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Dr. Joe Árvai's research focuses on improving the critical thinking, judgment, and decision-making capabilities of people. His research focuses primarily on contexts where people must make judgments and decisions under conditions of risk and uncertainty, and where they must confront tradeoffs across conflicting social, economic, and environmental objectives. His research also focuses on situations where people's instinctive approach to judgment and decision-making is biased by unchecked emotions and motivated reasoning.

In advance of this agenda, Joe and his lab of post-doctoral scholars and graduate students conduct research aimed at improving our understanding of how people intuitively make judgments and decisions about, primarily, environmental issues and sustainability. They couple this research with the development and testing of tools and approaches that can be used by people to improve decision quality across a broad range of environmental, social, and economic contexts. Decision quality, in this case, is measured by the degree to which people's values and objectives align with their ultimate judgments and choices.

All of this research conducted in Joe's lab is applied, and accounts for judgment and decision-making by a broad spectrum of public and stakeholder groups, as well as by technical experts, business leaders, and policy-makers. Likewise, Joe and his group conduct research across a wide range of contexts, ranging from environmental risk management to consumer choice and policy-making.

In addition to Joe's work at USC, he is a frequent advisor to government, business, and NGOs. He is a former member of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Chartered Science Advisory Board, and the U.S. National Academy of Sciences' Board on Environmental Change and Society. He is also a Senior Researcher at the Decision Science Research Institute in Eugene, OR, and he is an Adjunct Professor in Engineering and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA.

In his spare time, Joe likes to make photographs, ride motorcycles, and climb mountains.  
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