaining over 5 million views on a single TikTok. Smaller parties were also able to capture attention, with the Liberal Democrats receiving over two and a half million views on one individual TikTok. All of this suggests that, even with the cold start the Conservatives, Labour, and Liberal Democrats had, adopting TikTok late, they were still able to garner extensive engagement on the platform. They will likely have this in mind when designing their strategies going forward. The analysis now moves to assess how central more traditional forms of campaigning were on short-form video content, assessing leader focus, information provision, and mobilisation in Tables 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

5.1. Traditional Campaigning Techniques: Leader Focus, Information Provision, Mobilisation, and Original Content

To address RQ2, asking whether parties fell into well-rehearsed tactics when campaigning on newer short-form video platforms, we assessed their outputs on these platforms for traditional features of campaigning by firstly examining leader focus, followed by policy communication, and then mobilisation. All results show statistically significant associations between the variables.

In theory, the use of the short-form video format may allow extra space for campaigns to broaden their remit in terms of the range of actors they feature and perhaps include focus on ordinary voters, experts, and other non-politician figures who are often sidelined from more mainstream coverage (Deacon et al., 2018). For the most part, this did not appear to be something widely adopted by parties here. The most common dominant figure in short-form video campaign content was the leader of the party that posted, often followed by the leader of the opposition. However, there were also attempts by some parties to move away from a hyper-focus on their leader, as demonstrated by the Green Party, which featured candidates or representatives who were not the leaders in over a third of their Reels and over a fifth of their TikToks. This also appeared to be true for Reform, with a caveat. Reform changed leader just over a week into the election campaign, switching from Richard Tice to Nigel Farage. Before he became leader, Farage had featured prominently, as Reform's most recognisable face, and the patterns here reflect Tice featuring heavily after the switch. Interestingly, the Liberal Democrats featured other political figures from their party who were not the leader significantly on Reels but rarely on their TikTok, which largely focused on the leader, perhaps reflecting that Ed Davey, their leader, adopted a campaign persona seemingly tailor-made for TikTok (see Southern, 2026). Only Labour appeared to include non-political actors on their short-form video content to any significant degree and only on Reels. Here, they often featured contributions from ordinary voters and why they were voting for Labour, often in "out and about" settings. This was still relatively uncommon compared to their focus on leaders (their own or the opposition leader) in their Reels. Overall, then, short-form video did appear to open up space for a broader range of politicians within the party to be showcased than one would see in traditional coverage, but there was still a heavy focus on leaders. For an overview, see Table 3.

Table 3. Dominant figures by party and platform.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform		Total
	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	
No figure	6.25%	7.84%	27.43%	9.77%	12.5%	2.9%	31.97%	6.78%	5.83%	3.45%	15.33%
Leader*	43.75%	35.29%	23.43%	33.33%	53.13%	49.28%	51.02%	55.93%	48.54%	55.17%	40.92%
Minister/secretary of state/candidate/other politician from the party	16.67%	15.69%	8.57%	9.77%	21.88%	34.78%	6.8%	33.9%	33.01%	34.48%	17.25%
Opposition leader	14.58%	17.65%	30.29%	22.99%	6.25%	1.45%	8.16%	1.69%	11.65%	6.9%	15.67%
Opposition politician	12.5%	11.76%	4%	5.17%	—	—	.68%	—	.97%	—	3.38%
Non-politician figure	6.25%	11.76%	6.29%	18.97%	6.25%	11.59%	1.36%	1.69%	—	—	7.44%

Notes: * Reform changed leaders on the 2nd of June 2024; Richard Tice was coded as leader up until this announcement was made, and Nigel Farage thereafter; Pearson Chi-Square 58.33; $p = .00$).

