Responsible Tech Guide

The people, organizations, and ideas of the Responsible Tech ecosystem and actionable ways to get involved.
There’s a vibrant Responsible Tech community
Welcome to the Responsible Tech Guide!

The Responsible Tech Guide is designed to provide an overview of the people, organizations, and ideas of the growing Responsible Tech movement.

In order to build a tech future aligned with the public interest, we need a diverse and robust responsible tech ecosystem that promotes knowledge-sharing and collaboration and moves at the speed of tech to tackle wicked tech and society issues.

The purpose of the Responsible Tech Guide is to learn about the ecosystem and find actionable ways to get involved.

The Responsible Tech Guide is the flagship resource of All Tech Is Human, a non-profit organization dedicated to making a more connected, inclusive, and equitable environment to collectively approach complex tech and society issues. Together we can build a better tech future.

You can find the latest version, along with additional resources like our responsible tech org list, at responsibletechguide.com!
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1. **Responsible AI**

   Responsible AI is at the forefront of ethical technology development. It emphasizes the need for transparency, fairness, and accountability in AI systems. Our community of ethical practitioners works to ensure applications of AI benefit society without causing harm or reinforcing bias. In the responsible technology space, it’s important to craft guidelines, implement robust testing, and advocate for policies that prioritize ethical considerations while respecting human rights and equity.

2. **Trust & Safety**

   Trust & Safety teams play a vital role in maintaining the integrity of online platforms and digital spaces. Practitioners are not only dedicated to combating harmful content, disinformation, and cyber threats, they also work to foster an environment of trust among users. The Trust & Safety field is evolving and emerging with difficult tradeoffs and challenges in promoting a secure and trustworthy digital ecosystem.
3. Tech & Democracy

The intersection of technology and democracy involves the collective endeavor of safeguarding our digital public squares and the legitimacy of democratic institutions. In the complex interplay between technology and democratic processes, practitioners in this intersection advocate for transparency and election integrity, safeguard against foreign interference, and ensure our digital spaces remain open for discourse and civic engagement. This work is pivotal to preserving principles that underpin our society.

4. Public Interest Tech

Public Interest Tech involves the championing of technology serving the greater good. Practitioners in this space work to address societal challenges through innovative, sustainable solutions, with expertise spanning issue areas like civic tech, data, and digital accessibility. This work involves cross-sector collaboration with governments, civil society, and communities to create digital tools and policies that prioritize wellbeing and equitable access for all.

5. Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

The intersection of youth, tech, and wellbeing features a range of stakeholders steeped in the unique and emerging challenges between young people and technology. There is an emphasis on digital literacy, online safety, and the responsible use of technology, particularly in the realm of social media. Youth advocacy in the space promotes meaningful tech legislation, digital literacy, and wellbeing tools, ensuring mental and emotional health while navigating the digital landscape.
About All Tech Is Human

All Tech Is Human is a non-profit organization based in NYC committed to coalescing people and ideas to tackle wicked tech and society issues at the speed of tech. We believe we can build a better tech future by diversifying the people involved in the process, having a more cohesive and collaborative responsible tech ecosystem, and creating a conducive environment for the consideration of technology’s impact at a much faster pace.

Since our founding in 2018, we have directly interacted with thousands of individuals from a broad range of backgrounds around the world, through activities centered in multistakeholder convening and community building, multidisciplinary education, and the diversification of the traditional tech pipeline with more backgrounds, disciplines, and lived experiences.

We simultaneously learn from the responsible tech community with the ability to influence its future. Our activities include operating a Slack group of over 6k members across 77 countries, a talent pool of over 1.7k members, a global mentorship program, regular summits and mixers, and much more. We are highly-participatory and naturally inclusive, weaving together the emerging with the established to strengthen the ecosystem and seed the next generation. See all of our projects here, and learn about our theory of change here.

All Tech Is Human’s activities are entirely free — thereby creating a low barrier for entry — through the support of the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation, Schmidt Futures, and the Siegel Family Endowment.
The ten principles of All Tech Is Human

1. The future of technology is **intertwined with the future of democracy** and the human condition.

2. In order to align our tech future with the public interest, we **need to involve the public**.

3. **We need collective action in tech**, not just individual thought leadership.

4. No application without representation — **not about us without us**.

5. Combining multiple stakeholders, disciplines, and perspectives requires an **agnostic space for understanding and knowledge-sharing**.

6. People often struggle to “**find the others**” and discover the wide variety of people and orgs committed to **co-creating a better tech future**.

7. Technology is not just for technologists; we **need all disciplines involved**.

8. **Top-down models** have power but often lack a diversity of ideas; **grassroots models** have ideas but often lack power. We **unite these models**.

9. **Tech innovation moves fast**, while our consideration of its impact often moves **slow**. We need to reduce the gulf between these.

10. There is a growing awareness of the root causes of our current dilemma, but limited action toward understanding **values, trade-offs, and best paths forward**.

We cannot align our tech future with the public interest unless we actively involve the public. All Tech Is Human’s approach brings together people of all backgrounds and skill levels to learn from each other, build community, and co-create a better tech future. Find out more at AllTechIsHuman.org
It’s time for a better approach to tackling wicked tech & society issues

As a society, we are facing a slew of complex tech and society challenges that evolve each day. Whether it’s understanding the impact of generative AI, reducing harms online, or considering emerging technologies’ effect on our civil liberties, the problem space feels endless. But one question remains: *What can we do to ensure our tech future works for all of us?*

All Tech Is Human has built a better approach for tackling wicked tech and society issues. Learning from our interactions with tens of thousands of individuals around the world through our activities (our Slack community, mentorship program, summits, mixers, and working groups), we are disrupting the current approach to tech problem-solving (that is not working). The three main problems we are committed to resolving are:

- Tech innovation outstripping our ability as a society to understand its impacts and create necessary guardrails.
- The lack of clear pathways or adequate support for the diverse range of professionals wanting to engage the responsible tech ecosystem.
- The ecosystem’s inability to adequately leverage collective intelligence and collaboration.
It’s time for a better approach to tackling wicked tech & society issues (continued)

The Responsible Tech Guide is designed to address and offer remedies to the three problems, in conjunction with our activities centering multistakeholder convening and community-building, multidisciplinary education, and the diversification of the traditional tech pipeline with more backgrounds, disciplines, and lived experiences. We need to move at the speed of tech when considering the impacts of technology, elevate new voices and perspectives into the ecosystem, and promote greater knowledge-sharing and collaboration.

Tech and society issues will never be resolved by relying on the wisdom of a small sliver of society. Social media and emerging technology have profound impacts on our lives, so it behooves us to have an approach that incorporates these viewpoints.

The good news? There is a vibrant community committed to aligning our technology and its related policies with the public interest. The Responsible Tech Guide is the premiere resource to discover and amplify the people at the forefront of this movement.

Let’s co-create a better tech future.

DAVID RYAN POLGAR
Founder and President
All Tech Is Human
New York, New York
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Three common hurdles to getting more involved

01 Where to start?

It can be overwhelming to understand what the responsible tech ecosystem looks like and determine how to get more involved. Individuals often get inspired by a book, a movie, or a personal experience as a catalyst to making a positive difference in our tech future; however, they may struggle to understand how.

02 Finding community

It can oftentimes feel like a solitary pursuit for individuals who want to make a difference, so it is essential to illuminate pathways into the ecosystem. There are thousands of people and organizations committed to the responsible tech movement.

03 Getting support and mentorship to grow in responsible tech

Many struggle to find the necessary support to better understand the ecosystem, expand their network, upskill, and find career opportunities in responsible tech. Our activities at All Tech Is Human shine a light on this issue area and offer solutions.
Ways to get involved with All Tech Is Human

01 Join a working group: We mix the emerging with the established in responsible tech in our working groups.

02 Join the Slack community: Share resources, discover new jobs and events, and meet others.

03 Attend a mixer: Thousands have come together in-person around the world through All Tech Is Human.

04 Use our free career resources: We offer a robust job board, talent pool, support materials, and more.

05 Participate in our mentorship program: Be paired with a mentor based on topical interest and geographic location.

06 Attend a livestream: Our community is intentionally global; individuals are able to gather virtually.

07 Read our reports and hub resources: Dive deep into a number of organizations and resources in responsible tech.

08 Contribute your voice: By participating in our activities, you add to the collective intelligence of the responsible tech community.
No matter your skill level, you are needed

**Starting out**

Students or career-changers just getting started in Responsible Tech:

For young people and students, we created a global Responsible Tech University Network with intentional agnosticism to disciplines. For career-changers, we recommend reading our resources to understand the ecosystem and find support through mentorship, mixers, and the Slack community.

**Mid-career**

Some level of experience in Responsible Tech:

Many in our community seek mentorship while mentoring others getting started in the field. By getting involved in our working groups, attending our gatherings, and using our free resources, they can find their niche within the responsible tech ecosystem.

**Established**

Experienced in Responsible Tech:

Individuals with years of experience in Responsible Tech pay their knowledge forward by mentoring others, speaking at our gatherings, and getting interviewed for our reports.
We need a diverse range of backgrounds in the responsible tech ecosystem

We can’t solve complex tech and society issues alone. Instead, we must incorporate these disciplines and backgrounds to ensure a better understanding of the evolving ways technology impacts us — and the options improving the current situation.
Three ways to affect positive change

01
Change happens from the inside.

Having more socially responsible and ethically-minded tech companies hinges on tech workers making a difference from the inside.

Our aim is to diversify the pipeline of talent for better outcomes.

02
Change happens from the outside.

We need continued research and greater oversight in tech spaces. There are civil society organizations, think tanks, university outlets, and governmental bodies that play an important part in the responsible tech ecosystem. We maintain a list of over 500 organizations at alltechishuman.org.

03
Change happens from reimagining potential tech futures.

While a good portion of the Responsible Tech community focuses on improving our current approach to technology, there are artists, designers, entrepreneurs, technologists, and more thinking through and reimagining possibilities.
Creating a tech future that is aligned with the public interest.

What’s your vision for a better tech future?

One of the problems with our current approach to these challenges is that we allow a small sliver of society to determine the design, development, and deployment of technologies that impact society at large.

Here, at All Tech Is Human, we say “no application without representation.” In other words, if you are impacted by technology, you deserve some modicum of control or a mechanism for input.

This means our tech future should be determined collectively, not by a select group that may have values, concerns, and visions of a future that are out of step with the public’s general consensus.

The responsible tech movement needs to allow for speaking, but also listening. A few voices should not drown out many.
What does a “better tech future” look like?

Responses to the question, “What does your better tech future look like and what can we do to achieve it?” surfaced eight distinct categories related to a perceived root cause of today’s problems or an avenue for improving systems and structures.
What does a “better tech future” look like?

A better tech future is one where communities – especially historically overlooked communities – are centered in the design, development, and deployment of technology. Even more so, humans’ relationship with technology has changed because humans’ relationships with each other have changed. Cross-sector endeavors and cross-functional teams allow people with myriad skillsets to successfully collaborate to prioritize problems, identify opportunities for improvement, develop technology while mitigating systemic bias, and implement tech and data solutions that address community-identified needs. Technical innovation and complexity continues to progress at incredible rates, and access to advanced technology is widespread.

A better tech future also includes structures that provide enough support for people and organizations to positively impact the world in sustainable ways. This means the world has business structures that allow both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations to benefit when they design for equity and inclusion.

Additionally, policies and regulations encourage strong technical talent in all sectors. Finally, investors fund not just technical innovation but also process innovation, and support incremental improvements in addition to new products and services.
What does a “better tech future” look like?

[The future of technology] should inspire us to human creativity. It should let us do the things that bring us joy, whether that’s art or literature. It should inspire us to create more and better and augmented things. It should create shared economic opportunity, which means that as these technologies are creating new models for how we might build economic systems, we need to move to a world where there’s a cornucopia of bounty and everybody shares in it equally.

We need to live in a world where technology transforms political power, where individuals understand what’s happening and are able to use technology to influence policy. I have a deep hope and confidence that if we empowered communities to be a part of shaping our shared destiny, we’d live in a world where all of these things I’ve just described would happen naturally.

So really, to me, the best form of a technology future is one where people are at the center and have the ability to make decisions that create a dignified future for all of us.

[From our podcast series archive]
What does a “better tech future” look like?

A better tech future must be centered on public interest values that shape both the development of technological innovation, and the public policy that sets guardrails around it. The public cannot afford to be passive consumers of technology any longer. Internet centered innovation provides the public with great power to communicate, create, share, and form bonds in community.

This democratic power to communicate never existed before the internet. The public also has distributed responsibility for the use of that power, especially when it is used to create harm. Values like free expression, competition and consumer choice, privacy and control of individual data, quality content moderation, and affordable access, and other values have to be as important as a tech company's bottom line. It will take the public will, through democratic government and civil society organizations, to set this expectation in tech innovation...and to enforce it through regulation that is specific and flexible as innovation develops.

CHRIS LEWIS, PRESIDENT & CEO AT PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE
Three ways to build a better tech future

01 Creating a more cohesive ecosystem
Having a more cohesive responsible tech ecosystem that promotes knowledge-sharing and collaboration leverages collective intelligence and participation. Our activities are designed to bring together people across civil society, government, industry, and academia.

02 Moving at the speed of tech
Our current issues stem from tech innovation moving much faster than society’s ability to grapple with its ramifications and determine appropriate guardrails and policies. Our ability to consider the impacts of technology needs to move at the speed of tech.

03 Getting new voices into responsible tech ecosystem
Complex tech and society issues require a diverse range of backgrounds, disciplines, and perspectives involved. Too often, individuals with valuable insight and ideas are not sitting at the proverbial table; this needs to change.
If you are looking to get more involved in the growing responsible tech movement, All Tech Is Human has multiple in person and virtual options. Our Slack community (illustrated above) now has over 6k members across 77 countries. Individuals in our Slack are sharing resources, learning from each other, and meeting in person in cities around the world.

Our open working groups feature a mix of established leaders and emerging voices from various backgrounds across the globe, and our mentorship program has involvement from over 40 countries.

So, no matter the location, there is a community waiting for you. Find all of our projects here or at alltechishuman.org.
Mentorship Program

All Tech Is Human’s Responsible Tech Mentorship Program has continued to grow throughout the last two years. In our 2023 cohort, 117 mentors representing 19 countries are leading 300 mentees representing 40 countries. We have had nearly 1,000 mentees complete the program since its first cohort in 2021!

Below are just some of our incredible mentors who are paying their knowledge forward to build a more robust responsible tech ecosystem.
Mentorship Program

The Responsible Tech Mentorship Program is a free program run annually to help build the Responsible Tech pipeline. The program accomplishes this by facilitating connections and career development opportunities among talented students, career changers, and practitioners.

Our mentorship program cohorts represent people from a range of fields who work in Responsible Tech all over the world. In 2023, we had mentors and mentees from the following fields: Ethical AI, Digital Governance, Tech & Democracy, Public Interest Technology, Research, UX Research, Product, Responsible Technology in Healthcare, Tech Journalism, Technology & Wellbeing, Trust & Safety, Privacy, and Tech Policy.

