Integrating Ethics. Methods & Tools for ethical reflection in development processes of emerging technologies.

Panel contribution by the Berlin Ethics Lab (TU Berlin) and the

Societal Futures Research Field (AIT Vienna).

Keywords:

#Integrativeethics #Methods #ethicalreflection #Practice #epistemictools

Abstract:

A major concern of the advances in emerging technologies, e.g. in Artificial Intelligence and Human-Machine-Interaction, is the risk of causing undesired effects in sensitive areas of our lives. Negative effects can result in discrimination, violation of data protection and privacy, lack of transparency of decisions as well as scaling effects and many more. As technologies are strongly connected to the implicit ethics of the developers and the conceptual framing of the development process, it leads to a normalization of value systems hidden in the applications as well as in the developer's design frameworks.

To tackle these issues, academic fields from the humanities like STS, sociology, Technology Assessment, foresight or philosophy, reflect on the possible implications and create guidelines for emerging technologies to counteract negative effects already at the beginning of the development process. However, translating often abstract principles into the specifics of a very concrete development process remains a challenge. Due to a lack in specific design tools or methods to cross the disciplinary gap between actual development and ethical reflection, developers seem to neither approach ethics systematically nor have the knowledge or training to reflect ethical questions (neither independently nor with guidance).

In our panel we want to discuss this challenge and exchange experiences on how to integrate ethical reflection in the development process. It is an open call to present methods and tools, best practice examples and failures and to exchange praxeological knowledge within the wider STS-community. Guiding questions of the panel are – among others: What is the role of ethicists in technology development? What methods and approaches help to integrate ethics into development processes? What are best practices and best failures? What works, what doesn't and why?

We invite practitioners as well as theoreticians to reflect on the methodological experiences on integrating ethics into the development process of emerging technologies. Examples can come from different fields of development, especially those that need ethical reflection processes (e.g. AI development). For participating in the panel, please provide a short overview of your work in 300 – 500 words as well as up to 3 questions you'd like to discuss during the panel. For the actual panel, please prepare a short (5min) presentation to introduce yourself / your institution and your work and bring three questions, that are at the core of your work and which you would like to discuss with the community. We will then have a moderated discussion to exchange on the questions and advance our knowledge and practices on integrating ethics within technology development.

For participation or further information, please send your contribution to wenzel.mehnert@tu-berlin.de until the 01.11.2022. The panel committee will decide on the list of participants until the 01.12.2022.

The panel is a collaborative project by the Societal Futures research field at the Austrian Institute of Technology (Vienna) and the Berlin Ethics Lab at the TU Berlin (Berlin).

Panel organziers:

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