Information provision is also a key traditional function of campaigns, and we measured this by assessing whether content contained references to an identifiable policy the party in question was proposing (see Table 4). Overall, just over a quarter of Reels and TikToks appeared to contain a policy. Some fascinating patterns emerged by platform. For Labour, the Greens, and the Liberal Democrats, Reels were far more likely to include a clear policy proposal than on their TikTok. This was especially true for the Liberal Democrats, where over half their Reels contained a policy compared to just over a quarter of TikToks. By contrast, Reform displayed little difference by platform, and the Conservatives were far less likely to focus on policy on Reels compared to TikTok. Overall, this suggests that parties did not see TikTok as a space for policy focus, preferring to use Reels for this. This will be explored further when assessing the results in Table 7, but these findings suggest that parties saw Reels as a platform for more "serious" policy-based content. Perhaps with it being born from a more well-established and older social media platform and, having been adopted by parties at an earlier date, also provides evidence that Reels has now moved into the standardisation phase of platform adoption by parties (Gibson, 2020), in answer to RQ3a. It appears they saw TikTok as a platform for more jokey, eye-catching, or at least, policy-free content. This also raises the possibility that parties are responsive to platform cultures and restrictions (such as the de-prioritisation of politics content on TikTok) and may seek to circumnavigate this by matching platform cultures.

Table 4. Identifiable policy by party and platform.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform		Total
	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	
No	79.2%	94.1%	82.3%	73.6%	65.6%	52.2%	73.5%	45.8%	80.6%	82.8%	74.1%
Yes	20.8%	5.9%	17.7%	26.4%	34.4%	47.8%	26.5%	54.2%	19.4%	17.2%	25.9%
N	48	51	175	174	32	69	147	59	103	29	887

Notes: Pearson Chi-Square 9.53; $p = .00$.

When assessing mobilisation (see Table 5) as the final measure of more traditional campaign functions, a somewhat similar pattern to that of policy focus emerges. Overall, just under a third of posts by parties on Reels and TikTok contained a call to action. For the Green Party, Reform, and Labour, calls to action, which were usually a final call to "Vote [Party]," were far more common on Reels compared to TikTok. However, the Greens, Labour, and Reform, to a lesser extent, did not pull this across onto TikTok. Again, it does appear that, although Reels was released as a direct response to TikTok and contains many of the same features, parties see it as the short-form platform for more traditional campaign content and have standardised the content thereon. From these results, it is also clear that parties view these platforms very differently and were tailoring their content accordingly, not just producing videos and posting them on both platforms.

Table 5. Call to action by party and platform.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform		Total
	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	
No	79.2%	80.4%	80.6%	39.1%	81.3%	23.2%	85.7%	89.8%	66%	48.3%	66.5%
Yes	20.8%	19.6%	19.4%	60.9%	18.8%	76.8%	14.3%	10.2%	34%	51.7%	33.5%
N	48	51	175	174	32	69	147	59	103	29	887

Notes: Pearson Chi-Square 79.59; $p = .00$.

The analysis now moves to assess the amount of original content campaigns were producing for short-form platforms (Table 6) and how they incorporated elements of short-form platform cultures and affordances into their campaign content (Table 7), in line with RQ2b and RQ3. Once again, an overarching observation is that parties were tailoring their short-form content by platform. Each party produced more original content for TikTok than for Reels. Reform especially appeared to focus heavily on producing original content for TikTok. By stark contrast, over 70% of the content they posted for Reels was largely reused content, usually clips from mainstream media appearances. It is clear they saw TikTok as a place where clips from traditional media would not gain engagement, but saw Reels as a place to boost the audience of traditional media appearances in an online space with minimal effort, which could be considered a savvy platform strategy.

Table 6. Original content vs re-use of media by party and platform.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform	
	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels
Original content	64.6%	39.2%	63.4%	38%	46.9%	36.2%	65.3%	30.5%	79.6%	17.2%
Re-use of content from mainstream media/other party social media	6.3%	54.9%	20.6%	18.4%	50%	63.8%	22.4%	66.1%	12.6%	79.6%
Equal mix	16.7%	–	12.1%	35.6%	3.1%	–	3.4%	3.4%	6.8%	–
Original infographics	12.5%	5.9%	4%	8%	–	–	8.8%	–	1%	3.4%
Total *N*	48	51	175	174	32	69	147	59	103	29

Notes: Pearson Chi-Square 93.06; $p = .00$.

