

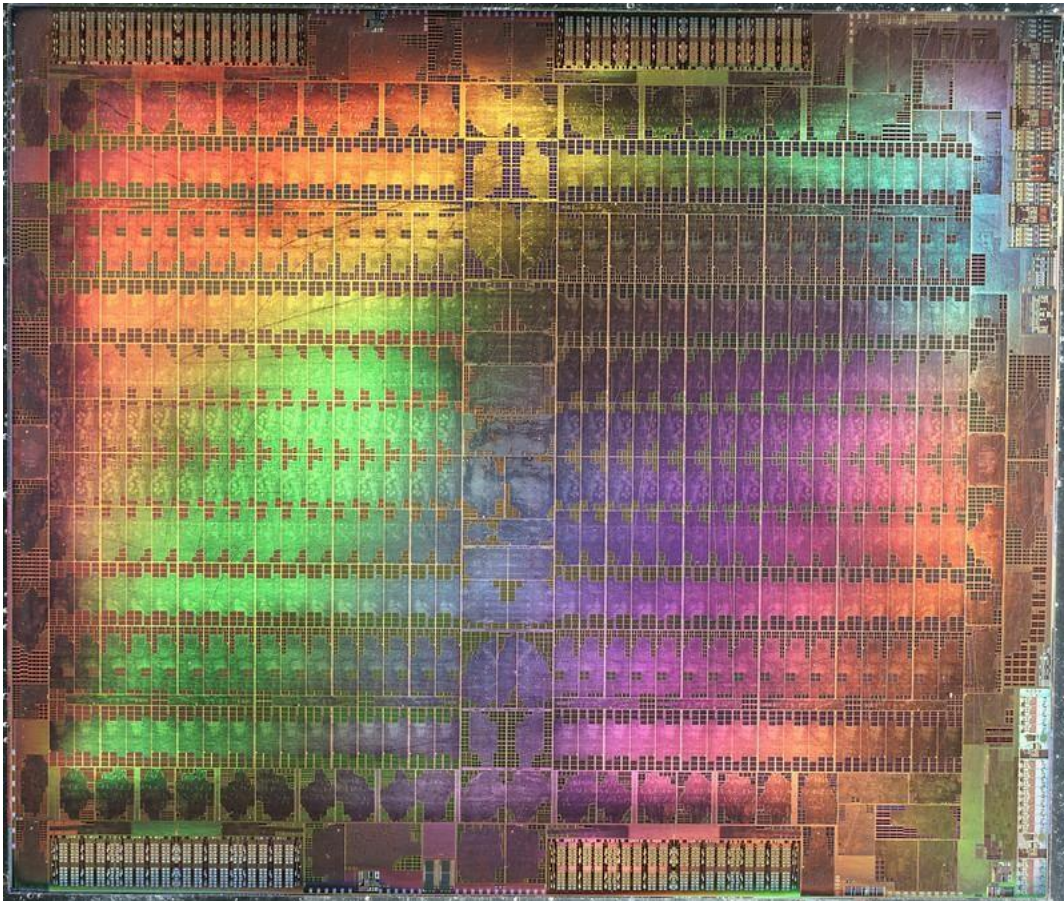
Call for Papers

The 1st Desirable Digitalisation Conference

Many Worlds of AI:

Intercultural Approaches to the Ethics of
Artificial Intelligence

University of Cambridge, 26-28 April 2023



Fritzchens Fritz / Better Images of AI / GPU shot etched 3 / CC-BY 4.0

Hosted by

The Leverhulme Centre for the Future of Intelligence (LCFI), University of Cambridge in
collaboration with The Centre for Science and Thought (CST), University of Bonn

Conference theme overview

The aim of this conference is to interrogate how an intercultural approach to ethics can inform the processes of conceiving, designing, and regulating artificial intelligence (AI).

Many guidelines and policy frameworks on responsible AI foreground values such as *transparency*, *fairness*, and *justice*, giving an appearance of consensus. However, this apparent consensus hides wide disagreements about the meanings of these concepts and may be omitting values that are central to cultures that have been less involved in developing these frameworks. For this reason, scholars and policymakers have increasingly started to voice the need to acknowledge these disagreements, foreground the plurality of visions for technological futures, and centre previously overlooked visions – as the necessary first steps in establishing shared ethical and regulatory frameworks for responsible AI.

While planetary-scale challenges demand international cooperation in search of new solutions – including those that rely on AI – to address the crises ahead of us, feminist, Indigenous, and decolonial scholars, among others, have pointed to potential problems arising from the techno-solutionism and technooptimism implied by the universalising ‘AI for Good’ paradigm. They recognise that some groups of humans have been multiply burdened under the current, dominant system of technology production, and that this system – if unchanged – is unlikely to bring about positive transformation. To ensure that new technologies are developed and deployed responsibly, we must, therefore, acknowledge and draw on ontological, epistemological and axiological differences, in ways that do not privilege a particular worldview. Yet in doing so, we must also work to avoid essentialising other nations or peoples, erasing extractive colonial histories, diversity washing, and cultural appropriation.