By expanding pathways for more disciplines and backgrounds to actively get involved, we believe we can help build a better tech future.

What does it look like to participate in the program?

The All Tech Is Human team reviews applications and creates mentorship pods that consist of one mentor and three mentees. Mentors are fully vetted, and many return to participate with us every year. Mentees are college students, new grads, early and mid career practitioners, and seasoned professionals.

Mentors lead a one 1-hour virtual meeting per month with an optional monthly curriculum provided by All Tech Is Human. Meeting topics include insight into what it looks like to be a responsible tech practitioner, career search advice, navigating the field, and more. Depending on what the pod looks like, mentors have the freedom to tailor the program however they wish. Some groups choose to work on a group project over the course of the program together, which might be an article, webinar, or podcast.

Mentors and mentees have opportunities to network with other participants through designated channels in the All Tech Is Human Slack, and virtual meetings and mixers.

How to Get Involved

If you’re interested in applying to participate in the future, join the waitlist linked on the mentorship program page of our website to be notified when applications open for the next cohort. And find additional info at AllTechIsHuman.org and reach out to our team.
Responsible Technology Career and Talent Pipeline

Transforming the Responsible Tech talent pipeline to make it more diverse, multidisciplinary, and aligned with the public interest is a crucial component of co-creating a better tech future. The homogenous sliver of society currently in the position to design, develop, and deploy the technologies that we use every day is failing to effectively and comprehensively navigate the complexities of these emerging technologies, leaving communities vulnerable to negative and unintended impacts. Our theory of change involves increasing the discoverability of the growing number and types of available opportunities and facilitating participation from talent with a significantly wider variety of backgrounds, disciplines, and lived experiences.

As the meta-connector for the people, organizations, and ideas of the Responsible Tech movement, All Tech Is Human is concerned with multi-stakeholder cooperation, bringing together talented job seekers alongside leading responsible technologists, practitioners, and hiring managers into one collaborative community. We feature roles that are focused on reducing the harms of technology, diversifying the tech pipeline, and ensuring that tech is aligned with the public interest.

We curate a list, updated daily, of hundreds of jobs, internships, and fellowships in fields like:

- Responsible or Ethical AI
- Public Interest Technology
- Online Trust & Safety
- Tech Policy
- Data Privacy
- Accessible & Human-Centered Design
- Digital Governance
- Youth, Tech, and Wellbeing
- Tech & Democracy

“At All Tech Is Human, we are focused on illuminating career pathways for responsible tech practitioners and aspirants within our growing community and on connecting these passionate individuals with impactful positions throughout the Responsible Tech ecosystem.”

- Rebekah Tweed, Executive Director
Learnings from the Job Board

Rebekah Tweed first started the Responsible Tech Job Board in September of 2020 in an effort to curate into a single resource the many disparate opportunities that constellate our shared center of gravity – tackling the thorny issues at the intersection of tech and society. This job board, now curated by Elisa Fox and expanded to regularly feature more than 500 opportunities, has quickly grown into a go-to resource for both applicants and hiring managers to understand the evolving field of Responsible Tech. We track roles across sectors, including:

- Academia
  - Responsible Tech-orientated Faculty
  - University-based Research Institutes
- Civil Society
  - Global NGOs
  - Non-profits
  - Think Tanks
  - Research Institutes
  - Philanthropic Foundations
- Government
  - Federal
  - State
  - Local
- Industry
  - Tech Industry
  - Other Industries: Finance, Textiles, Energy, Communication, Automotive, Pharmaceuticals, and more
  - Responsible Tech Startups
  - Global Consultancies

Despite the recent challenges in the hiring environment across the tech industry, there has been an uptick in available opportunities related to trust and safety and artificial intelligence, thanks to shifting priorities of many companies in the wake of the widespread availability of generative AI tools and the corresponding regulatory interest from policymakers across the globe. We expect to see early career opportunities grow as Responsible Tech departments within the industry continue to grow throughout the next year.

Our conversations with hiring managers provide insights into the skills, experiences, and educational backgrounds that are most highly sought after, and we incorporate these learnings into the advice we give to job seekers for how to best prepare themselves to become great candidates, secure these roles, and contribute to the field of Responsible Tech.

Responsible Tech Talent Pool & Matchmaking Service

All Tech Is Human offers a personalized Talent Matchmaking Service to connect hiring managers and recruiters with Responsible Tech talent within the All Tech Is Human community and our extensive network of talented individuals who are ideal for these hard-to-place roles, and we have a large Responsible Tech Talent Pool of job seekers who are interested in connecting with these employers!
This private platform is open to those currently looking for a role as well as those already in a role but interested in being notified about additional opportunities in Responsible Tech:

- Responsible AI
- Online Trust & Safety and Integrity work
- Public Interest Technology
- Tech Policy
- Digital Governance
- Data Privacy
- Accessible & Human-centered Design
- Tech & Wellbeing
- Tech & Democracy & more!

We have built up extensive relationships with hiring managers, amassing invaluable insights into emerging careers, desired skill sets, and an understanding of how we can better align individual career paths, employer needs and job descriptions, and new university programs being launched to educate the next generation.

With our Talent Matchmaking Service, our business model (to offset our reliance on foundations as a small non-profit) is to charge employers a 10% finder’s fee for successful matches which allows us to assist thousands of individuals freely through our job board, mentorship program, office hours, mixers, and more. Cost should never be a barrier to bring in new voices!

**University Network**

With our Responsible Tech University Network, we are aiming to connect all stakeholders engaged in the tremendous level of activity happening at universities across the globe around tackling wicked tech and society issues.

In particular, our organization takes a bottom-up approach that finds and connects key professors, researchers, career counselors, and student leaders across a wide variety of disciplines, uniting them all in a network that promotes knowledge-sharing and collaboration and has the agility to move at the speed of tech.

Whether you are an undergraduate student, graduate student, or professional pursuing a certification, All Tech Is Human’s Responsible Tech University Network is for all students and prospective students who are entering or advancing in the field through the pursuit of an academic degree, as well as responsible tech practitioners, academic faculty, and university staff who are contributing to the field within the academic sector.

The Responsible Tech University Network provides the opportunity to connect with like-minded people across campuses in a collaborative environment, to deepen engagement and involvement in the nascent responsible tech movement, and to share ideas and compare perspectives that are informed by the unique campus experiences of each member of the network.
The Responsible Tech University Network convenes advisory sessions around important topics as well as facilitates webinars and provides resources, including best practices for starting a student club or organizing an event (with resources for finding ideal speakers, such as our list of previous speakers), and providing support for members of underrepresented groups in tech.

The Responsible Tech University Network provides the opportunity to engage in important conversations within a like-minded community that spans stakeholder groups in a more effective convening, intentionally structured to break the silos that traditionally create friction in academic settings.

All Tech Is Human’s University Network attracts students across the globe who want to create Responsible Tech student clubs, organize and host Responsible Tech events, expand the Responsible Tech movement on their own campuses, and learn more about the field – to network, to find peers and mentors, to deepen their understanding of the space and to explore the varied professional and educational options, as well as to give back to the larger community.

Our University Network provides an opportunity to connect with likeminded students across the globe who are often navigating without a clear sense of common degree programs that lead directly to jobs in the field of Responsible Tech. This lack of clearly defined academic pathways is why we have undertaken a Responsible Tech University Ecosystem Mapping Initiative to examine the many emerging degree programs at the intersection of tech and society, as well as the faculty who are researching these issues and teaching these courses, and the student clubs addressing topics in Responsible Tech. This resource is available on our website and serves as a helpful guide for students looking into academic programs for their undergraduate majors or trying to navigate where to head for grad school to pursue masters and doctoral degrees and graduate certificates.

As part of this initiative, we’re also tracking professional certifications, which is an increasingly important component of the ecosystem as career changers look for upskilling opportunities. We find Responsible Tech degree programs offered within colleges and schools focused on a variety of disciplines, including: Philosophy, Public Policy, Law, Engineering, Computer Science, Data Science, Information, Design, Sociology, Anthropology, Social Work, Education, Communication, Business, Arts & Sciences.

Many students were first introduced to the Responsible Tech movement through a single, typically undergraduate, course. The University Network also provides an opportunity for interested students to join our group peer review initiative – we’ve partnered with Springer AI and Ethics Journal for students to gain experience of the anonymous peer review process and are preparing a Topical Collection of the Springer AI and Ethics Journal examining the impacts of artificial intelligence on children and youth set for release in 2024.
Profile Interviews

Hear from individuals in the All Tech Is Human community on career advice, what a better tech future looks like, and more!

Our organization has featured and learned from hundreds of responsible tech professionals through our reports, summits, and more.
Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

I am the Director of the Council for Responsible Social Media at Issue One, a cross-partisan advocacy organization that is fighting to build a better online world that can enhance, rather than undermine, American democracy. In this role, I have the great fortune to lead the Council, which is a diverse and bipartisan coalition of leaders—including former politicians, tech insiders, national security and religious leaders, and impacted individuals, like parents and Gen Z advocates who have felt the negative impacts of social media firsthand. It’s an incredible group of people to work with as we advocate for responsible social media safeguards that protect our kids, communities, and U.S. national security.

As an advocacy organization bringing Republicans, Democrats, and independents together, success is real change that impacts people’s daily lives. That change can come in many forms, but we are primarily working to pass legislation and make policy changes that will fundamentally alter how social media, AI, or other technology impacts our lives and our democracy.

"My advice to anyone looking to improve our online world is that you should think about where you can add the most value to this work—whether that is as a researcher, journalist, data scientist, or advocate. Talk to the people doing this work and figure out where you would be best suited to make an impact and then go for it!"
How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?

I found my way into responsible tech by continuing to follow my passion for democracy and politics and looking at where I could make the biggest impact. After working in government and trying to protect democracy around the world at the State Department, I moved into state and local politics working to improve our education system. Then I watched January 6th unfold and felt deeply compelled to find a way to improve the health of American democracy. For me, that started with the information environment and making social media a much healthier place. January 6th didn’t happen overnight. While much blame has been put onto one individual, it is unlikely that the lies could have spread in a healthier online world that wasn’t focused on maximizing engagement at any cost— including at the cost of American democracy.

My advice to anyone looking to improve our online world is that you should think about where you can add the most value to this work—whether that is as a researcher, journalist, data scientist, or advocate. Talk to the people doing this work and figure out where you would be best suited to make an impact and then go for it!

What advice would you give to individuals looking to be involved in the Responsible Tech ecosystem?

Whether you want to make this your full-time career, or just know that you want to spend some of your energy working to make technology better, safer, and healthier—do it! We need more voices, more volunteers, and more incredible professionals among our ranks to help create a world where technology enhances the human experience and lifts democracies around the world. That reality is possible, but the opposition to it is immense. The tech platforms are incredibly powerful and spend hundreds of millions of dollars to ensure that they continue to have free reign over our digital lives — and continue to rake in the money that follows. The only way for that to change is for people to step up, be brave, and fight to make this better—from inside these platforms to the halls of Congress and beyond.
Tell us about your role.

Consumer Reports is an independent, non-profit that speaks directly to, and for, consumers across the nation, while standing up for the issues they care about. In my role, I work closely with organizations helping to advance similar missions to develop impactful and collaborative projects. These projects focus on how we have to improve the cybersecurity and privacy of products and tools in the marketplace, while also tackling topics like discriminatory technologies and the impacts algorithmic biases have in the systems that surround us.

How did you pave your career in the Responsibility Tech field?

As someone who’s always been excited about the future of technology, I started my career early working at start-ups, where I got first-hand

“A better tech future depends on the people. Whether it is people combining power to create movements that improve technology for everyone, or it is individuals who are developing new technology to address the harm others have felt. I’m optimistic about people’s abilities to hold each other and the systems accountable.”
experience of what it was like to build, launch, and develop emerging tech. As I continued a career in technology, going beyond start-ups, I found myself chasing projects and roles that were guided by the issues faced by communities I cared about. Working with communities around the world, I was able to thread similarities in their concerns with the technology they use and how it impacts them on different levels. I realized the various threats emerging technology poses to historically oppressed people and have spent many days since then advocating for a more inclusive and safe digital world.

Where do you see the future of Responsible Tech headed?

In a recent Consumer Reports survey, we asked individuals who were responsible for protecting the privacy and security of individuals – not surprisingly, most selected the federal government (33%) which was followed closely by companies (32%) and individuals (25%). The future of Responsible Tech includes a framework for how we understand and practice accountability among those respective stakeholders. All of us have to be more accountable to how technology impacts the most vulnerable people using it and our respective role. In doing so, we will see more roles evolve that involve ethical decision-making that is directed towards companies or trust and safety teams that protect individuals. We will also see more resources and information that shows how our digital systems impact people without them even realizing it.

What does a better tech future look like to you?

One thing I’m looking forward to seeing in the future is how the term “Responsible Technology” is integrated in academic institutions. Schools are vital to the development of technology skills, but we’re starting to see more conversations on how Responsible Tech becomes a core part of curriculum. Instead of just learning how to become a software engineer or a designer, a school can also have mandatory curriculum on how to reduce biases in code or prevent deceptive design patterns. In turn, we’ll see a field that is filled with people who are creating audience-facing technology in a more responsible way.

Looking ahead, what makes you optimistic that we can build a better tech future?

A better tech future depends on the people. Whether it is people combining power to create movements that improve technology for everyone, or it is individuals who are developing new technology to address the harms others have felt. I’m optimistic in people’s abilities to hold each other and the systems accountable.
"Diversity, inclusion, and belonging are not just helpful but essential in the AI safety domain, if we want AI systems to be less biased, less discriminatory, and more reflective of the global population. Similarly, representation is a national security concern, as it is how the best and the brightest minds can bring fresh perspectives into government and civil society."
How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?

I have carved my career with intention while enjoying the many unexpected twists, turns, and opportunities along the way. While I was in the Masters’ Security Studies Program (SSP) at Georgetown, learning about national security risks, Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, and how the extremist far-right operates online, I had an epiphany that I wanted to work in tech. More specifically, work on the nexus of technology, policy, and national security to bolster online safety and write policies to govern new technologies. With that in mind, I pursued several roles after graduation, from busting malicious influence actors and preserving election integrity at LinkedIn to building a product safety pipeline for AI image generation at OpenAI.

The main piece of advice that I would give to anyone starting in this domain would be to focus on a values-driven career first--how will your work impact society for the better? Are you nourished by the culture and environment you are working in? Are you supported by the people around you? I do not like to perceive any opportunity as the end goal, but rather a piece of a broader journey towards career satisfaction and success. What you’re working on today should be a building block for what you do 5 years from now--but it does not have to fit into a perfect box. My desires for my career have changed over time, but a constant goal has been to work on issues at the intersection of technology and society that matter in a values-driven environment.

Within your area of practice, who still needs to be included in your field?