Table 7. Adoption of platform cultures and affordances.

	Conservatives		Labour		Green		Liberal Democrat		Reform		Total
Feature (Pearson Chi-Square ^{sig})	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	TikTok	Reels	
Post contained a meme (49.64***)	10.42%	3.92%	34.86%	12.07%	9.38%	2.90%	32.65%	0%	5.83%	0%	16.69%
Use humour (66.65***)	25%	9.80%	46.29%	14.94%	9.38%	5.80%	40.14%	8.47%	18.45%	3.45%	24.24%
Talking while walking/selfie video (1.30)	6.25%	11.76%	2.29%	3.45%	9.38%	1.45%	.68%	3.39%	1.94%	0%	3.16%
Music via in-app widget (134.37***)	25%	0%	38.29%	0%	18.75%	0%	38.78%	0%	5.83%	0%	16.69%
Slide show (76.71***)	18.75%	0%	26.29%	0%	15.63%	0%	19.05%	0%	2.91%	0%	10.26%
Mash-up/montage/duet (9.56***)	16.67%	25.49%	36.57%	58.62%	6.25%	15.94%	22.45%	8.47%	22.33%	13.79%	29.88%
Total *N*	48	51	175	174	32	69	147	59	103	29	887

Note: *** $p \leq .00$.

The Conservatives, Labour, and the Liberal Democrats displayed similar patterns, largely focusing their efforts on original content for TikTok more than Reels. Again, much of the content these three parties posted on Reels were clips of mainstream media appearances. Reform deployed a similar strategy but to an even greater extent. Reels were seen as a way to push out content that already existed and increase the audience on efforts that had already been made via traditional media. By contrast, the Conservatives, Labour, and the Liberal Democrats clearly saw benefit in creating original content for TikTok. As these three parties were new to the platform, some of this may have been an effort to grow their following on TikTok as well as an attempt to win votes. The Green Party were more likely to produce original content for Reels, in line with what appears to be their overall strategy of preferring this platform for their short-form content over TikTok. Nevertheless, they still produced a significant amount of original content for TikTok, with almost half of their TikToks being largely original. Overall, it does appear that parties were willing to put effort into their content on TikTok rather than treating it as simply another channel for reposting content from more traditional media or other social media. This was not the case for Reels, where parties seemingly viewed the platform as a good avenue for gaining an online audience for traditional media content.

5.2. TikTokifying the Campaign? Content, Cultures, and Affordances

Finally, to address RQ2c and RQ3a and b, we consider the adoption of six features which might be considered typical of TikTokification in terms of platform culture or affordances, what this means both for experimentation and standardisation, and the subversive 4th era of campaigning. We caveat that we are aware that TikTok does not have a monopoly on memes and humour, and that these exist on all social media platforms; however, TikTok is also a highly memetic platform, and it bills itself as an entertainment platform. The other aspects here are all hallmarks of the TikTok platform in terms of its affordances or common uses by creators on this platform. Firstly, in assessing memes and more broadly the deployment of humour, parties saw TikTok as the place to post memes and humorous content, rather than Reels. This broad finding suggests that parties further tailor content to platform cultures. All parties posted memes and humorous content at far higher levels on TikTok compared to Reels. Reform and the Liberal Democrats posted humorous content on TikTok at four times the rate they did on Reels, and both parties posted no memes on Reels at all. Labour posted three times more humorous content on TikTok compared to Reels. Beyond this, however, adoption of memetic content on TikTok was mixed. The Liberal Democrats and Labour embraced this with over a third of their TikTok posts featuring a meme. Conversely, the Conservatives, Greens, and Reform largely avoided memetic content on TikTok, with the Conservatives and the Greens posting memes in about 10% of their TikToks and Reform only 5%. This shows that some parties embraced the experimentation with platform cultures, while others did not.

