Having to answer memory questions is a ubiquitous feature of everyday life. When a question is asked, the most obvious action is to try to retrieve the answer to the question from one's own memory. However, memory is not infallible – on the contrary, it is often susceptible to forgetting and distortions. When memory fails, it stands to reason that people might rely on other sources of information to answer memory questions. For example, they might refer to their calendar, check the Internet – or ask another person. It is this last case that will be investigated in the present project.

When deciding whether to make use of another person's memory, it would be good to know how reliable this person's memory typically is: in other words, can we trust this person's memory? It is perhaps not a difficult question when the other person is well known to us – for example, a partner, a close friend, or a family member. In such a case, we can refer to our previous experiences with this person's memories. For example, if we know that our mother remembers the details from our childhood very well, we can safely assume that whatever she remembers about our 10th birthday is likely to be accurate. What happens, however, if the only person who can help us answer a memory question is someone we do not know well? This situation is nowadays becoming more and more common, given the growing importance of our online life, where anonymity is often one of the primary features of social interactions. How can we *learn* about the reliability of memory of an initially unknown person? And do we actually act on this information, relying on memories of those whom we believe to be credible, and discarding information from those whose memories seem to be wrong?

This project will attempt to answer these questions by examining three groups of factors that can help people establish the reliability of another person's memory: factors concerning the *learner* (= us), the *social source* (= another person), and the *memory task*. The first group of factors includes what we know, how confident we are in what we know, and who we are. The better our own memory is, the easier it will be for us to assess the accuracy of another person's memories and draw conclusions regarding this person's memory efficacy. This task should, however, become more difficult if we mistrust our own memory, lacking confidence in what we remember. Finally, our personal characteristics should matter as well – an older person might put either more or less trust in their memory as compared to a younger person, depending on the memory question.

The second group of factors includes the properties of answers provided by another person. Seeing a person err several times in a row is likely to undermine our trust in this person's memory, while a series of correct answers might improve our perception of how accurate this person is. Also, we are likely to form impressions regarding someone's memory accuracy early on, so the first answers provided by another person might affect our beliefs about this person's memory disproportionately.

The third group of factors includes task demands. A person might be an expert in some areas, but not necessarily in others: for example, someone with an interest in jazz might have no interest whatsoever in popular music. When filling in gaps in our own memory with information from this person, it would then be reasonable to rely on information that matches another person's expertise, but discard information about topics this person knows little about. A question thus arises whether we can simultaneously track how good someone's memory is in more than one area of knowledge, and how this can be facilitated.

Together, this project will allow for providing a comprehensive overview of what helps us behave adaptively in memory tasks, benefitting from social learning of accurate new information without the costs associated with learning errors. In addition to theoretical advances, understanding what determines social learning from initially unknown sources will, in the long run, have important practical implications, for example helping establish guidelines for creating effective and memorable educational campaigns.