By foregrounding the many worlds of AI, we aim to create a space for dialogue between different worldviews without reifying the notion of discrete and unchanging cultural approaches to AI. Through centralising terms like ‘diaspora’, we aim to examine the complex (and often violent) histories of cultural exchange and the global movement of people and ideas which rarely take centre stage in conversations on intercultural AI ethics.

The question central to Many Worlds of AI is therefore: How can we acknowledge these complexities to facilitate intercultural dialogue in the field of AI ethics, and better respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by AI?

Many Worlds of AI is the inaugural conference in a series of biennial events organised as part of the [‘Desirable Digitalisation: Rethinking AI for Just and Sustainable Futures’](#) research programme. The ‘Desirable Digitalisation’ programme is a collaboration between the Universities of Cambridge and Bonn funded by [Stiftung Mercator](#). The primary aim of the programme is to explore how to design AI and other digital technologies in a responsible way, prioritising the questions of social justice and environmental sustainability.

Call for Papers

We are interested in a wide variety of approaches to the ethics of AI that interrogate 1) how **intercultural dialogue and conflict** is reflected in existing AI regulatory frameworks (the ‘Intercultural AI’ theme); 2) how the use and development of AI can build on **local and situated knowledges and imaginaries** (the ‘Scale(ability) of AI’ theme); 3) the perspectives of **diasporic and dislocated communities** on ‘AI ethics’ and regulation (the ‘AI across borders’ theme).

While we encourage applicants to suggest papers that speak to one or more of these themes, we will consider proposals that take on the idea of intercultural ethics of AI from other angles. We accept proposals for traditional academic presentations, as well as project/product demonstrations and artistic interventions. An individual contribution should be 15 minutes long; we also accept proposals for group presentations, panels, or workshops. We are looking for contributions from established academics, earlycareer researchers, technologists, policy specialists, civil society organisations, as well as communicators and artists.

Themes:

1) Intercultural AI: Exchange, dialogue and conflict

As part of this theme on intercultural exchange, dialogue, and conflict in AI ethics, we ask:

- How do different ethical traditions inform technology development and regulation?
- How can we meaningfully speak to differences in approaches to ethical AI among different groups?
- How can different groups learn from one another without risking conceptual appropriation and diversity-washing?
- How can we acknowledge ideological conflicts in efforts at regulating AI at the international level?

2) Scale(ability) of AI: From the local/situated to the global/planetary

As part of this theme focused on AI and scale(ability), we invite contributions that respond to the questions:

- How can intercultural approaches to AI ethics facilitate a conversation on shared, planetary-scale concerns and solutions in a critical way?
- How can we build AI systems that help us respond to the challenges ahead of us that are planetary in scale, while recognizing that our knowledge is always partial and situated?
- How can we think about AI as a tool for addressing planetary-scale concerns while remaining wary of ‘universalising’, ‘totalising’ visions?
- How does the planetary impact of AI both intersect with and reproduce racial, colonial, and capitalist histories of resource extraction? How do we plan to grapple with the waste products produced by AI development and deployment, and how can intercultural approaches to pollution and e-waste reinvigorate our understanding of the planetary costs of AI?

3) AI across borders: rethinking intercultural AI ethics through diaspora

Relating to this theme, we invite interventions that ask:

- What does a diasporic approach to AI and AI ethics look like? How does the concept of diaspora complicate current approaches to intercultural AI ethics?
- How can we rethink the relationship between race and AI through the lens of diaspora?
- How does AI affect diasporic identities and experiences?
- How do flows of people, data and technologies intersect with one another?
- How does diasporic thinking about AI shape and inflect the issue of AI and climate justice?
- How do colonial histories of racial capitalism, empire and mass displacement shape contemporary AI and data collection processes?
- What kinds of solidarities can be built between and among diasporic people when resisting technological harms?

Conference format

The conference will be a hybrid event, with a strong online dimension. We will try to accommodate different presenters' needs, bearing in mind they might be joining us online from different time zones.

The conference will include social events for those joining in person in Cambridge and remotely.

Accepted speakers who decide to participate in person will be considered for travel and accommodation funding.

Submission Guidelines

Please upload a 300 word abstract to the Many Worlds of AI submission form, available [HERE](#). Abstracts must be submitted by 31 December 2022. Please email any questions to desirableAI@lcfi.cam.ac.uk. We will notify you regarding the status of your submission by 31 January 2023.

This conference is generously funded by Stiftung Mercator.