Secondly, in terms of other TikTok-typical styles and affordances, “walk and talk” videos have not been widely adopted by parties here, and this was the only variable where party and platform differences are not statistically significant. On TikTok, the Greens adopted this to some extent, but only in 10% of their posts. Interestingly, the Conservatives adopted this too, but on Reels rather than TikTok, where almost 12% of their videos were in this style. Assessing adding music to posts, and the posting of slide shows, there were some stark and interesting findings. Despite these two features also being present on Reels, hardly any parties at all adopted either feature there. They were widely deployed on TikTok among every party except Reform. For example, the Liberal Democrats enhanced almost 40% of their TikToks with the in-app music feature, but none of their Reels. This does seem to suggest that parties do adapt their content to platform cultures specifically, rather than the availability of a certain affordance, and that they enforce this separation

strictly. Finally, assessing the adoption of mash-ups, montages, or duets, due to a Krippendorff's alpha of .66, we tentatively suggest that adoption was variable by party and largely patchy. The use of these features appeared to be a widespread practice, especially by Labour on Reels, while the Greens and Liberal Democrats rarely deployed such content in their TikToks and Reels, respectively.

6. Conclusions

This article aimed to assess the adoption and use of short-form video by parties at the 2024 UK General Election. Taken together, the findings suggest that all parties attempted to "TikTokfy" their campaigns. All major parties engaged with short-form video to a substantial degree, but the intensity and manner of adoption differed markedly. These differences were not only quantitative but reflected distinct strategic and stylistic patterns across parties. Every party, except the Green Party, evidently favoured TikTok over Reels and gained more views on TikTok. TikTokification is not simply the adoption of short-form video, but the selective internalisation of platform-specific cultural logic. Most parties saw TikTok as a space for more original and experimental content, as well as content that attempted to match the short-form video platform's culture and affordances, whereas Reels was used to repost more traditional campaign content to increase views on those appearances.

To address RQ3a on whether this new wave of social media follows earlier patterns of experimentation and standardisation (per Gibson, 2020), we can offer a cautious affirmative answer. The findings suggest that short-form video was widely used to perform traditional campaign functions, yet its execution varied markedly across platforms. On Reels, far fewer short-form-native features were deployed, with most parties using the format in a more conventional and standardised manner. This likely implies that standardisation had appeared at a relatively advanced stage by the time the election was called. For most parties, Reels functions primarily as a distribution channel for repurposed traditional media campaign content, reflecting an already stabilised and professionalised mode of use. In contrast, TikTok remained in a more pronounced experimentation phase, with many parties creating TikTok accounts only days after the election was called. The newness of TikTok within party campaigning encouraged risk-taking, allowing this study to capture an experimentation phase in real time. Parties engaged extensively with platform-specific cultures, incorporating memes, humour, informal performance style, and multimodal features such as in-app music and editing tools. Internet memes and informal campaign styles are now a mainstream form of political communication, even as part of the formal party campaign (see Southern, 2026, for an extensive discussion of this). These elements signify subversive features (Römmele & Gibson, 2020), yet TikTokification occurred unevenly and, in a strict sense, was largely confined to TikTok itself. In short, experimentation on TikTok appears more extensive and radical than earlier Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 phases of digital media (Gibson, 2020; Jackson & Lilleker, 2009); meanwhile, the adoption of Reels suggests a compressed experimentation-standardisation cycle. Overall, then, the evidence here suggests that the experimentation-standardisation cycle for short-form video may be expedited compared to previous waves of digital campaigning, and furthermore that contemporary campaign change is shaped not only by technological innovation but by platform-specific cultural logics and accumulated organisational experience with prior waves of digital media. Whether this experimentation continues remains an open question. TikTok may follow the now-familiar trajectory toward standardisation, as earlier digital media tools did.

In terms of limitations, firstly, the analysis focuses on official party accounts, excluding candidates' and party leaders' personal short-form video profiles, particularly Reform UK's Nigel Farage, which may exhibit distinct patterns of platform adaptation. Future research should apply and refine the framework across these actor types to assess whether TikTokification operates differently at organisational and individual levels. Secondly, conclusions drawn from half of the coded variables should be interpreted cautiously because some intercoder reliability scores fall below the conventional threshold. While these variables offer suggestive patterns, the interpretations based on them should be understood as indicative rather than definitive. Further refinement and testing of the codebook is therefore necessary. More broadly, these challenges highlight a methodological difficulty for political communication research, especially on emerging multimodal platforms where meaning is produced through audio, visual editing, performance styles, and platform-specific affordances rather than textual content alone.