The area in which I practice is largely dominated by men, both in the national security domain and in the AI domain. There must be a conscious effort to bring more women and people of color to the forefront of technology. Diversity, inclusion, and belonging are not just helpful but essential in the AI safety domain, if we want AI systems to be less biased, less discriminatory, and more reflective of the global population. Similarly, representation is a national security concern, as it is how the best and the brightest minds can bring fresh perspectives into government and civil society.
Brittney Smith
Senior Manager of Education Partnerships at the News Literacy Project

Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

For the News Literacy Project, success means building a movement for news literacy throughout American society, creating better informed, more engaged, and more empowered individuals, and ultimately a stronger democracy.

In my role, I collaborate with educators across the country to cultivate partnerships that encourage schools to teach their students news literacy skills. Schools are a crucial part of how we will build this movement. That means we need to support requirements for news literacy instruction as part of a robust civics’ education, with the same emphasis and importance as English or math classes. We also need to prepare educators and develop their skills in news literacy instruction.

"Just because young people are ‘digital natives’ doesn't mean that they know how to determine what makes information and sources credible. And it's not just adolescents and teens - people of all ages are struggling to know what's fact and what's fiction."

In your opinion, what are the most important issues in Responsible Tech today?

Misinformation and disinformation are existential threats to our democracy, and widely available
artificial intelligence technologies will likely only add to this problem. We need to teach everyone how to navigate today’s information environment by becoming more news-literate. News literacy means knowing how to identify credible sources of news and other information.

Just because young people are “digital natives” doesn’t mean that they know how to determine what makes information and sources credible. And it’s not just adolescents and teens – people of all ages are struggling to know what’s fact and what’s fiction.

We can teach students and people of all ages how to spot misinformation and identify credible information. This requires supporting requirements for media literacy instruction in schools, so young people learn transferable skills that are flexible enough to apply to the ever-changing information and technology landscapes. It also requires building a movement for news literacy, so these skills are an integral part of American life.

Ultimately, we need to teach people how to think, not what to think.

**Which individuals or organizations do you believe are doing impactful work in building a better tech future?**

Educators, school librarians, and school district leaders across the country are doing impactful work to build a better tech future by ensuring that young people have news literacy skills to find credible information online and resist misinformation.

They have the support of many nonprofits like mine, the News Literacy Project, which provides free resources and training to educators in all 50 states. Currently, our resources have reached about 450,000 students and 60,000 educators. We also partner with organizations like AARP to bring our training and resources to the public.

Other champions in this area include the National Association for Media Literacy Instruction, which advocates media literacy instruction, and Media Literacy Now, which tracks legislative efforts to make media literacy instruction required in schools.

**If you could travel back in time 5 to 10 years, what would you urge companies/govt to do in order to prevent some of the tech related problems we are facing now in the 2020s?**

If I could travel back in time for five to 10 years, I would urge tech companies and the government to prevent the messy information space we live in today by taking the following actions proactively: First, requesting social media and tech companies to have clear community standards for their products, that are enforced at the very launch, and algorithms that reduce the spread of misinformation and promote credible information. Second, urging school leaders to require media literacy instruction beginning at kindergarten to prepare students to think critically and safely navigate our information environment.
Deepti Doshi
Co-Director, New Public

What does a better tech future look like to you?

A better tech future is one that is not controlled by capitalist interests. It’s not necessarily one that only serves public needs, but one where there is an ecosystem of talent and funding that supports the creation of public social spaces online – that are welcoming to everyone, support people to be in healthy community with one another, and work together – without profitability as the motive.

How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?

I think it’s important to ask yourself, what’s the problem facing people that you want to contribute to solving? I stumbled into tech because I was interested in how you help people build civic power by working together, and had created Haiyya in India to run grassroots door-to-door neighborhood campaigns. Through that work and in the wake of the Arab Spring, I saw the value of social media to helping ordinary people build power through relationships – and decided to go...
to Facebook to work on Groups. I began to feel the limits and pressures of an incentive system governed by advertising revenue, and so joined Eli Pariser and Talia Stroud to build New_Public. But the problem I am trying to solve over the last decade has always been the same: how to help people build their power through relationships and community. Figure out what your question is!

Here at All Tech Is Human, we aim for a diverse range of disciplines to be involved in tackling wicked tech & society issues. In your opinion, what background(s) should be included more?

At New_Public, we believe in and practice sociotechnical design — by that we mean that we bring together technical skills with practical knowledge about community formation, maintenance and governance. Individuals who have this practical experience are often under-represented in the product development process — even across responsible tech. But if one of the problems we are trying to solve online is how to support people to be together better, then we must turn to people — like pastors, neighborhood community leaders, as well as online moderators — who have this lived experience.

Everyone has a different motivation for being involved in the Responsible Tech movement. What is your motivation?

I come from a Jain family, and one really important tenet of our faith is Anekāntavād, which means that multiple truths can exist at the same time. My belief in this principle brought me to this work, and my curiosity: how can we build technology and social media that serve as a space for different kinds of people who may hold different truths to be in healthy and functional communities, and build their power together?

I see community as the foundation of democracy. It’s not the only thing a good democracy needs — we need reform across many pillars — but spaces for people to get to know people different from them is an important part that’s decaying and often underlooked. And today, digital innovation is a large part of making it happen.
Evelyn Aswad
Co-Chair and Member of the Oversight Board

Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

I’m a Co-Chair and Member of the Oversight Board, which issues binding decisions on content on Facebook and Instagram as well as makes recommendations on a broad range of issues to both companies. In this capacity, success for me means applying oversight of these companies’ content moderation over the speech of billions through a global Board that is independent of the companies and which applies an international human rights framework to all of its decisions. The Oversight Board remains a bold experiment in responsible tech. I think in our (just over) three years of existence, we are showing that through careful work such oversight is capable of increasing transparency in content moderation, promoting fairness in the treatment of users, and highlighting the utility of human rights principles as an ethical framework in this space.

What does a better tech future look like to you?

For me, a better tech future means more tech companies espouse the UN Guiding Principles on Business & Human Rights, which is a global framework that calls on corporations to respect international human rights standards in their business operations.
Business & Human Rights, which is a global framework that calls on corporations to respect international human rights standards in their business operations. As part of implementing this framework, companies are supposed to engage in human rights impact assessments before launching new products and services. These assessments should, among other things, include consultation with a variety of stakeholders and experts. I think we’ll have a better tech future if companies engage in such human rights impact assessments before launching new products and services rather than leaving society to clean up the problems after they arise.

How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?

I started as a corporate lawyer at a private law firm in DC working with information and communication technology companies. Then I clerked for a judge at a U.S. federal appellate court that had a big focus on tech and intellectual property. Afterward, I was a lawyer at the U.S. State Department for about 14 years. I spent 9 years in the human rights law division, with the last four as the director of that office. My endeavors at the Department included working on Internet freedom issues, participating in consultations and negotiations on the UN Guiding Principles & Human Rights, and promoting freedom of expression. When I became a law professor about 10 years ago, I focused on applying those principles, frameworks, and multilateral approaches to tech issues in my scholarship. My advice is to seek professional experiences that give you a strong grounding in both technology issues and international human rights principles. Then bring that combined perspective to responsible tech issues.

Which individuals or organizations do you believe are doing impactful work in building a better tech future?

There are many organizations doing very impactful work in this field. For example, I think the Center for Democracy and Technology does great work in identifying issues as they arise, providing a useful analysis of freedom of expression and privacy problems, and recommending ways forward. Witness is doing cutting-edge work in tackling the problem of manipulated media in the digital age. Access Now does tremendous work in flagging global trends in digital rights issues as well as convening a wide variety of stakeholders from around the world at its RightsCon conference to discuss digital rights issues in a timely way and with an interdisciplinary approach.
Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

I work on the Global Policy and Engagement team at NAVER Z. Our flagship service, ZEPETO, is an immersive 3D avatar-based social universe of over 400 million global users that provides a powerful platform and intuitive tools for users to express their creative visions, find community, and explore new forms of entertainment. I’m responsible for developing minor safety policies, communications and external engagement with multi-stakeholders in the responsible tech space, and the creation of educational resources for ZEPETO to empower the next generation of healthy digital citizens. Because I wear a few different hats in this role, success takes different forms, but chief among them is seeing high levels of engagement and understanding across our user base (especially our younger users) in online safety knowledge -- both specific to our platform and online spaces in general.

In your opinion, what are the most important issues in Responsible Tech today?

Perhaps I'm biased because my role is geared very

“What we need to focus on, in my opinion, isn't to put all of our resources into trying to win every race, but to channel them into equipping the next generation with the knowledge and tools to navigate the landscape-- a ‘teach a person to fish’ approach. This requires collaboration and active involvement from all parts of society.”
much towards minor safety, but one of the most critical issues we face is keeping kids safe. We are constantly playing catch up in the online safety space, just by the nature and pace of technological advances. It will always be challenging to get ahead of new harms. What we need to focus on, in my opinion, isn’t to put all of our resources into trying to win every race, but to channel them into equipping the next generation with the knowledge and tools to navigate the landscape—- a “teach a person to fish” approach. This requires collaboration and active involvement from all parts of society.

What advice would you give to individuals looking to be involved in the Responsible Tech ecosystem?

One of the things that drew me to All Tech is Human was its firm belief that anyone who uses or is affected by technology can and should be involved in it in some capacity, no matter how big or small, and no matter how much direct experience you have in tech. The beauty of the responsible tech ecosystem is that fresh perspectives and diverse skill sets are necessary to improve the direction that tech is taking. It’s a complex problem that isn’t going to be fixed by a line of code or a set of policies. There are so many ways to get involved, whether it’s at the individual level of learning what responsible tech is and sharing that knowledge, joining an organization focused on responsible tech or online safety, working at a tech organization and infusing those values into its operations, and so much more.

What group would you like to see more active in the Responsible Tech movement and why?

It would likely require multiple groups to effect this type of change, but I would love to see a digital safety curriculum made mandatory in our education systems. Our online and offline lives are inextricably linked, perhaps even indistinguishable from one another in many areas, and youth’s ability to navigate these complex and dynamic online spaces is critical to their safety and wellbeing. Foundational youth education should include the knowledge about protecting digital privacy, detecting harmful actors, being respectful and responsible online, and understanding how, when, and where to seek help.
Tell us about your role.

As an Architect of Ethical AI Practice at Salesforce, I work with teams and roles across the company including research scientists, product management, engineering, UX, legal, and government affairs. I work with our research scientists to examine ethical considerations in their AI research to ensure it is safe. I collaborate with product teams to identify features that empower our customers to use our AI platform (Einstein) responsibly and to build those features with ethics in mind.

A chunk of my time is also focused on developing processes that bake ethical considerations into our development cycle. And finally, I engage with customers, policy makers, civil society groups, peers at other tech companies, and consumers broadly to share what we’ve learned and to learn from them so we can create a more fair and just world together.

"Block off at least two hours per week, every single week, to stay up-to-date on the latest research and resources. Follow experts on social media, attend conferences and meetups, and build your network."
How did you pave your career in the Responsible Tech field? What advice would you give to college & grad students looking to be involved in the Responsible Tech ecosystem?

I have a BS in Applied Psychology and MS in Engineering Psychology/Human Factors Engineering. It is a technical degree situated in humanities with an emphasis on research ethics -- ensuring what we are doing provides benefit and avoids harm. I began my career in user experience research, examining people’s needs, context of use, and values. In 2016 I transitioned to research in AI and focused on the ethical risks AI can present. In 2018 I pitched and created a role to focus on ethics in AI full time.

My advice: There are loads of existing resources and research in this area. Block off at least two hours per week, every single week, to stay up-to-date on the latest research and resources.

Follow experts on social media, attend conferences and meetups, and build your network. This area is rapidly developing & if you don’t invest in keeping up, you’ll be left behind. There is no shortcut, summary course, or CliffsNotes to learning about the vast world of ethics in technology as a foundation and ethics in AI specifically.

Where do you see the future of Responsible Tech headed?

I’m encouraged by the increased public focus on issues of racial injustice in technology in the wake of the BLM movement and COVID. There have been more discussions about how much surveillance we are comfortable with, whether it is for health or security purposes. Big tech companies are reconsidering who they sell facial recognition to and for what purposes. There are questions about the harms vs. anticipated benefits of predictive policing and if it can ever be applied fairly. There is greater awareness of the risks of deepfakes and disinformation to our democracy and who is responsible for keeping it in check.

The push for AI regulation by a concerned and angry society will only increase. AI regulation is already being implemented in California, Illinois and Massachusetts, with more US states will follow. Just as the EU’s GDPR changed the way US-based companies handled the data and privacy of customers in the EU, we will see significant changes in how EU and US-based companies work following AI regulations in the EU. This is a good thing. Despite fears that regulation will harm innovation, I believe it will elevate the ethical playing field and stop the race to the bottom for profits by any means necessary.
Tell us about your role.

I currently work for myself doing a variety of projects for organizations at the intersection of technology and democracy. This includes fellowships at the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Integrity Institute, Atlantic Council, National Conference on Citizenship and the International Republican Institute. My work specifically focuses on how tech companies protect the integrity of elections on their platforms as well as their content policies.

How did you pave your career in the Responsibility Tech field?

My career started in the early 2000s running digital campaigns for the Republican party. I then spent 10 years at Facebook where I built and led global teams that managed elections and helped government and political figures use the social network to connect with their constituents. This work included managing the global elections strategy across the company by working closely with product teams to develop and deploy civic engagement and election integrity products including political ads transparency features;

"We are in the middle of a massive transformation in how we consume content online. This means we are rewriting societal norms and laws for how we hold people accountable for what they say and do on the internet. By having more people involved in Responsible Tech work and sharing their experiences we can learn from the lessons of the past to build the future we want to have."
developing and executing policies around elections; building the teams that support the government, political, and advocacy partners; working with policymakers on shaping the regulation of elections online, and serving as a spokesperson for the company about these issues. It was at Facebook where I started to get more into the integrity field and I am continuing that work mainly through the Integrity Institute.

What advice would you give to college & grad students looking to be involved in the Responsible Tech ecosystem?

Nearly every job I’ve had in my career never existed before I created it. This is true for the Responsible Tech ecosystem which has exploded in the last five years and will continue to grow and evolve. For those that want to get into this line of work I highly recommend spending time working at a technology company on integrity and/or content policy issues. There is no better learning ground for the really hard tradeoffs and decisions that companies face every day. It’s also worth getting experience in policymaking as well through a job or fellowship in a state legislature or Congress. TechCongress is a great fellowship to consider for that. Finally, read a lot. There are a ton of amazing people writing and talking about these topics.

Looking ahead, what makes you optimistic that we can build a better tech future?

Just the fact that we are having these conversations in the open gives me great hope. We are in the middle of a massive transformation in how we consume content online. This means we are rewriting societal norms and laws for how we hold people accountable for what they say and do on the internet. By having more people involved in Responsible Tech work and sharing their experiences we can learn from the lessons of the past to build the future we want to have.

