

Impact Engagements: Mapping the uneven consequences of AI with impacted communities

The risk that an AI system will cause harm is often underestimated prior to deployment. A primary driver of this neglect is the uneven distribution of AI harms: people most likely to be harmed by an AI system are also those least likely to have decision-making power over it. This open panel invites submissions addressing this challenge by focusing on two ongoing debates in organizing impact engagements: first, what is “impact” and how to evaluate it; and second, who should be involved in “engagements” that uncover impacts and how to organize it.

Starting with the first debate, impact is a way to evaluate potential consequences of algorithmic systems to make them legible to assessment practices and regulatory control. Given that safety of algorithmic systems can never be assumed or guaranteed, articulating a clear relationship between impact and harm is the central concern animating this debate. An effective strategy in this context is to articulate who is impacted by these systems, which in turn shapes the contours of the second debate. This debate around “engagement” often focuses on who counts as a participant and the unevenly distributed challenges of claiming autonomy, power, and agency among people subject to these systems. Those excluded from social and political privilege have a different standpoint on how algorithmic systems do not work for them and thus must be afforded substantial power in determining how these systems are designed and operated.

The panel invites submissions that address these debates by centering the experiences of impacted communities as the perspective that binds impacts to harms of algorithmic systems. Taking an expansive view of what counts as impact and engagement, this panel welcomes papers that critically examine the histories, futures, politics, and lived experiences underlying how we know, measure, and regulate algorithmic harms.

Panel Organizers:

Ranjit Singh, Data & Society Research Institute
Jacob Metcalf, Data & Society Research Institute
Meg Young, Data & Society Research Institute

Submission Portal: [Call for Submissions](#)