

## Report on Misinformation and Disinformation

**Whereas,** There is widespread concern that generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) — as exemplified by Microsoft’s ChatGPT — may dramatically increase misinformation and disinformation globally, posing serious threats to democracy and democratic principles.

“I’m particularly worried that these models could be used for large-scale disinformation,” said Sam Altman, CEO of OpenAI, the company that developed ChatGPT along with Microsoft.<sup>1</sup>

Microsoft has reportedly invested over 13 billion dollars in OpenAI, and has integrated ChatGPT in its Bing search engine and other products. ChatGPT is reportedly the fastest-growing consumer application in history.<sup>2</sup>

The *Washington Post* said ChatGPT users “have posted numerous examples of the tools fumbling basic factual questions or even fabricating falsehoods, complete with realistic details and fake citations.”<sup>3</sup> The *Guardian* reported that “ChatGPT is making up fake Guardian articles.”<sup>4</sup> Microsoft itself states: “Bing will sometimes misrepresent the information it finds, and you may see responses that sound convincing but are incomplete, inaccurate, or inappropriate.”<sup>5</sup> Tests by NewsGuard found ChatGPT technology could be the most powerful tool in widely spreading misinformation.<sup>6</sup>

Generative AI’s disinformation may pose serious risks to democracy by manipulating public opinion, undermining institutional trust, and swaying elections. In January, Eurasia Group ranked generative AI as the third highest political risk confronting the world, warning new technologies “will be a gift to autocrats bent on undermining democracy abroad and stifling dissent at home.”<sup>7</sup> 2024 will be a critical year for elections, with a United States presidential election and significant Senate and House races.<sup>8</sup> Presidential elections will also be held in Russia and Ukraine.<sup>9</sup>

Shareholders are concerned that ChatGPT presents Microsoft with significant legal, financial and reputational risk. Many legal experts believe technology companies’ liability shield provided under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act may not apply to content generated by ChatGPT. Senator Wyden, who wrote the law, says Section 230 “has nothing to do with protecting companies from the consequences of their own actions and products.”<sup>10</sup> Experts are also debating how the principles of defamation law apply to AI-generated falsehoods, which open the company up to substantial litigation risk.<sup>11</sup> ChatGPT is already running afoul of regulators, with current investigations by European and Canadian data protection authorities.<sup>12</sup>

In March, Microsoft eliminated its entire AI ethics and society team. Employees expressed concern that this leaves Microsoft without a dedicated team to ensure its AI principles are closely tied to product design.<sup>13</sup>

**Resolved,** Shareholders request the Board issue a report, at reasonable cost, omitting proprietary or legally privileged information, to be published within one year of the Annual Meeting and updated annually thereafter, assessing the risks to the Company’s operations and finances as well as risks to public welfare presented by the company’s role in facilitating misinformation and disinformation disseminated or generated via artificial intelligence, and what steps, if any, the company plans to remediate those harms, and the effectiveness of such efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/03/20/openai-ceo-sam-altman-says-hes-a-little-bit-scared-of-ai.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/04/08/microsofts-complex-bet-on-openai-brings-potential-and-uncertainty.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2023/04/05/chatgpt-lies/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/apr/06/ai-chatgpt-guardian-technology-risks-fake-article>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bing.com/new#faq>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/08/technology/ai-chatbots-disinformation.html>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.eurasiagroup.net/issues/top-risks-2023>

<sup>8</sup> [https://ballotpedia.org/United\\_States\\_Congress\\_elections,\\_2024](https://ballotpedia.org/United_States_Congress_elections,_2024)

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/c6972372-a02a-4b42-abba-3d98296e08f3>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2023/03/17/ai-chatbots-wont-enjoy-techs-legal-shield-section-230-authors-say/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/chatgpt-labeled-me-can-i-sue-defamation-law-artificial-intelligence-cartoonist-court-lawyers-technology-14086034>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/04/25/1072177/a-cambridge-analytica-style-scandal-for-ai-is-coming/?truid=&utm\\_source=the\\_download&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=the\\_download.unpaid.engagement&utm\\_term=&utm\\_content=05-03-2023&mc\\_cid=1fb19f5898&mc\\_eid=5c3e4c2150](https://www.technologyreview.com/2023/04/25/1072177/a-cambridge-analytica-style-scandal-for-ai-is-coming/?truid=&utm_source=the_download&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=the_download.unpaid.engagement&utm_term=&utm_content=05-03-2023&mc_cid=1fb19f5898&mc_eid=5c3e4c2150)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.theverge.com/2023/3/13/23638823/microsoft-ethics-society-team-responsible-ai-layoffs>