Which individuals or organizations do you believe are doing impactful work in building a better tech future?

I continue to be inspired by my colleagues at the Integrity Institute who are the engineers, data scientists, researchers, analysts, and policy experts that have or currently work at the platforms on integrity issues. By sharing their knowledge publicly they are helping policymakers, civil society, academics, and the media better understand the challenges this work faces every day. Moreover, some of the most impactful work is still happening at the platforms themselves. There are thousands of people doing the hard work every day to make difficult decisions, invent new ways to prevent harm, and write policies.
What are the most pressing and important topics in Responsible Tech?

I am biased, but I think online hate speech poses an incredibly challenging and complex societal problem that in the context of social media platforms is global and cross-cultural. It is distinct from other online harms as its precise definition continues to be contested and highly dependent on context. It takes place on public channels and will always take place at incredible scale. We may improve tech/human hybrid solutions, but when it is mixed with far-right violent extremism, disinformation and violent conspiracy theories, the result is a concoction that poses a real threat to the fabric of societies, risks animosity towards minorities and increases levels of real-world violence.

How did YOU pave your career in the Responsible Tech field?

I saw and realised that my expertise in international human rights law and conflict
prevention relating to decreasing religious hatred and countering extremism was far more relevant and meaningful in the online context. Advocating for changes to laws and policies was a slower and more difficult process, which comparably had less societal impact. So I sought to apply my legal, policy and international relations knowledge to online content policies and moderation.

I worked with the late Jo Cox MP, who was murdered by a far-right extremist radicalised through online channels. Societal divisions and toxic campaigning for the UK to leave the EU also contributed to this. Soon after in 2016, when I gave oral evidence to the UK Home Affairs Select Committee on Islamophobic hate speech on a number of social media platforms, it dawned on me the huge potential benefit that could result from such tech companies’ exerting sincere efforts at improvement that went beyond reputational or commercial concerns.

**What impact is your organization having on the Responsible Tech ecosystem?**

Ofcom is one of the first national regulators to take on the task of ensuring online safety for UK online users. It has just begun to do this in relation to UK-established video sharing platforms with incitement to hatred expressly within its scope. This role will expand to all user-generated content hosting and search services under the Online Safety Bill, once passed. It will seek to protect online users from illegal and harmful content.

Prior to joining Ofcom, I helped draft ‘Effective Guidelines on Hate Speech, Social Media and Minorities’ for the UN Special Rapporteur on Minority Issues. Once published, it is hoped that it will provide a blueprint for the application of international human rights standards to how social media companies can practically ensure better online safety for minorities and other protected groups. The resort to social media channels in inciting ethnic violence in Myanmar and Sri Lanka and associated failures should never be allowed to repeat.
What does a better tech future look like to you?

In the short term, it’s a world where incentive structures are more in sync with humanity’s best interests—where the costs of invisible harms show up on company balance sheets. Many companies that seem incredibly profitable are only that way because we aren’t accounting for their invisible harms.

In the longer term, it’s a world where the mindsets that drive the technology world aren’t rooted in competition and extraction. What we need instead is a mentality that is deeply rooted in interdependence: how our minds and bodies influence and are influenced by our experiences, relationships, and the world around us. This one principle unlocks all sorts of positive downstream thinking, such as better economic goals, metrics, and product designs.

Without folding at least some elements of interdependence, our abundance of technology and resources will most likely lead to more

"...People who deploy and profit from powerful technology must have matching responsibility and liability. The reality is that if all the unanticipated harms from new technology are added up and put back on company balance sheets promptly, companies will be forced to slow down and proceed much more thoughtfully."
concentrations of wealth and power, broken sensemaking, widespread mental health harms, and a world that leaves the vast majority of humans behind.

Rapidly advancing technology that’s tied to competition, extraction, and harmful incentives may force a reckoning sooner than later.

What changes would you like to see happen over the next year?

There’s a lot here, but here are two high-level ideas:

- Binding of power and responsibility: people who deploy and profit from powerful technology must have matching responsibility and liability. The reality is that if all the unanticipated harms from new technology are added up and put back on company balance sheets promptly, companies will be forced to slow down and proceed much more thoughtfully.

- More nuanced discussions about tech, and especially AI: we’ll be able to make better collective sense of our situation if more people try to represent different viewpoints more accurately. We can ask: Where is the truth in a viewpoint that makes us cringe? Why might someone else feel so strongly about that viewpoint? Can we add elements of those answers to our work?

Here at All Tech Is Human, we aim for a diverse range of disciplines to be involved in tackling wicked tech & society issues. In your opinion, what background(s) should be included more?

We need so much help! One idea I’d like to emphasize is taking some time to round out areas we don’t know as much about.

A technologist can learn more about relevant social sciences—perhaps the history and power structures of a society that technology reinforces. A social scientist can learn more about how a relevant piece of tech works and how it impacts communities.
Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

I lead the Data Science team at Thorn. Thorn is an NGO dedicated to building technology to combat child sexual abuse. My team builds the ML/AI technology that accelerates our mission across the three main intervention points we pursue - supporting victim identification, stopping revictimization (ending the viral spread of child sexual abuse material), and preventing abuse from happening in the first place.

We have ambitious goals here at Thorn. If I think about what success looks like on a day-to-day basis, it's: does my team have what they need to keep building and having impact? Are we supporting our partners well, and providing tools that are easy to use, easy to integrate, meet their needs, and are highly effective? Are we ahead of the curve on technological trends and advancements, ensuring the best of technology is used to help kids first? Technology can be a double-edged sword - are we working to mitigate both how current harms against children manifest, as well as how technological trends and advancements will impact harms against children in the future?
as well as how technological trends and advancements will impact harms against children in the future?

Stepping out of the day-to-day, to the broader perspective: success looks like every single kid who has been identified and recovered from their abusive situation, every single image or video documenting this abuse taken down and reported, and every single kid who has been reached and moved away from a dangerous situation in time as a result of the work we do in partnership with the broader child safety ecosystem.

What are some trends / growing possibilities in the future in your field?

Generative AI is front of mind for me. I said earlier that technology is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, we’re seeing this exciting burst of technical advancement with large language models and transformer models—advancements that my team is incorporating into our tech stack.

On the other hand, we’re seeing generative AI technology get misused by bad actors to further scale harm against children. They use this technology to create AI-generated child sexual abuse material (AI-generated child sexual abuse material). Victim identification is already a needle in the haystack problem for law enforcement, where they have to sift through huge amounts of content to find that child in active harm’s way. Anything that adds to this haystack makes their job more difficult. Bad actors also use this technology to further re-victimization, using existing CSAM to generate more explicit images of those same children. Sextortion is another area of impact—bad actors accelerate their efforts by using GAI technology to support the content creation necessary to target a child.

The good news is that while the prevalence of AIG-CSAM is growing, it’s still small. Now is the moment for safety by design: prioritizing child safety across the entire ML/Al life cycle of development, deployment, and maintenance. We can clean training datasets of CSAM, include content provenance as part of deployment, and share hashes of known AIG-CSAM with the proper authorities. There are opportunities at each stage of the lifecycle to prioritize child safety, and now is our moment to do so.
Sarah Gold
Director of Research, Institute for Experiential AI, Northeastern University

Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

I lead a research team where responsible AI is a horizontal area that applies to several verticals like health, life sciences or climate. Success is when we influence companies to implement responsible AI and influence public policies.

In your opinion, what are the most important issues in Responsible Tech today?

Making sure that you show that your idea is legitimate ethically and scientifically, and that you have the administrative and technical competence to do it. This implies doing an societal impact assessment to show that the benefits are much greater than the harm, doing a sound scientific validation, and certifying all the competences needed.

"My utopia is a world where machines do everything that we do not want to do, while every person develops all her/his potential to improve society. A true renaissance."
What does a better tech future look like to you?

One where the goal is the wellness of people instead of the profit of founders and investors. This includes helping people to be more productive instead of replacing them. My utopia is a world where machines do everything that we do not want to do, while every person develops all of her/his potential to improve society. A true renaissance.

What is one major change that you would like to see in the next few years?

Realizing that instead of regulating the use of technology, we need to regulate sectors like education, health, food, transportation, etc. Then, the same regulation applies to all technologies and not only a specific one, like AI. In fact the latter is dangerous because it leaves a loophole allowing companies to ignore regulation by saying that they aren’t using AI.
Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

In my role as a Senior Researcher and Project Director of Data & Society’s newly launched Algorithmic Impact Methods Lab (AIMLab), we are attempting to gain access to systems so we can figure out the best methods, both qualitative and quantitative, for assessing technologies’ broad range of social impacts across their entire life cycles. The only way to hold the developers of algorithmic systems accountable is to gather rich, empirical data and make actionable recommendations. Having a deep ethnographic understanding of potential and existing harms is important, and this requires building trusted relationships and examining a problem from many angles. We will partner with a variety of organizations, emphasizing and foregrounding marginalized communities, to assess impacts in the public interest. Success to us means providing transparent documentation and in-depth methodological frameworks for understanding algorithmic impacts in different sectors and according to particular, granular use cases, helping

"Having a deep ethnographic understanding of potential and existing harms is important, and this requires building trusted relationships and examining a problem from many angles. We will partner with a variety of organizations, emphasizing and foregrounding marginalized communities, to assess impacts in the public interest."
headvocates, industry leaders, and policymakers make informed decisions.

**What are some trends / growing possibilities in the future in your field?**

I’m excited about the work I see that provides a more coalition-based, interdisciplinary approach to addressing the biggest problems in the tech industry. Technologists and academics can listen to workers, artists, and communities that are most affected by algorithmic systems or other technological realities. Rather than panels of academics and tech insiders talking about the impacts of AI on workers, it’s great to hear from affected workers themselves, from gig workers who are experiencing algorithmic wage discrimination to Amazon Mechanical Turkers experiencing information asymmetry in their relationships with requestors, or artists who are having their work stolen by AI art generators. This does seem to be happening more at events like Mozilla Festival, within nonprofit research organizations, and on academic conference panels.

**How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?**

Throughout my career, including during my time as a graduate student, I have always been involved in external political causes. My background as a labor organizer and my work with various coalitions in the cities in which I lived have helped frame my ethnographic and historical work on computing. I worked a number of jobs in nonprofits, academia, and in tech, which helped me to see how power operates in different settings and taught me how to communicate with a wide variety of audiences. There is no right or wrong path, and there is precarity or other forms of difficulty in any field. But I do think that having professional experience in a variety of sectors, along with my background in organizing, opened up different kinds of opportunities.

**What does a better tech future look like to you?**

Right now, a handful of companies have a great deal of money and power. But the vast majority of people who interface with platforms do not have much control over their working conditions or their experiences of technology more generally. In an ideal world, technology for good would also mean changing the social, political, and economic conditions that produce and deploy technologies in the first place. Historically vulnerable communities and contingent tech workers around the world, from ride-hail drivers to content moderators, must have more say over how technology is used in their daily lives. In addition to changing labor conditions, there must be more attention paid to the resources that go into software and hardware production. There is a dire need for circularity and reuse, given the growing problem of e-waste, and a greater effort to switch to renewable energy and forsake fossil fuels.
Tell us about your role and what success looks like for you.

My organization’s mission is to provide secure and quality digital information, services, and tools to customers and constituents when and where they need them. The Commonwealth’s lead IT and cybersecurity organization provides secure and quality digital information, services and tools across the Executive Branch. In this role, I advise executive agencies across Massachusetts state government around technology decisions to provide effective constituent services. Our team has assisted agency partners by managing procurements (from drafting the RFX to evaluating responses), mapping business processes, conducting market research and RFIs, and developing requirements for technology. Success means that we have worked thoughtfully with an agency partner to articulate a clear need and work with them to implement their vision.

"People for whom technology directly impacts them, such as those who have experienced online discrimination, harassment, and account hacking, need to be included in the tech policy conversation. Their voices are essential to ensuring that tech policy is designed to protect and empower everyone."
How did you carve out your career, and what advice would you give to others wanting a similar role?

I started my career working with civil society organizations in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa. In Greece, the West Bank, Morocco, and Turkey, I worked on issues including refugee integration and immigration, youth violence, community development, poverty alleviation, conflict resolution, and education. I observed firsthand how people used platforms to advance meaningful political discourse and social movements around restrictive government policies. Later, at Booz Allen Hamilton, I examined public sentiment, social movements, and disinformation using social media for the U.S. Federal Government. I witnessed how digital technologies proliferated in the hands of political and social organizers and violent extremists. This work educated me on global conversations. At Twitter, I managed our Trust and Safety Council, a trusted partners program to support journalists and human rights defenders globally, and a research hub for the Public Policy team. My team’s work sat at the heart of global debates around online speech governance, content moderation, and trust and safety. Most recently, I have consulted with civil society organizations and companies. These have included Carnegie Endowment for International Peace’s Partnership for Countering Influence Operations on government efforts to combat disinformation in Ukraine, National Democratic Institute on online violence against women in politics and public life, and the Committee to Protect Journalists on a new chat-based safety initiative that delivers journalist safety information. Now, I am the Deputy Director of Strategy for the Massachusetts Executive Office Technology Services and Security, where I advise executive agencies across the Massachusetts government around technology issues.

Within your area of practice, who still needs to be included in your field?

There are several groups that still need to be included in my field:

- People from underrepresented groups: The tech policy profession remains dominated by one traditional group.

- People with lived experience: People for whom technology directly impacts them, such as those who have experienced online discrimination, harassment, and account hacking, need to be included in the tech policy conversation. Their voices are essential to ensuring that tech policy is designed to protect and empower everyone.

- People with expertise in other fields: Technology policy is a complex field that requires expertise in a variety of areas, such as conflict resolution, philosophy, and sociology. People with expertise in these other fields need to be included in the tech policy conversation, so that we can develop policies that are informed by a wide range of perspectives.
Five subject matter areas of responsible tech

Our global working group of 100 individuals from a range of backgrounds, disciplines, and experience levels came together to offer an overview of Responsible AI, Trust & Safety, Tech & Democracy, Public Interest Tech, and Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing.
**Overview**

The capabilities of artificial intelligence (AI) are developing rapidly and in multiple directions. Recent breakthroughs in Generative AI are currently the most visible, but AI technologies are impacting decision-making and automation in a wide range of fields, with implications for industry, government, and civil society. This rapid pace of evolution and deployment is resurfacing important and complex questions surrounding AI ethics. As a result, a diverse community of advocates for responsible technology, including responsible artificial intelligence, is actively working to provide practical thought leadership to guide AI development and deployment – with a focus on equity, inclusion, societal benefits, harm reduction, and environmental viability.

The technical and social complexity of AI systems requires a multi-voice effort to explore what AI can do, what it should do, and what it could do in the future. The responsible tech ecosystem is a venue where such issues are examined, value propositions are defined, tradeoffs are explored, and guardrails are proposed. Responsible AI focuses on addressing ethical, social, and safety concerns associated with AI systems. Responsible AI systems should be designed to make ethical decisions and align with and prioritize values of human well-being, fairness, transparency, and accountability to have a positive and sustainable impact on society.