To conclude, despite somewhat patchy adoption, there is evidence that UK parties were open to adopting, and even embracing, certain affordances, features, and styles of TikTokification in their campaigns. Since the election, several political figures have risen to prominence and enjoyed successes deploying TikTokified techniques in their campaigns. These include New York mayoral candidate Zohran Mamdani and the new leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, Zack Polanski (Gabbatt, 2025). This suggests that the patterns identified in this article are unlikely to be unique to this context. The platform affordances shaping campaign behaviour operate transnationally. The uneven yet widespread attempt at TikTokification may therefore reflect a broader shift in digital campaigning across established democracies. Comparative research is needed to assess whether the compressed experimentation-standardisation cycle generalises across political systems and electoral contexts; however, the use of TikTok and TikTok-style communicative practices will likely continue.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank and acknowledge the contributions of Iara Faleiro Diniz and Samuel Palmer in helping code our pilot data.

Funding

Publication of this article in open access was made possible through the institutional membership agreement between the University of Manchester and Cogitatio Press. Our pilot coding was funded via the University of Liverpool Master's Research Internship Scheme via payment to the project interns acknowledged above.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest. The corresponding author also works for Ofcom—the communication services regulator in the UK. This article represents the views and opinions of the author(s) and should not be taken as a statement of Ofcom policy/opinion.

Data Availability

We are happy to share the data used here upon reasonable request. Please contact the corresponding author in the first instance.

Supplementary Material

Supplementary material for this article is available online in the format provided by the author (unedited).

References

Ahler, D. J., Citrin, J., Dougal, M. C., & Lenz, G. S. (2017). Face value? Experimental evidence that candidate appearance influences electoral choice. *Political Behaviour*, 39, 77–102. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-016-9348-6

Al-Othman, H. (2015, July 20). 'Don't drunk tweet.' MPs given advice on using social media. *London Evening Standard*. https://www.standard.co.uk/hp/front/don-t-drunk-tweet-mps-given-advice-on-using-social-media-in-new-commons-guide-10403273.html

Bhattacharya, S., Srinivasan, P., & Polgreen, P. (2017). Social media engagement analysis of US Federal health agencies on Facebook. *BMC medical informatics and decision making*, *17*(1), Article 49. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12911-017-0447-z

Cervi, L. (2023). El uso de TikTok en las elecciones municipales: de candidatos a políticos-influencers. *Revista Más Poder Local*, *53*, 8–29. https://doi.org/10.56151/maspoderlocal.175

Cervi, L., Tejedor, S., & García Blesa, F. (2023). TikTok and political communication: The latest frontier of politainment? A case study. *Media and Communications*, *11*(2), 203–217. https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v11i2.6390

Chadwick, A. (2017). *The hybrid media system: Politics and power*. Oxford University Press.

Chen, Y., Mingming, L., Guo, D., & Wang, X. (2023). The effect of short-form video addiction on users' attention. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, *42*(16), 2893–2910. https://doi.org/10.1080/0144929X.2022.2151512

Crowther, Z. (2024, November 14). MPs approach "tipping point" to move away from Elon Musk's X. *Politics Home*. https://www.politicshome.com/news/article/mps-approach-tipping-point-move-away-elon-musk-x

Dan, V., & Arendt, F. (2021). Visual cues to the hidden agenda: Investigating the effects of ideology-related visual subtle backdrop cues in political communication. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *26*(1), 22–45.

Deacon, D., Downey, J., Smith, D., Stanyer, J., & Wring, D. (2018). A tale of two parties: Press and television coverage of the campaign. In D. Wring, R. Mortimore, & S. Atkinson (Eds.), *Political communication in Britain: Campaigning, media and polling in the 2017 general election* (pp. 23–41). Springer.

