

TAFTIE Academy Networking Workshop: How To Make AI Programmes Ethically Sound

Date & Place: 23 March 2023, Sensengasse 1, 1090 Vienna

Type: Networking Workshop

Time: 9:00-15:30

Host: FFG

Moderator: FFG

Speakers:

PD Dr **Peter Biegelbauer**, Sc.M., Senior Scientist at the Center for Innovation Systems & Policy of AIT Austrian Institute of Technology, leads project Co-Change and the AIT AI Ethics Lab, focuses on innovation policy and research, responsible innovation, evaluation, impact assessment.

Dr **Sven Schlarb**, MA, Scientist at the Center for Digital Safety & Security of AIT Austrian Institute of Technology in the Data Science research group, deals with AI applications and machine learning for the analysis of extensive text corpora (big data) in the security and archive areas.

[Project Co-Change](#) (H2020, 2020-2023) focuses on responsible innovation in 8 [change labs](#) located in research performing, research financing and standardisation organisations and firms. One of these labs is the [AIT AI Ethics Lab](#), where researchers from [data and social sciences](#) work on questions of [bias, privacy and ethics in AI](#).

The workshop will be hosted by FFG. We suggest in class delivery to support intensive exchange, networking and support group-creativity.

Contact persons at AIT: peter.biegelbauer@ait.ac.at, Sven.Schlarb@ait.ac.at

Contact persons at FFG: Markus.Proell-Schobel@ffg.at, Kristina.Grandits@ffg.at, Sabine.Mayer@ffg.at

Brief Description

Artificial intelligence technologies offer manifold promises for economy and society. The prominent AI scholar Stuart Russell estimates a GDP increase of 1000% for developing a general-purpose AI. This may take some time, but no country can afford to be left behind. Therefore, currently hundreds of billions of Euros, Dollar and Renminbi are invested into AI and AI research.

Yet AI also raises challenges. Applications such as speech recognition, optimization of mobility needs, face recognition or the analysis of employee productivity are based on the analysis of personal data. This leads to challenges, such as biases contained in the data from which algorithms learn, as well as explicitly racist and discriminatory statements affecting the predictions and conclusions in downstream AI applications.

In a nutshell, the existence, storage, and processing of personal data as well as ethical procedures of AI applications raise diverse questions of privacy, data protection and ethics, all of which are subject to recent discussions on societal and policy-making levels. In late 2022 the "Digital Services Act" and the "Digital Markets Act" have been adopted, proposals of the European Council, Parliament and Council for the "AI Act" are on the table. Practically all OECD countries feature similar discussions, which will lead to severe changes of the ways in which AI and AI research is conducted.

The principles under discussion are human (ultimate) responsibility, (data) security, compliance with privacy, transparency, fairness and non-discrimination, social and ecological sustainability and accountability, many of which the EU-level discussion subsumes under the term "trustworthiness". They will serve as cornerstones of what will be seen as desirable and undesirable AI applications.

Content

We will have a one-day workshop on what this all means for the funding of AI research. What can be the role of funding agencies regarding the societal impact of AI? How can agencies tackle the aforementioned challenges and support companies and research organisations in arriving at products, processes, skills and knowledge, which are ethically sound? We will discuss different approaches to, e.g., project selection procedures, risk assessment processes and tools, and concrete examples coming also from the partaking agencies.

These topics will be covered through different methods, such as short input presentations, (good) practice examples by facilitators and experts from innovation agencies, discussions in small groups and the plenary as well as networking elements.

Who Should Attend?

Target groups are: programme managers working with AI-related programmes; experts working on digitization, ICT and IT, as many project proposals in these areas are likely to contain AI elements already now, but certainly in the future; experts working on data-driven programmes, since these are likely to contain AI elements; strategy experts from agencies working on AI, ICT, IT or, broadly, digitisation topics.

Learning Outcome

Workshop attendants will gain an understanding of the current debates on the societal and ecological impact of AI. They will have discussed ethical criteria and principles, helpful also for project selection procedures. Another part of the workshop is on obtaining a good understanding of risk assessment and management procedures for selection, monitoring, and supervision of projects and programmes. Attendants will be aware of different ways of risk assessment and management for AI related projects. They will also have learned how these challenges are debated in several of the innovation agencies present.

Costs

For TAFITIE members and International Partners: free of charge (Travel and hotel costs have to be covered by the participant's agency)

For non-members: please contact Berna.Windischbaur@ffg.at