AI should not perpetuate or reinforce existing biases and discrimination. Responsible AI thus ensures that algorithms treat all individuals fairly and without discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, ability, geographic location, or socioeconomic status.
Responsible AI must safeguard user data and respect individual privacy. AI systems should be designed with safety and security in mind and should have mechanisms in place for human oversight and control to prevent undue reliance or inappropriate use.

Creating Responsible AI systems requires collaboration between engineers, ethicists, researchers, policymakers, and the public. Only a multidisciplinary approach ensures that AI is developed with a broad understanding of its implications.

Key Terms and Definitions (From ActiveFence, TSPA, and Digital Trust & Safety Partnership glossaries)

**AI Bias**: Bias in AI is the presence of unfair or discriminatory outcomes arising from the incorporation of biased data or flawed algorithms. It occurs when the AI’s predictions or decisions disproportionately favor or disadvantage certain groups, thereby replicating existing societal biases present in the training data. Addressing AI bias involves recognizing, understanding, and rectifying these disparities to ensure outcomes that are as equitable and unbiased as possible.

**AGI vs ANI**: Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) is the hypothetical concept of AI systems that possess general intelligence, similar to human intelligence. AGI systems would have the ability to understand, learn, and apply knowledge across various domains and tasks. On the contrary, Artificial Narrow Intelligence (ANI) refers to AI systems that are designed for specific tasks or narrow domains.

**Black Box AI vs Glass Box/White Box**: A ‘black box’ is a system that is so complex that its behavior cannot be explained in terms of its individual components. In AI and machine learning, the components of interest are the features, or inputs, and the parameters that the system learns from data. Although it is possible to grasp these components mathematically and understand them, the system as a whole is not accessible—hence ‘black box.’” Glass box models, often referred to as “white box,” are the opposite of Black Box models. With these models, users can understand the decision-making process and trace the relationship between inputs and outputs.

**Generative AI**: Refers to AI systems or models that can create or generate new content, such as images, music, or text, based on patterns learned from training data. See Also: Foundation/Frontier Model [https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/resource/foundation-models-explainer/](https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/resource/foundation-models-explainer/)

**LLMs (Large Language Models)**: Refers to advanced AI models that are trained on large amounts of text data and can generate human-like text responses. These models use deep learning techniques, such as transformer architectures, to understand and generate relevant language.

**Human-in-the-loop**: A human operator is
involved in every step of the machine learning process, in which human oversight, intervention or decision-making is integrated into an automated or AI-driven process. This approach ensures that humans remain actively involved in critical tasks, allowing them to monitor, guide, and correct the system's actions as needed. A person is part of every stage of the machine learning process, blending human oversight and decision-making with automated or AI processes. This way, humans can stay hands-on with important tasks, keeping an eye on the system and stepping in when necessary.

**Responsible AI:** RAI involves developing and using artificial intelligence systems ethically, considering their potential impacts on society. It requires adhering to human values, legal frameworks, and ethical standards, while ensuring transparency, accountability, fairness, and privacy. The goal of responsible AI is to harness the benefits of AI while minimizing any adverse effects on individuals and society.

**TESCREAL:** The acronym stands for Transhumanism, Extropianism, Singularitarianism, Cosmism, Rationalism, Effective Altruism and Long Termism. See also: Timnit Gebru.

**Key Moments in Responsible AI**

October 2022: The White House Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights is released. This “Blueprint” identifies five core principles to guide and govern the development and implementation of AI systems with particular emphasis on the unintended consequences of civil and human rights abuses. The “Blueprint” calls for safe and effective systems, algorithmic discrimination protections, and data privacy. – The White House

November 2022: OpenAI releases GPT-3.5

February 2023: A reporter’s unsettling conversation with Bing Chat implies there is still work to do. – The New York Times

March 2023: The Future of Life Institute published a letter calling for “all AI labs to immediately pause for at least 6 months the training of AI systems more powerful than GPT-4.” The Future of Life Institute focuses on mitigating long-term “existential” risks to humanity such as superintelligent AI which they argue could lead to extreme automation of jobs and even human obsolescence. The letter was signed by more than 20,000 people, including academic AI researchers as well as industry CEOs. The letter has been criticized for diverting attention from immediate societal risks such as algorithmic bias and the lack of a transparency requirement for training data. The pause did not occur. – Future of Life Institute

August 2023: OpenAI releases GPT-4, its largest LLM. GPT-4 is publicly available via the paid ChatGPT Plus, and OpenAI’s API. GPT-4 is a multimodal model, accepting image and text-based input.

August 2023: Statement on AI Risk released. – Center for AI Safety
August 2023: AI experts inform Congress about the advantages and drawbacks of artificial intelligence, as well as provide insights on how to effectively regulate this swiftly advancing technology. – Bloomberg Law

August 2023: The Federal Election Commission begins a process to potentially regulate AI-generated deepfakes in political ads ahead of the 2024 election. – Federal Election Commission

Global Perspectives on AI
AI has become increasingly intertwined with our daily lives, influencing what we see, where to go, what to buy, and even how we vote. Governments and local legislatures are working to create actionable laws and regulatory practices, as companies increase the availability of various generative AI models to the general public. The following is an international list of the current major happenings and trends surrounding the use of artificial intelligence.

Global: G7 Hiroshima Leaders’ Communiqué published with a reference to a commitment to Responsible AI. In May, leaders from the G7 countries announced they will be setting up the Hiroshima AI Process this year, in collaboration with the OECD. The nations are set to discuss AI governance, IP rights, and transparency.

North America: The United Nations Security Council held the first-ever session on artificial intelligence. The Council emphasized the risks AI poses to international peace and discussed how to mitigate potential security implications. – The New York Times

The Canadian government sought input on a voluntary code of practice for generative AI, aiming to ensure that participating firms adopt safety measures, testing protocols, and disclosure practices. – Venture Beat

Europe: The European Parliament passed its version of the AI Act, triggering the final stage of the Union’s regulatory process. The EU is expected to vote through and implement the law in early 2024. The Act sets out a comprehensive framework for regulating the development and use of AI in the EU. – EU AI ACT

149 civil society organizations called on EU institutions to put people first in AI ACT. – Algorithm Watch

The National Risk Register officially classified AI as a long-term security threat to the UK’s safety and critical systems. – CSO

Asia: China unveiled new rules governing the AI. Beijing’s controls on internet content and U.S. curbs on semiconductor exports to the world’s second-largest economy are thought to hamper progress. – Reuters

India’s telecom regulator, Trai, recommends an independent statutory authority, the Artificial Intelligence and Data Ethics Council of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to regulate AI in the country. – The Economic Times

ALL TECH IS HUMAN | 2023
Responsible AI

New Zealand updates expectations on the use of Generative AI. – RegulationAsia

The Way Forward

More codified enforcement of AI safety and protocols for businesses: Companies may not take into account the implications of their software’s impact on consumers, including youth. Social media platforms and big tech have designed their software with large language models that have increased privacy violations, racial bias, manipulation, and pressuring and deceptive marketing tactics to turn over a profit using an individual’s data. State and federal governments must act to uphold strict standards.

Increased collaboration globally: Big tech is dominated by Western culture; we’re seeing this hold true for the development of AI as well. Responsible AI needs to address biases and training, red-teaming, and other aspects that need to include input from diverse groups, especially the Global South. There could be an international body that sets standards so that AI machine learning will have a globally integrated understanding instead of a biased perspective.

Shift in focus from future harms to present-day harms: The AI doomsday talk is not only a distraction from present-day AI harms, like bias in loan rates, but it’s also creating an AI arms race because (as the logic goes) if you don’t rush to make/control the next advancement in AI, someone else will. We’d like to see AI slowed down so we can be more thoughtful about its uses and build tools that don’t perpetuate bias, violate privacy rights, and erode democracy.
Resources

Your Face Belongs to Us by Kashmir Hill: The story of a small AI company that gave facial recognition to law enforcement, billionaires, and businesses, threatening to end privacy as we know it.

A Human Algorithm by Flynn Coleman: A groundbreaking narrative on the urgency of ethically designed AI and a guidebook to reimagining life in the era of intelligent technology.

Race After Technology by Ruha Benjamin: From everyday apps to complex algorithms, Ruha Benjamin cuts through tech-industry hype to understand how emerging technologies can reinforce White supremacy and deepen social inequity.

Ethical Machines by Reid Blackman: In "Ethical Machines," Reid Blackman gives you all you need to understand AI ethics as a risk management challenge.

Machine See, Machine Do by Patrick K. Lin: Patrick K. Lin’s Machine See, Machine Do: How Technology Mirrors Bias in Our Criminal Justice System takes a deep and thorough look into the use of technology in the criminal justice system, and investigates the instances of coded bias present at every level.

Artificial Unintelligence by Meredith Broussard: A guide to understanding the inner workings and outer limits of technology and why we should never assume that computers always get it right.

Dr. Ravit Dotan’s Resource Hub with Responsible AI write-ups, guides, listicles, and more.

Montreal AI Ethics Institute’s reports, blog, and newsletter.

Bad Input by Consumer Reports in partnership with the Kapor Center: Three short films look at how biases in algorithms and data sets result in unfair practices for communities of color, often without their knowledge. Directed by filmmaker Alice Gu.

Dataiku’s AI and Us web series exploring how AI is changing our everyday lives: from how we dress, to insurance, perceptions, or the gender pay gap.

Ant-Defamation League’s Online Hate Index: The ADL Center for Technology and Society (CTS) built the Online Hate Index (OHI), a set of machine learning classifiers that detect hate targeting marginalized groups on online platforms.

Check out responsibletechguide.com for more on Responsible AI!
Here is a snapshot of recent job postings related to Responsible AI:

- Lead/Principal Technical AI Ethicist – NLP at Salesforce
- Responsible AI Analyst at Indeed
- Responsible AI Senior Technical Program Manager at Workday
- Research Associate – Project FAIR Fairness and Transparency theme at Alan Turing Institute
- Industry Partnerships Program Manager at Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence
- Research Scientist, AI Ethicist at Northeastern University Institute for Experiential AI
- AI Ethics Technical Program Manager at Sony AI
- Senior Communications Manager, Responsible AI at TikTok
- Responsible AI Solutions Engineer at Credo AI
- William J. Brennan Fellowship, Speech, Privacy & Technology Project at ACLU

Visit our Responsible Tech Job Board for the latest listings and freely join our Responsible Tech Talent Pool to be matched up with potential opportunities.

Are you an employer looking for Responsible Tech talent? Reach out to rebekah@alltechishuman.org and learn more here.
Overview

Trust and Safety (T&S) is a field that developed as a group of professionals emerged to identify and address the risks and harms impacting communities online. Trust and Safety, as we know it, is a relatively young area - although relevant work has been around since the early 2000s, the term was first adopted by eBay with specified efforts to establish and sustain trust among users, keeping them safe on the platform (Boyd, 2022). Since then, familiarity with the concept of Trust and Safety, and what it includes, has increased exponentially. Nonetheless, it’s still the case that most Trust and Safety teams are born in/out of a crisis; a good example came from Zoom growing its T&S team at the height of the pandemic, when the product experienced a massive increase in its user base (Maxim, Parecki, Cornett, 2022).

T&S professionals ensure users of an online platform, tool, or community feel welcome, safe, and secure. They develop community guidelines and moderate content. T&S addresses many issues such as disinformation, offensive content, harassment, fraud, online child safety, phishing, and spam. When it comes to types of work in this space, there could be product-specific or even regional needs. That said, there are three core functions within a Trust & Safety team: policy (individuals who create the principles and policies that define acceptable online behaviors), operations (individuals who ensure the policies are being followed and taking action against violative content and behaviors), and engineering and product (individuals who create the infrastructure/tooling systems for detecting and enforcing abusive content on the platform). On top of these, depending on the size of the company and product needs, we might also see threat detection/intelligence, investigations, and specialized issue teams, such as child safety.
Trust & Safety

Although Trust and Safety has existed as long as Internet services have been offered, the field has grown beyond niche communities, is leveraged at large companies, and has rapidly grown in the past few years. Organizations like the Trust and Safety Professional Association (founded in 2020), TS Collective, the Digital Trust & Safety Partnership, and the Integrity Institute were formed to support T&S professionals and improve the public’s understanding of T&S. These organizations’ existence serves as a milestone for the professionalism of the Trust and Safety field.

Key Terms and Definitions
(From TSPA, Digital Trust & Safety Partnership, and ActiveFence)

Adversarial Behavior: Intentional actions of actors or a network of actors circumventing detection or interrupting moderation rules.


Disinformation: Intentionally misleading information distributed to deceive and influence an audience.

Hashing: Creates a unique, fixed-length string of letters and numbers to represent content or a digital signature for an image.

Hash sharing: The cross-industry sharing of hash data to create databases of hashes related to malicious content. Platforms can then compare image hashes from their content to hashes of known malicious content, without exposing human moderators to potentially harmful content.

Hate Speech: Any speech or content that incites, discriminates, justifies hatred, or promotes violence against an individual or group.

Impersonation: Apps or websites that are created to resemble existing apps or services in order to gain access to personal data, passwords, or other sensitive data. Impersonation of individuals is the creation of fake accounts, using the target’s identifying information and/or images, in order to cause harm to that individual.

Memes: Content, intended to be amusing or interesting, that is widely shared online.

Misinformation is incorrect or misleading information, often posted or shared unwittingly.

Non-consensual sharing of intimate imagery (NCII): When images and videos of people who are naked, showing their genitals, engaging in sexual activity or poses, or wearing underwear in compromising positions; are shared without the consent of all people involved. May have been unknowingly or unwillingly or consensually taken.

Protected categories: A set of traits that are used to discriminate against a person or a group of people such as race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, age.
Trust & Safety

Recidivism: The evasion of suspensions or bans, such as creation of accounts after a previous account ban.

Reverse Engineering (Red Team): A process to replicate a system, process, device, or software, often used by cybersecurity teams.

Risk Assessment: An analysis of the types, potential severity, and likelihood of harms of a product, service, or feature.

Sextortion: The act of seeking financial gains, favors, or private content by threatening to share sexually intimate information about a target.

Terms of Service/Terms of Use: Legal agreements between users and service providers under which the user can utilize services.

Transparency Reports: Issued by a service that discloses metrics and insights about its approach to salient risks and relevant enforcement practices, including how it enforced its policies and how it handled requests to remove or restrict user content. Often detail government requests for user records.

True Positive/True Negative: Content correctly or incorrectly flagged as violative.

Virality: When content gains high, rapid, and wide reach amongst the users of a service or multiple services. This may occur within seconds to hours on some platforms like social media.