Esser, F., & Pfetsch, B. (2020). Political communication: A 2020 update. In D. Caramani (Ed.), *Comparative politics* (pp. 336–358). Oxford University Press.

Faltesek, D., Graalum, E., Breving, B., Knudsen, E., Lucas, J., Young, S., & Varas Zambrano, F. E. (2023). TikTok as television. *Social Media + Society*, *9*(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231194576

Farkas, X., & Bene, M. (2020). Images, politicians, and social media: Patterns and effects of politicians' image-based political communication strategies on social media. *The International Journal of Press/Politics*, *26*(1), 119–142. https://doi.org/10.1177/1940161220959553

Gabbatt, A. (2025, September 20). On the street and in your feed: The joyful genius of Zohran Mamdani's viral videos. *The Guardian*. https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/20/zohran-mamdani-social-media-viral-videos

Gerbaudo, P. (2024). TikTok and the algorithmic transformation of social media publics: From social networks to social interest clusters. *New Media & Society*, *28*(3), 1019–1036. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448241304106

Gibson, R. K. (2020). *When the nerds go marching in: How digital technology moved from the margins to the mainstream of political campaigns*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195397789.001.0001

Gibson, R. K., & Ward, S. J. (1998). UK political parties and the internet: "Politics as usual" in the new media? *Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, *3*(3), 14–38. https://doi.org/10.1177/1081180X98003003003

Grabe, M. E., & Bucy, E. P. (2009). *Image bite politics: News and the visual framing of elections*. Oxford University Press.

Guess, A., Malhotra, N., Pan, J., Barberá, P., Allcott, H., Brown, T., Crespo-Tenorio, A., Dimmery, D., Freelon, D., Gentzkow, M., González-Bailón, S. Kennedy, E., Kim, Y. M., Lazer, D., Moehler, D., Nyhan, B., Rivera, C. V., Settle, J., Thomas, D., . . . Tucker, J. A. (2023). How do social media feed algorithms affect attitudes and behavior in an election campaign? *Science (American Association for the Advancement of Science)*, *381*(6656), 398–404. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.abp9364

Guinaudeau, B., Munger, K., & Votta, F. (2022). Fifteen seconds of fame: TikTok and the supply side of social video. *Computational Communication Research*, *4*(2), 463–485. https://doi.org/10.5117/CCR2022.2.004.GUIN

Hagar, N., & Diakopoulos, N. (2023). Algorithmic indifference: The dearth of news recommendations on TikTok. *New Media & Society*, *27*(6), 3449–3469. https://doi.org/10.1177/14614448231192964

Jackson, N. A., & Lilleker, D. G. (2009). Building an architecture of participation? Political parties and Web 2.0 in Britain. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, *6*(3/4), 232–250. https://doi.org/10.1080/19331680903028438

Kreiss, D., Lawrence, R. G., & McGregor, S. C. (2017). In their own words: Political practitioner accounts of candidates, audiences, affordances, genres, and timing in strategic social media use. *Political Communication*, *35*(1), 8–31. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1334727

Kriesi, H. (2012). Personalization of national election campaigns. *Party Politics*, *18*(6), 825–844. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068810389643

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology*. Sage. https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071878781

McLoughlin, L. (2019). *How social media is changing political representation in the United Kingdom*. University of Salford.

McLoughlin, L., & Southern, R. (2021). By any memes necessary? Small political acts, incidental exposure and memes during the 2017 UK general election. *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, *23*(1), 60–84. https://doi.org/10.1177/1369148120930594

Moir, A. (2023). The use of TikTok for political campaigning in Canada: The case of Jagmeet Singh. *Social Media + Society*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051231157604

Muñoz, C. L., & Towner, T. L. (2017). The image is the message: Instagram marketing and the 2016 presidential primary season. *Journal of Political Marketing*, *16*(3/4), 290–318. https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2017.1334254

Norris, P. (2004). *The evolution of election campaigns: Eroding political engagement* [Paper presentation]. Political Communications in the 21st Century, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. https://web.archive.org/web/20200128151540/https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Otago%20The%20Evolution%20of%20Election%20Campaigns.pdf