Key Moments in Trust & Safety

Dismantling Trust and Safety at Twitter: The X (formerly Twitter) Trust and Safety Council was formed in 2016. It consisted of volunteers from several advisory groups that addressed issues like online safety, harassment, human and digital rights, suicide prevention, mental health, child sexual exploitation, and dehumanization. After Elon Musk’s acquisition of Twitter in October 2022, many employees responsible for addressing prohibited content and misinformation were laid off. Three key members of the Trust and Safety Council, Eirliani Abdul Rahman, Anne Collier, and Lesley Podesta, resigned in December 2022. They were disappointed in new leadership’s disregard for T&S, including Twitter’s move to heavily rely on automated content moderation, which “can only go so far in protecting users from ever-evolving abuse and hate speech before detectable patterns have developed.” As Musk advocated for free speech, many have noted a rise in misinformation, disinformation, harassment, and hate speech on the platform. - Net Family News

Reddit Moderator Protests: Reddit’s API has been open for developers since 2008. In April 2023, Reddit announced it would charge for its new API terms. This move was intended to monetize Reddit’s data and prevent the platform’s content from being used to train large language models (LLMs) for free. Christian Selig, the developer of a popular Reddit client for iOS called Apollo,” announced he would shut it down due to
the $20 million cost to keep the app running under the new API terms. Other third-party developers of Reddit clients shut down in June. Thousands of subreddits went dark in protest. Reddit threatened and removed some moderators for restricting access to subreddits in protest, under grounds that the protests violate the Code of Conduct. The removed moderators were eventually reinstated. – The Verge

**Volokh v. James:** New York’s Online Hate Speech Law was slated to take effect in December 2022. The law required social media networks to develop and publish a policy describing how they will address visitor complaints of hate speech, create a “clear and easily accessible mechanism” for visitors to complain about perceived hate speech on the site, and inform complainants of how the matter is being handled. The law originated, in part, as a response to the 2022 mass shooting in Buffalo, NY. Prior to the shooting, the shooter wrote a manifesto describing himself as an ethno-nationalist and supporter of white supremacy motivated to commit acts of political violence. Eugene Volokh, founder of Rumble (a video platform intended to be a YouTube alternative) filed a complaint in federal court seeking to stop New York’s Online Hate Speech Law. The plaintiffs argued the law infringes upon the First Amendment of the US Constitution, which prevents the government from making laws that abridge the freedom of speech. The plaintiffs also argued against upholding the state’s definition of what constitutes hate speech as law or weighing in on the debate of the definition of hate speech; instead, they argued users should be able to communicate freely. The court ultimately blocked the law in February 2023, and similar debates on content moderation and free speech persist across the U.S.

**The UK’s Online Safety Bill:** The upcoming bill has several requirements to make tech companies more responsible for content on their platforms, intended to keep online users safe. Requirements include: preventing the spread of illegal content by requiring organizations to remove this as soon as they see it, age-verification processes to access certain websites (e.g. pornography), securing adults from ‘legal but harmful content’ (e.g. abuse, harassment, self-harm and eating disorders) by removing such content from their platforms, and forcing the biggest platforms to take action against paid-for-scam adverts published or hosted on their services. This legislation has received backlash from those who fear freedom of expression and user privacy will be threatened. The content scanning and surveillance required by the bill pose threats to end-to-end encrypted (E2EE) communication services such as WhatsApp and Signal. E2EE is intended to prevent data from being read or modified by anyone other than the sender and recipient, so companies that provide E2EE are unable to hand over texts of their customers’ messages to the authorities. Security and privacy researchers argue that “nobody but us” cryptographic backdoors have historically failed and created vulnerabilities for attackers to
Trust & Safety

Technology-neutral and future-proof policy and regulation: With the rise of ChatGPT and general buzz around generative AI, there has been little to no consensus in terms of a) whether existing laws and regulations cover this new area and b) how to regulate/create guardrails around the usage where coverage is unclear. Generative AI is not the first emerging tech and won’t be the last, hence we need more technology-neutral and future-proof guardrails to evaluate and prevent potential harm.

Standardized regulations with minimum-to-no deviation: With the increased focus on efforts to regulate social platforms – specifically within the EU (e.g. Digital Services Act, Online Safety Bill), trust and safety practices will become more standardized and formalized across the industry. That said, we don’t always see coordination between governments in how they approach platforms and their risk assessment and prevention efforts. Given the delicate balance between innovation and ensuring online safety, it’d be crucial to have good coordination between different governments in their approach to regulating platforms.

The Way Forward
Change should come in three categories: more transparency and inclusion in key partnership and collaboration efforts in the industry, building technology-neutral and future-proof policy and regulation, and ensuring intergovernmental coordination on regulations applied to global firms that operate in multiple jurisdictions.

Key partnership and collaboration efforts in the industry (and inclusion of youth): Safety and wellbeing of the minors and younger audience is the top priority for platforms as well as regulators, and it’s important to give the youth a voice while companies are building products and policies around the platforms they interact with. Some examples: the TikTok Youth Council which was announced recently, Meta’s Safety Advisory board, the Co-design program and Youth Advisors, and Youth and Families Advisory Committee of Youtube just to name a few. We’d like to see this becoming a common practice in the industry, and companies to offer knowledge sharing and best practices around inclusion of youth.

exploit. WhatsApp and other tech platforms have indicated they may leave the UK if forced to weaken encryption for the bill. They also argue potential AI models that can scan people’s messages for CSAM will likely result in false positives, subject innocent users to having their private messages widely viewed, and face false accusations of viewing CSAM. – TechRadar
Trust & Safety

Resources
Glossaries: ActiveFence, Trust and Safety Professional Association, and Digital Trust & Safety Partnership


Events and Conferences
Trust & Safety Forum (Europe): Since 2021, the Trust & Safety Forum (T&SF) offers a cohesive space open to all stakeholders, from platforms to regulators, inclusive of trusted flaggers and solutions providers, committed to a trusted and safer digital environment today and for the future.

Trust and Safety Research Conference (Stanford, US): Hosted at Stanford University’s Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, the Trust and Safety Research Conference convenes participants working on trust and safety issues across academia, industry, civil society, and government. The event brings together a cross-disciplinary group of academics and researchers in fields including computer science, sociology, law, and political science to connect with practitioners and policymakers on challenges and new ideas for studying and addressing online trust and safety issues.

TrustCon (San Francisco, US): TrustCon is the global conference dedicated to trust and safety professionals who are responsible for the challenging work of keeping our platforms and communities safe. TrustCon, the only conference of its kind, is the culmination of TSPA’s vision to create and foster a global community of practice among trust and safety professionals.

Africa Internet Governance Forum (Nigeria, Africa): The Africa Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF) is a regional initiative that brings together various stakeholders to discuss and address internet-related issues in Africa. It serves as a platform for governments, civil society organizations, academia, private sector representatives, and technical communities to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration on matters concerning Internet governance.

Online Safety Conference (South Pacific/Oceania): Bringing together leading online safety experts and practitioners from Aotearoa, Australia, and internationally, to share knowledge and insights, and to participate in discussion and debate, exploring themes including:
- Legislative and policy responses
- Diversity and inclusion
- Innovative education
- Pacific collaboration

RightsCon (location rotates): The world’s leading summit on human rights in the digital age.

Check out responsibletechguide.com for more on Trust & Safety!
Here is a snapshot of recent job postings related to Trust & Safety:

- Sr. Director, Trust & Safety Communications at Hinge
- Data Scientist, Trust & Safety – Operations at Roblox
- Senior Machine Learning Engineer (User Trust & Safety) at Canva
- Digital Life Initiative (DLI) Director at Cornell Tech
- Program Manager – Sensitive Content at Scale AI
- Managing Director at Integrity Institute
- Digital Safety Lead Technical Advisor – Principal Group Product Manager at Microsoft
- Exploitative Content Lead at Discord
- Sr. Product Manager, Trust & Safety at Vimeo
- Product Manager, Safety Experience at Bumble

Visit our Responsible Tech Job Board for the latest listings and freely join our Responsible Tech Talent Pool to be matched up with potential opportunities.

Are you an employer looking for Responsible Tech talent? Reach out to rebekah@alltechishuman.org and learn more here.
Overview
The convergence of technology and democracy has reshaped the way societies engage, decide, and operate. From deepfake presidential campaigns in South Korea to the Chilean government’s initiative to boost local entrepreneurial activity, tech saturates democracy by shaping political processes, civic engagement, information dissemination, and government operations. This section presents an overview of four main components within tech and democracy: consumer rights, tech policy, digital platforms and political participation, and civic tech.

As digital tools and platforms become widely available to the everyday consumer, governments must balance the line between fostering innovation and protecting consumers from big tech. Meanwhile, the proliferation of digital communication technologies — and more recently, images and text manipulated by machine learning and AI — raises complex issues around the trade-offs between freedom of expression, privacy, and public safety, as well as the notion of truth and authenticity. Yet, digital technologies fuel civic mobilization and citizen journalism, equalizing the playing field for information sharing and commentary. But they have also led to the spread of misinformation and disinformation, as well as surveillance and censorship. Emerging tech is also deeply personal and rooted in cultural context, so governments around the world have created their own guidance on how technology will thrive within their democracies. Charting the dynamic intersection of technology and democracy, this section uncovers the tools, challenges, and opportunities that shape the modern political landscape.

Key Terms and Definitions
Data portability – The ability of individuals to transfer their personal data from one service provider to another, enabling
greater control over their data.

**Digital footprint** – The trail of data left behind by a person’s online activities, including social media interactions, website visits, and other online actions.

**Digital rights management** – Technologies or strategies used by content creators or distributors to control the access, usage, and distribution of digital content.

**Right to be Forgotten (RTBF)** – A legal concept that allows individuals to request the removal of certain online information about them from search engine results and other online platforms.

**Surveillance capitalism** – A concept in political economics that denotes the widespread collection and commodification of personal data by corporations.

**Data governance** – The practice of organizing and implementing policies, procedures, and standards for the effective use of an organization’s structured/unstructured information assets.

**Net neutrality** – The idea that network operators shouldn’t discriminate against any network traffic based on source, destination, protocol, content, application, or device.

**Disinformation** – False information that is deliberately intended to mislead.

**Echo chamber** – An environment where a person only encounters information or opinions that reflect and reinforce their own.

**Civic hacking** – Collaborative and often grassroots efforts to use technology to address civic issues, and create apps, tools, and platforms that benefit communities.

**Election integrity** – Ensuring the security, accuracy, and fairness of digital voting systems to maintain the trust and legitimacy of electoral processes.

**Predictive policing** – The use of algorithms, predictive analytics, and other techniques in law enforcement to identify potential criminal suspects and activities.

**Techplomacy** – Coined by the Danish government to define the connection between the governments and tech companies.

**Key Moments in Tech & Democracy**

**Africa**

Nigeria – *The Data Protection Act, 2023*

Provides a legal framework for the protection of personal information and establishes the Nigeria Data Protection Commission. The Act aligns with international standards and establishes principles for the processing of personal data, outlining specific requirements for the processing of sensitive and children’s data.

South Africa – *National Policy on Data and Cloud*

Creates guidelines for government bodies to safely
Europe
EU – The Digital Services Act (DSA) was established to better protect consumers and their rights online, establish transparency and a clear accountability framework for online platforms, and foster innovation, growth, and competitiveness within the single market. By 17 February 2024, online platforms and search engines will be required to publish the number of monthly average users in the EU.

EU – The Digital Markets Act (DMA) establishes specific criteria for qualifying a large online platform as a “gatekeeper”. The DMA starts on 2 May 2023. By 3 July 2023, gatekeepers need to notify their “core platform services” to the Commission.

EU – The Artificial Intelligence Act is a proposed EU regulation targeted at regulating AI systems in the EU, aims to maintain trust in AI systems, and to create an ecosystem of excellence for AI.

Asia
China – Management Measures for Generative Artificial Intelligence Services. The Cybersecurity Administration of China introduced draft measures listing rules that generative AI services have to follow, including the type of content these products are allowed to generate — within the framework set up by China’s national trifecta of data laws: the Cyber Security Law, Data Security Law, and Personal Information Protection Law.

India – The Digital Personal Data Protection Act requires companies to get user consent before collecting personal data. Allows the government to limit the transfer of data outside India and penalizes companies for violating rules.

Singapore – Enabling Service Hubs. Civic tech initiative to strengthen support for persons with disabilities and their caregivers within the community. Offers residents courses on daily living and digital skills.

South America
Brazil – The Fake News Law (Bill 2630) requires internet companies, search engines, and social messaging services to find and report illegal material. Recently, Brazil’s government and judiciary objected to big tech firms campaigning against the bill, alleging undue interference in the debate in Congress.

Chile – “Chile takes first steps towards AI regulation.” The Chilean parliament is engaging in discussions for a proposed bill that would address legal and ethical considerations in AI development.
and usage, aiming to strike a balance between protecting citizens’ rights and promoting the accessibility and advancement of these technologies.

Costa Rica – “Lawmakers use ChatGPT to draft AI regulation bill,” Costa Rican legislators asked ChatGPT to draft legislation aimed at governing AI systems within the country. The generated bill advocates for the establishment of a dedicated institution responsible for overseeing AI regulation, guided by principles such as accountability, explainability, bias prevention, and safeguarding human rights.

North America
Canada – Digital Services Tax Act. The Digital Services Tax Act would impose a 3% tax on revenue for large tech companies and online marketplaces, companies like Walmart, Amazon, and Meta.

US – The National AI Commission Act (H.R.4223) was introduced to establish an artificial intelligence commission and for other purposes.

US – The AI Disclosure Act of 2023 (H.R.3831) would require that any content produced by AI contain the phrase: “DISCLAIMER: this output has been generated by artificial intelligence.”

US – The REAL Political Advertisements Act (S.1596) provides further transparency and accountability for the use of AI-generated content in political advertisements by requiring a disclaimer that AI was used.


Tech & Democracy Information Hubs
Tech Policy
- Data & Society Research Library
- MIT Internet Policy Research Initiative Research
- Produces policy research in a variety of technical fields, including cybersecurity, AI policy, privacy, advanced network architectures, decentralized web, and app development.
- AI Ethicist, a global repository of reference and research material for research on AI ethics, responsible governance, and social impacts of AI.

Digital platforms and Political Participation
- Center for an Informed Public at the University of Washington Resources – Research, workshops, and talks on misinformation and disinformation.
- UNC Center for Information, Technology, and Public Life Research – Information on the Political and Civic Applications Division (PCAD), which develops software to support research into information environments; critical disinformation studies; and resources tracking how platform policies, state laws, and ethics
Bobina Zulfa, Digital Rights Researcher at Pollicy

Upon joining Policy after the completion of my fellowship program and then becoming a data and digital rights researcher there. I have since co-led Pollicy’s AI work. My advice to individuals looking in this field of work — especially young people across the African continent — would be to interest themselves in fellowships and other such career-shaping programs by organizations in the space both on the continent and elsewhere.”

Jules Polonetsky, CEO, Future of Privacy Forum

“Data protection issues are now squarely societal and human rights issues. There is a societal impact on every sector that relies on data, affecting the future of healthcare, transportation, and marketing – the list goes on. Many of these impacts will extend to the future of free speech and, ultimately, our democracy.”