Ofcom. (2025). *Communications market report 2025: Interactive data*. https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-and-broadband/service-quality/communications-market-report-2025-interactive-data

Pearson, G. D., Silver, N. A., Robinson, J. Y., Azadi, M., Schillo, B. A., & Kreslake, J. M. (2025). Beyond the margin of error: A systematic and replicable audit of the TikTok research API. *Information, Communication & Society*, *28*(3), 452–470. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2024.2420032

Perez, S. (2020, August 5). Instagram Reels launches globally in over 50 countries, including US. *TechCrunch*. https://techcrunch.com/2020/08/05/instagram-reels-launches-globally-in-over-50-countries-including-u-s

Peters, J., & Clarke, M. (2023, January 13). Twitter's For You timeline appears on desktop browsers now, too. *The Verge*. https://www.theverge.com/2023/1/13/23550345/twitter-for-you-following-desktop-ios-android

Phillips, W., & Milner, R. M. (2017). *The ambivalent internet: Mischief, oddity, and antagonism online*. Polity.

Römmele, A., & Gibson, R. (2020). Scientific and subversive: The two faces of the fourth era of political campaigning. *New Media & Society*, *22*(4), 595–610. https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444819893979

Selnow, G. W. (1998). Electronic whistle-stops: The impact of the internet on American politics. Praeger Publishers.

Southern, R. (2015). Is Web 2.0 providing a voice for outsiders? A comparison of personal web site and social media use by candidates at the 2010 UK general election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, *12*(1), 1–17. https://doi.org/10.1080/19331681.2014.972603

Southern, R. (2026). *Memes and politics in the UK: From piggate to partygate and beyond*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Southern, R., & Leicht, C. V. (2024). The memes of production—Grassroots-made digital content and its incorporation into the formal presidential campaign. In D. Jackson, A. Carson, D. S. Coombs, S. Edgerly, E. Thorsen, F. Trevisan, & S. Wright (Eds). *US election analysis 2024: Media, voters and the campaign* (pp. 140–142). Bournemouth University. https://doras.dcu.ie/30542/1/USElectionAnalysis2024_Jackson-et_al_v1-Lokot.pdf

Steffan, D. (2020). Visual self-presentation strategies of political candidates on social media platforms: A comparative study. *International Journal of Communication*, *14*, 3096–3118. https://ijoc.org/index.php/ijoc/article/view/13128

Stokel-Walker, C. (2021). *TikTok boom: The inside story of the world's favourite app*. Cranbury Press.

Stromer-Galley, J. (2000). On-line interaction and why candidates avoid it. Journal of communication, *50*(4), 111–132. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2000.tb02865.x

Theocharis, Y., Boulianne, S., Koc-Michalska, K., & Bimber, B. (2022). Platform affordances and political participation: How social media reshape political engagement. *West European Politics*, *46*(4), 788–811. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2022.2087410

Wallsten, K. (2010). "Yes we can": How online viewership, blog discussion, campaign statements, and mainstream media coverage produced a viral video phenomenon. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, *7*(2/3), 163–181.

Zeng, J., & Abidin, C. (2021). '#OkBoomer, time to meet the Zoomers': Studying the memefication of intergenerational politics on TikTok. *Information, Communication, & Society*, *24*(16), 2459–2481. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2021.1961007

About the Authors

Rosalynd Southern is senior lecturer in political communication at the University of Liverpool. Her work focuses on how digital and social media are used for political communication by politicians, parties, and citizens.

Niamh Cashell is a politics PhD candidate on the Digital Campaigning in Electoral Democracies project at the University of Manchester.

Liam McLoughlin is senior lecturer of politics at Edge Hill University. His work focuses on political communications, particularly addressing how digital platforms and technologies shape the discussions between elites and citizens.

Ploykamol Suwantawit is a recent PhD graduate of the University of Liverpool. Her work also focuses on how popular culture and social media shape political communication during election campaigning and protest movements.