Faith Obafemi, Data Protection and Privacy Writer, Captain Compliance

“I built my career by simply doing three things, which I like to call the 3C framework: Consume, Create and Collaborate. When I was just starting out, my first line of action was to consume as much content as I could about tech policy. As you consume more content, you begin to identify gaps and ignite a burning desire to fill those gaps with your own content. After consuming and creating, you will naturally begin receiving collaboration requests — which helps to broaden your reach, letting more people know about you and what you do.”

Check out responsibletechguide.com for more on Tech & Democracy.
Here is a snapshot of recent job postings related to Tech & Democracy:

- Research Analyst, Technology and International Affairs Program at Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- Digital Democracy Program Officer, Arlington at International Foundation for Electoral Systems
- Research Director, Transformative Technologies and Governance at Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI)
- Data Analyst at Protect Democracy
- Senior Digital Democracy Program Officer, Arlington at International Foundation for Electoral Systems
- Director, Technology and Democracy at National Endowment for Democracy
- Assistant Professor – Technology Policy, Governance, and Society at Goldman School of Public Policy / School of Information, University of California, Berkeley
- Senior Technologist / Senior Policy Analyst / Senior Counsel, Elections & Democracy at Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT)
- Director, Independent Media and Information Space at National Endowment for Democracy (NED)

Visit our Responsible Tech Job Board for the latest listings and freely join our Responsible Tech Talent Pool to be matched up with potential opportunities.

*Are you an employer looking for Responsible Tech talent?* Reach out to rebekah@alltechishuman.org and learn more here.
Public Interest Tech

Overview
Many people have created definitions for what public interest technology (PIT) is, and most definitions agree on this idea: PIT is a technology created for the public good, rather than for individual or commercial gain. Several definitions of PIT also emphasize that PIT should also aim for equity, to ensure that PIT is inclusive and accessible to all.

It is not just technologists who can be involved in PIT, but also lawyers, government workers, nonprofit workers, activists, scientists, policymakers, and any others who can provide a perspective that will ensure that PIT is better shaped towards the public good. As such, the PIT ecosystem is made up of a mix of public and private stakeholders.

Similar to PIT are civic technology and government technology. Civic technology is often regarded as technology that governments and citizens use to communicate with each other. Government technology is often regarded as any technology where governments are the intended users. PIT, civic technology, and government technology can overlap, but in our definition, PIT does not necessarily have to overlap with either. Any technology that serves the public interest could be considered PIT, no matter who is creating it, nor what type of problem it is trying to solve. For example, PIT creators, supporters, and service providers may be corporations, startups, non-profits, design firms, public benefit corporations, technology consultancies, teams in government, and so on.

Problem and opportunity domains in the public interest may include improving the quality of, and access to, education, healthcare, public programs and services, civic participation, a healthy and safe environment, digital privacy, digital equity, and more.
Key Terms and Definitions

**Accessibility:** Accessibility is about ensuring that digital technology is usable by people with disabilities. Checklists, standards, and laws are important tools to help achieve accessibility — yet sometimes they get the focus instead of the fundamental goal of accessibility: meeting the needs of disabled people in the real world. Accessibility is an important aspect of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

**Anti-racist Technology:** Structural Racism is a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in mutually reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. Anti-racist Technology is designed to combat structural racism and mitigate the harms (current, inherited) it causes, the access, opportunities, and rights it denies baked in as part of the design process, and it would actively seek to generate racial equity – also as part of its design.

**Assistive Technology:** Assistive technology is a technology used by individuals with disabilities in order to perform or improve functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible and can include mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs, as well as hardware, software, and peripherals that assist people with disabilities in accessing computers or other information technologies.

**Civic Tech:** Civic Tech is a technology that enables greater participation in government or otherwise assists the government in delivering citizen services and strengthening ties with the public.

**Consentful Technology:** Consentful Technologies are digital applications and spaces that are built with consent (defined above) at their core, and that support the self-determination of people who use and are affected by these technologies.

**Cybersecurity, (also Public Interest Cybersecurity, Cyber Civil Defense):** Ensures confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information, and reduces the risk of cyberattacks. When applied to public interest organizations such as hospitals, city governments, non-profits, etc., who serve the public, and typically lack the capacity to defend against cyber criminals or politically motivated attacks, we get Public Interest Cybersecurity or Cyber Civil Defense.

**Deceptive Design Patterns:** Deceptive Design Patterns are tricks used by websites and apps to get you to do things that you didn’t mean to, or that you might not otherwise do, like buy things, sign up for services, or switch your settings.

**GovTech:** GovTech is the technology used to deliver public sector services, as well as the processes involved in modernizing them (aka digital transformation), with an emphasis on citizen-centric, universally accessible public services, and whole-of-government approach to digital government transformation.
Human-Centered Design: Human-centered design is a practice where designers focus on four key aspects. They focus on people and their context. They seek to understand and solve the right problems, the root problems. They understand that everything is a complex system with interconnected parts. Finally, they do small interventions. They continually prototype, test, and refine their products and services to ensure that their solutions truly meet the needs of the people they focus on. Cognitive science and user experience expert Don Norman sees it as a step above user-centered design.

Inclusive Design: Inclusive design describes methodologies to create products that understand and enable people of all backgrounds and abilities. Inclusive design may address accessibility, age, culture, economic situation, education, gender, geographic location, language, and race. The focus is on fulfilling as many user needs as possible, not just as many users as possible.

Public Interest Technology: Public Interest Technology (PIT) is a broad and emergent field that is synonymous with Responsible Tech. Many people have created definitions for what PIT is, and most definitions agree on this idea: PIT is a technology created for the public good, rather than for individual or commercial gain. Several definitions of PIT also emphasize that PIT should also aim for equity, to ensure that PIT is inclusive and accessible to all.

Web Accessibility: Web accessibility means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them.

Key Moments in Public Interest Tech
- The New York State government has recently signed the Digital Fair Repair Act into law. This made New York the first state in the U.S. to guarantee people the right to repair their digital devices, protecting consumers from anticompetitive efforts to limit repair. (See Governor Hochul Signs the Digital Fair Repair Act Into Law.)

- Some PIT stakeholders in the U.S. are optimistic about the future of civic tech. This is due to a number of factors: recently laid-off private sector tech workers showing great enthusiasm for public sector tech jobs; governments making improvements in building up their technical capacity; and governments becoming more human-centered in their approach to technology. (See Why 2023 could be a year for civic-tech optimism and To Build A Better Internet, Put Laid Off Tech Workers Back to Work in the Public Interest.)

- Some of the most pressing ethical issues in technology today are: misuse of personal information, misinformation and deepfakes, lack of oversight and acceptance of responsibility, use of AI, and autonomous technology. (See 5 Ethical Issues in Technology to Watch for in 2023.) PIT is not immune to these ethical issues. For example,
Public Interest Tech

- when governments rely on technology created and maintained by external consultancies, it becomes more difficult to ensure that citizens’ personal data is kept private and secure (representing the ethical issue of lack of oversight and acceptance of responsibility).

- becomes more difficult to ensure that citizens’ personal data is kept private and secure (representing the ethical issue of lack of oversight and acceptance of responsibility).

- Consumer Reports is creating an app called Permission Slip, which will provide people more control over how for-profit entities use their consumer data.

- Organizations like TechCongress and Presidential Innovation Fellows are helping influence tech policy and government technology by placing technologists as fellows in the offices of federal policymakers and government agencies.

The Way Forward

- Build up internal technical capacity within governments so that governments do not need to rely on external experts and piecemeal projects to improve their technology. One way to make this a reality is by ensuring that pay for these government roles are competitive with similar roles in the private sector. (See In Public Service, Technology Is Only as Good or Bad as We Are.)

- Educate students from the broad range of fields that contribute to PIT to be prepared to think and work in PIT. An existing example is the Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN).

- When creating a new policy or piece of legislation, think down to the very end user how that policy or legislation will play out. Ensure there is a real plan for funding and implementation, as well as feedback loops for collecting data and adjusting course according to that data. (See In Public Service, Technology Is Only as Good or Bad as We Are.)

- Get the broader public informed and involved in discussions on tech policy, to ensure that decisions truly reflect the public interest.

- Incorporate AI with caution. Continuously educate ourselves about what AI can and cannot do. When AI is used, monitor for errors. Check out responsibletechguide.com for more on Public Interest Tech.
Public Interest Tech

Here is a snapshot of recent job postings related to Public Interest Tech:

- Full-Stack Software Engineer at State of New Jersey Office of Innovation
- Chief Data Officer at City and County of Honolulu
- Director, Digital Experience at Franklin County, OH
- Program Officer, Technology in the Public Interest at MacArthur Foundation
- Chief Information Technology Officer at New York County District Attorney’s Office
- Digital Equity Officer and Director of Broadband and Cable at City of Boston
- Supervisory Digital Services Manager (12-Month Register) at Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Department of the Treasury
- Digital Service Expert at State of Colorado, Governor’s Office of Information Technology
- Digital Service Director at State of Arizona
- Deputy Chief Digital and Artificial Intelligence Officer for Business Analytics at Office of the Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense

Visit our Responsible Tech Job Board for the latest listings and freely join our Responsible Tech Talent Pool to be matched up with potential opportunities.

Are you an employer looking for Responsible Tech talent? Reach out to rebekah@alltechishuman.org and learn more here.
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

Overview
Over the past few years, our relationship with technology has undergone a transformation that distinctively impacts youth and well-being. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests that coincided with it brought our attention to the impact of our relationship with technology on our mental health. Although young people today are digital natives, the past few years highlighted how their lack of power, rights, and autonomy in the design process of digital technologies and spaces has placed them in a vulnerable position.

Caregivers, technologists, and policymakers who have recognized young people’s vulnerability have begun the process of transforming digital technologies and spaces that are intentionally designed with youth and well-being at the forefront of the design process. Although these efforts are impactful, the lack of youth voices in the process of identifying a problem and developing a solution indicates a gap that needs to be filled within the responsible tech ecosystem. All Tech is Human aims to address this gap by highlighting the need and power of multiple stakeholders, disciplines, and perspectives.

For this section of the report, the contributors wish to offer a holistic lens regarding the perspectives of the youth of today in their relationship to tech. Without initiating feelings of doom and gloom that some resources may project, we want to foster a more grounded and yet actionable hope to garner mobility and motivation of actionable change while allowing a chance to see how tech is integrated in the lives of Youth in a better and healthier way. We want to show that Youth has a voice and autonomy over their wellbeing and how it relates to tech.
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

Key Terms and Definitions

Youth is defined as the period determined between childhood and adulthood – the age group is also referred to as “young adult.” For the purposes of the Responsible Tech Guide, we define “youth” as between the ages of 18 to 25.

Digital Natives: Youth born in generations already immersed in technology from an early age. These individuals think and learn in the context of a hyper-connected world. Understanding how to navigate this digital landscape is crucial for their personal and professional development. (See John Palfrey and Urs Glasser, Born Digital: Understanding the First Generation of Digital Natives).

Emerging Technology: New or evolving technologies; the process of continued development of existing technologies; this also includes Artificial Intelligence (AI): Artificial Narrow Intelligence (ANI), Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), and Artificial Super Intelligence (ASI). More on the types of AI at mygreatlearning.com.

Social Media: A digital technology that facilitates the sharing of text and multimedia through virtual networks and communities where it also connects friends, families and even businesses where they market, promote and track customers. More than 4.7 billion people around the world use social media.

Wellbeing: While there is no global consensus on a single definition of well-being, the definition would include having a fulfilled, abundant, and healthy life that is all-encompassing of these attributes. It also may include striving towards having positive emotions such as happiness and contentment including having the ability of self-autonomy, purpose, and meaning over one’s life.

Key Moments in Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

Youth, Tech, and Wellbeing are interconnected because technology plays a significant role in young people’s lives. Equipping digital natives with the skills, knowledge, and tools to use technology responsibly and for their personal growth contributes to their overall wellbeing and prepares them for success in the digital age. Digital technologies provide opportunities for communication and social interaction. Social media, messaging apps, and online communities enable young people to connect with peers across the globe. However, using technology mindfully is important to prevent negative impacts on mental health and social relationships. While technology can offer numerous benefits, it also brings challenges, such as increased screen time, cyberbullying, and the pressure to curate a perfect online image. Teaching youth about responsible technology use is vital for maintaining their mental health and wellbeing. It also opens doors to various opportunities, such as online learning, remote work, and entrepreneurship, which can positively impact the future prospects of young individuals. Equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and tools to use technology responsibly and for their personal growth contributes to their overall
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

wellbeing and prepares them for success in the digital age.

Youth are empowered to advocate for their digital rights, and government officials across the world are more resolved to increase digital well-being for youth. Illinois passed the first US law aimed at protecting child influencers which will “entitle influencers under the age of 16 to a percentage of earnings based on how often they appear on video blogs or online content” discouraging youth exploitation (Teen Vogue).

However, the pursuit of digital well-being for youth has made progress with differing outcomes. In 2023, the US Congress reintroduced the Kids Online Safety Act (“KOSA”) as a measure to protect children online by increasing monitoring and limiting access to sensitive information after revisions proposed by over 100 civil organizations. However, advocates for online safety continue to highlight potential dangers. The Electronic Frontier Foundation says KOSA this as putting the “tools of censorship in the hands of state attorneys general, and would greatly endanger the rights, and safety, of young people online” (EFF). Also see: Children’s Online Privacy Protection Rule (“COPPA”), which protects children’s privacy by giving parents tools to control what information is collected from their children online (FTC). The “European strategy” to foster a safe environment for youth is Better Internet for Kids (BIK+), to “improve age-appropriate digital services and to ensure that every child is protected, empowered and respected online” which incorporates the European Parliament Resolution on children’s rights.

There still needs to be a human-centered and people led approach that considers the safety and rights of all users, including youth. In fact, youth are taking the lead in their own advocacy with organizations like, Design It For Us, a US based “coalition of young activists and organizations fighting for safer social media and online platforms for kids, teens, and young adults” (Design it for Us). In Africa, the African Union Youth Envoy utilizes the Google Digital Skills Campaigns encourages Africa’s growing youth population who want to position themselves to benefit from Africa’s digital revolution and establish a strong digital economy, “part of the larger African Union’s Digital Transformation campaign, which seeks to reach 100,000 young people with digital skills for the creation of jobs by 2024 through a country acceleration strategy across the African continent” (Unlocking Africa’s Potential). There are a number of initiatives by youth-led and established institutions focused on youth digital well-being.

The Way Forward
EdTech: Technology is a fundamental part of modern education. Equipping young people with tech skills prepares them for the job market of the future, where digital literacy is essential. Familiarity with technology also enhances their problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity skills. Technology offers tools and
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

platforms for creative expression. Young people can explore various forms of digital art, music production, video creation, and more. Encouraging their creativity in these digital mediums can foster innovation and self-expression.

Digital Literacy: By fostering tech literacy among youth, we empower them to effectively use technology to be active participants in shaping their digital experiences. And ultimately lead discussions about digital ethics, privacy, cybersecurity, and the social implications of emerging technologies. Youth may become creators of content, advocates for positive online communities, and contributors to the digital landscape in meaningful ways. Learning how to analyze information, evaluate sources, and make informed decisions in the digital age is crucial for youth to navigate a rapidly changing world. Understanding technology and its impact on society helps young people become responsible global citizens.

Advocacy: The decisions made in the tech industry today will have far-reaching consequences for the future. Youth advocacy ensures that the voices and concerns of future generations are heard and considered in policy-making and technology development. Through youth advocacy efforts, we harness the unique perspectives, digital fluency, and passion of young people to drive positive change in the tech industry, ensuring that technology serves the best interests of society as a whole.

Bridging Generational Gaps: Fostering meaningful intergenerational collaboration in responsible tech can help bridge the gap in tech understanding and adoption. They can facilitate communication between older generations and younger ones, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Civic Engagement: Youth advocacy on tech issues is needed to encourage young people to engage in civic activities and become informed and active participants in shaping government policies related to technology.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging: Involving new voices in responsible tech promotes diversity and inclusivity in the tech industry, which has historically lacked representation from underrepresented groups. Advocacy efforts can help ensure that technology is developed with a broader range of perspectives and experiences in mind.

Sustainability and Innovation: Involving a wide range of perspectives in the development and deployment of technologies and policies can serve as a catalyst for innovation in emerging challenges. With tech’s significant impact on the environment, youth advocacy should raise awareness about sustainable practices and alternatives, and advocate for ethically-minded solutions.
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

Resources
Organizations and Initiatives
- Connected Wellbeing Initiative
- Design It For Us
- Erasmus Student Network
- Social Media and Youth Mental Health: An Event to Confront the Moral Panic, a collaboration between Stanford Medicine’s Center for Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing, the d.school at Stanford, and GoodforMEdia.
- Headstream Innovation Festival, a youth-focused accelerator (of Second Muse) on the theme of digital solutions to wellness for youth.
- Inspired Internet Pledge, a cross-sector initiative of the Digital Wellness Lab and various social media companies.
- Responsible Technology Youth Power Fund
- Safer Internet Day, a collaboration amongst organizations coordinated by UK Safer Internet Centre
- Stop Non-Consensual Intimate Image Abuse | StopNCII.org
- Thriving Youth in a Digital Age
- UN Internet Governance Forum: Youth Initiatives
- Youth Tech Health

Publications and Media

AI 101 for Teachers, a collaboration of online videos about AI in education by code.org, ETS, ISTE, and Khan Academy.


EdSurge Podcast, with episodes on AI in education.

Connection, Creativity and Drama: Teen Life on Social Media in 2022, Pew Research Center

Disrupted Childhood: The Cost of Persuasive Design, 5Rights Foundation


Gen Z in the Room: Making Public Media By and With Youth for the Future, Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop

2023 State of Kids’ Privacy, Common Sense Media

Fostering An Inclusive And Technology Responsive Education For Youth Living With Disabilities In Africa, African Union Development Agency

Check out responsibletechguide.com for more on Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing.
Youth, Tech, & Wellbeing

Here is a snapshot of recent job postings related to Youth, Tech & Wellbeing:

- Child Safety Researcher at ActiveFence
- Data Analytics Intern at Institute for Youth in Policy
- Global Issue Policy Lead – Youth Safety & Wellbeing – Trust & Safety at TikTok
- allcove Data Systems Manager at Psychiatry Center for Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing, Stanford University
- Remote Student Contractor, Youth & Education Privacy at Future of Privacy Forum
- Senior Data Scientist – Child Safety at Roblox
- Senior Policy Manager at Thorn
- Game Design Manager for Empowerment and Well-being at Lego
- Program Manager, EdTech & Digital Health at SecondMuse
- UX Research Manager for Youth Initiatives at YouTube

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Panel Highlight: How To Build A Career in Responsible Tech

All Tech Is Human recently held a panel discussion featuring Danielle Sutton, Kristina Francis, Ginny Fahs, and Flynn Coleman, moderated by Executive Director Rebekah Tweed. This was part of our Responsible Tech Mixer and Speaker Series, which brings together 200 people each month in NYC to build community. This panel was held at Betaworks on July 26, 2023.

The panel focused on the ways people can build a career in responsible technology. Career pathways, the importance of multiple backgrounds and perspectives, and how responsible technology is one of the greatest civil rights issues of our time were discussed. Click here to watch the full video.

In the coming pages, you will find high-level overviews of each panelist and key insights from the discussion. You can see all the videos from our series here.
Danielle Sutton is a Senior Consultant at Deloitte and Trustworthy AI Strategist. Danielle Sutton is a 5th generation Harlemite who is currently a Senior Consultant at Deloitte in their Government and Public Services Strategy & Analytics Practice. She has been with the firm for 4 years, focusing her work on the intersection of Trustworthy AI and criminal justice.

“I think one of the big things that I’ve realized very early on was that responsible tech is truly one of the greatest social justice issues of our time and it is also one of the greatest market opportunities. And that rarely happens honestly, those, this convergence of events and so I found it really exciting in my own journey to be able to explore and navigate that space.” – Danielle Sutton
What kind of impact do you ultimately hope to make in your career?

“A lot is this idea that ultimately we can’t take any of what we do just for ourselves with us, right? What we do for ourselves dies with us...We live very much in an individualist culture. And that can bring incredible innovation and incredible independence. But thinking about this collective community, legacy I think is incredibly important. And it also takes the pressure off having to do all of these things for ourselves because what we do for ourselves dies with us. What could we give away? What could we take and then bring back to our communities?” – Flynn Coleman

Flynn Coleman is an author, an international human rights attorney, an environmental advocate, a Fellow at Harvard and Yale, and a professor. Flynn is the Fernand Braudel Senior Fellow in the Department of Law at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy, and is also a Visiting Researcher at the University of Copenhagen in the Law Faculty. She has been named a Technology & Human Rights Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy.
Kristina Francis
Executive Director, JFFLabs

What kind of impact do you ultimately hope to make in your career?

“I tell people a lot of times that my mission in life is to make sure that people can live in their genius. I say it all the time, and so I said that even before I went to JFF. And when we talk about walking through the door and allowing life to kind of bring you to the area that allows you to live your mission. That’s what JFF allows me to do. And for me it is making sure that everyone in this room, all the people in different communities, those who are suffering, that we can come together as a people, as a community, as a humanity, and make sure that people can live in the way that gives them dignity and allows them to give the gifts and talents to the world.” – Kristina Francis

Kristina Francis is the executive director of JFFLabs. In this role, she oversees advisory, acceleration, data, and investing initiatives that connect traditional systems with systems disruptors to enable equitable economic mobility. Kristina has more than 20 years of experience in corporate operations and entrepreneurial ventures focused on management consulting, business development, software and data integration, and impact investing competencies.
What advice or tips do you have, especially from your own perspective, your own little slice of the responsible tech ecosystem?

“I would say for folks who are transitioning into responsible technology for the first time there are ways to run small scale experiments. To see what sorts of roles are gonna be a good fit for you. Particularly if you’re interested in working for a nonprofit. Lots of nonprofits and governments, too, have kind of smaller consulting engagements where you’re able to embed with a team, try on what it looks like to work in this way and, and better understand the environment you’d be working for and with. And that’s been really crucial for me in my career as well. Most of my big career transitions have started with some sort of consulting contract or internship or apprenticeship or way to try on the role. And I feel like that’s really helped clarify decision making to get, to experience a day in the life myself, see the team I’ll get to be working with, and make calls about where to move based on the people, the project, the mission, and just how it feels day to day.” –Ginny Fahs
Panel Highlight: Technology Is Infrastructure

All Tech Is Human recently held a panel discussion featuring Dr. Saima Akhtar, Matt Mitchell, Claire Liu Yang, and Lyel Resner, moderated by Program Associate Elisa Fox. This was part of our Responsible Tech Mixer and Speaker Series, which brings together 200 people each month in NYC to build community. This panel was held at Betaworks on August 24, 2023.

The panel centered innovation necessity in workforce development in order to recruit a wide range of disciplines and voices and foster a more equitable tech ecosystem. It also explored how a diverse range of backgrounds and voices are required in cybersecurity and public interest technology. Click here to watch the video.

In the coming pages you will find high-level overviews of each panelist and key insights from the discussion.
Can you share why a diverse and inclusive ecosystem and workforce are important?

“So I’m gonna return to that sentence that I hope all of you remember, technology is infrastructure, right? What does that mean? What does that mean when you think about it? Technology is infrastructure...Do you think one person built [the] New York City subway? Do you think one person can build that? Is that possible? No. Because infrastructure is not a single skillset, right?...So there’s so many different skillsets needed, and I bet that in this room we have a good combination of them. And that’s what’s beautiful about it.”
–Claire Liu–Yang

Claire Liu Yang is an emerging leader who demonstrates that female leadership can transcend social stigmas and shatter barriers. With a passion for building infrastructure that’s blind to gender, age, income, race and disabilities, the chief of staff at Silicon Harlem manages the broadband that provides internet service for affordable housing in underserved communities.
How would you persuade industry and funders to invest in and collaborate with academia and civil society on workforce development and education programs?

“...we run around a lot trying to convince influential company builders and investors that responsible tech in some way is a business imperative. And I think there’s a growing set of data that suggests that that’s true...I mean, one, we talk most importantly about how the talent cares. We, you can look at this room as some evidence. There are all sorts of studies about how millennials and Gen Z care more about buying products and services and being part of communities that resonate with their values and generation....Second and relatedly is consumers care. I think we’re entering a time where trust in the private sector generally and in technology companies specifically, very justifiably, is at all time lows. And that’s empirical...And then thankfully, although to a lesser degree here domestically than in the EU, there is an increasingly aggressive and sophisticated regulatory regime. And so to kind of build social capital and maybe get ahead of some of those things is useful.” – Lyel Resner

Lyel Resner is currently Visiting Faculty and the Head of the Public Interest Technology Studio at Cornell Tech, where he leads programming for 400+ graduate students on creating tech to create a more just future, and co-leads the Startups & Society Initiative (SSI) – a non profit research project backed by Ford, OSF, and Omidyar to support founders and investors with responsible innovation practices. As part of SSI, Lyel Co-founded the Responsible Innovation Founders Summit – an annual event that has attracted 700+ global tech leaders including founders backed by Y-Combinator, General Catalyst, and Sequoia, and published the Responsible Innovation Primer for Founders – a distillation of 100+ interviews of influential tech and civil society leaders about building tech companies responsibly.
Matt Mitchell is a well known security researcher, operational security trainer, and data journalist who founded and leads CryptoHarlem, impromptu workshops teaching basic cryptography tools to the predominately African American community in upper Manhattan. He hosts a weekly livestream that educates all people on how to stay safe from digital harms. Matt is also the Senior Cybersecurity Program Manager at The Ford Foundation.

“If you look in the mirror and you see the identity of the community that’s being, you know, targeted, it’s really hard for you to show up as your full self everyday to work...CryptoHarlem is about like, tugging on that piece of thread. Until the evil sweater falls apart, you know? You can donate all your money, you could be a whistleblower. You know, the realities of capitalism is what forces so many good minds from your program into that temptation of those factories. You know what I’m saying? And we’re about just trying to Harriet Tubman this whole situation and get people outta there, you know?” –Matt Mitchell

How does CryptoHarlem’s work at the Harlem Business Alliance expand cybersecurity education to underrepresented groups in the cybersecurity field?
Saima Akhtar

Senior Associate Director of the Vagelos Computational Science Center (CSC), Barnard College

"Technology is infrastructure and the way that I think about it really is that I studied the built environment, right? I think about the inequities that are built into the world around us. We think about these buildings as just magically appearing. No, there was an architect, there was a patron, there was a plan, and in that same way, the internet is, whether it’s virtual or infrastructure. So those same inequities are gonna be built in our virtual world if they don’t get resolved in our physical world. And so I think that it’s really important to think about all hands on deck ways of thinking about the future of technology and its impact on society” – Saima Akhtar
All Tech Is Human recently released three reports that involved hundreds of diverse community members working collaboratively around the world. These reports feature dozens of profile interviews and resources from hundreds of organizations in the responsible tech ecosystem.

Download *Tech & Democracy: People, Organizations, and Ideas for a Better Tech Future* at techanddemocracy.com

Download *HX Report: Aligning Our Tech Future With Our Human Experience* at hxreport.org

Download *AI and Human Rights: Building a Tech Future Aligned With the Public Interest* at aihumanrightsreport.com

Our organization is able to assemble hundreds of individuals quickly on emerging topics in responsible tech, allowing us to map the ecosystem, provide an overview, and conduct dozens of profile interviews for the community’s education.
All Tech Is Human conducted 16 live interviews with inspiring individuals involved in the responsible tech ecosystem at Unfinished Live in September 2022 in NYC. We asked each person, "What does your ideal tech future look like?" You can listen to all 16 interviews in our podcast series here.
Key Takeaways

01 Gain confidence and a better understanding of the ecosystem

There are thousands of individuals just like you looking to plug into this community. Treat it like a high-level of commitment to learn about the ecosystem, read relevant books and articles, expand your network, and find mentors.

02 Play an active role in responsible tech

After gaining a better understanding of the ecosystem, attend a responsible tech gathering to meeting others in the field. Participate in the many activities from hundreds of organizations working to make a better tech future.

03 Stay involved with All Tech Is Human

Join our newsletter, which covers the responsible tech movement, contribute to a working group, attend a summit or mixer, and join our Slack. There are numerous ways to take an active part in our work!
All Tech Is Human’s Team

David Ryan Polgar: Founder & President
Elisa Fox: Program Associate, Tekalo
Josh Chapdelaine: Special Projects & Multimedia
Rebekah Tweed: Executive Director
Renée Cummings: Senior Fellow for AI, Data, and Public Policy
Sandra Khalil: Head of Partnerships & Trust & Safety vertical
Sara M. Watson: Siegel Family Endowment Research Fellow
Sarah Welsh: Program Manager, Mentorship & Tekalo

Our team is small-but-growing and is complimented by a core of dedicated advisors and volunteers. Read an overview of our organization here. For general inquiries, write to us at hello@alltechishuman.org.
Stay involved with All Tech Is Human and the responsible tech community!
Get in touch

Stay in touch with All Tech Is Human by joining our newsletter and Slack community, attending our livestreams, and meeting in person at our summits and mixers!

Find all of our projects and links at link.tree/alltechishuman.

Our non-profit is based in NYC with a global community and approach. We hold in-person gatherings in NYC, San Francisco, DC, and London and are exploring additional locations. There are also informal meet-ups happening around the world organized independently by members of our Slack community.

Find additional resources related to the Responsible Tech Guide at responsibletechguide.com and stay in touch with All Tech Is Human at alltechishuman.org.

Contact: hello@alltechishuman.org.