



AI Policy Matters

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Abstract

AI Policy Matters is a regular column in *AI Matters* featuring summaries and commentary based on postings that appear in the *AI Matters* blog (<https://sigai.acm.org/aimatters/blog/>). We welcome everyone to make blog comments so we can develop a rich knowledge base of information and ideas representing the SIGAI members.

Update on the ACM Technology Policy Committee

SIGAI has links with [other policy and education groups](#), including Computing Research Association ([CRA](#)) and particularly the ACM US Technology Policy Committee ([USTPC](#)). AI has an expanding share of the technology policy area, and as the new Chair of USTPC I plan to report current resources and issues regularly through the *AI Matters* newsletter and blog. ACM and its USTPC are non-profit, non-lobbying, and entirely apolitical. The mission is simply to help policymakers and their staff, the science community, and the public understand the forms of computing technology so they can make technically informed decisions and recommendations. Recent and upcoming USTPC policy products on AI include

- * Generative AI
- * AI and Cybersecurity
- * Responsible AI
- * Human-Centered AI
- * Automated Vehicle Safety

Sample USTPC Products

Recent documents include

- 1 [Comments to White House OSTP on National AI Priorities](#), US Technology Policy Committee (July 7, 2023)

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- 2 [Joint Principles for the Development, Deployment, and Use of Generative AI Technologies](#), ACM TPC, Europe/US Technology Policy Committees (June 27, 2023)
- 3 [Statement on Principles for Responsible Algorithmic Systems](#), ACM TPC, Europe/US Technology Policy Committees (October 26, 2022)
- 4 [Comments to NIST on Update of the National Artificial Intelligence R&D Strategic Plan](#), US Technology Policy Committee (March 4, 2022)
- 5 [Statement on Facial Recognition Technologies](#), ACM US Technology Policy Committee (June 30, 2020)

TechBriefs

Another ACM policy resource is the [TechBrief series](#) of short technical bulletins that present scientifically-grounded perspectives on the impact of specific developments or applications of computing technology. Designed to complement ACM's computing activities in the policy arena, the primary goal is to inform on, rather than advocate for, specific policies. AI topics in recent and upcoming TechBriefs include AI and trust, media disinformation, smart cities, safer systems, and generative AI.

1 [Safer Algorithmic Systems](#)

Lead Author Ben Shneiderman

The ubiquity of algorithmic systems creates serious risks that are not currently being adequately addressed. A recurring theme of this TechBrief is that while AI is incredibly useful and generally benign, when deployed in complex systems algorithms can cause a variety of profound harms to individuals and to society, threatening opportunity, liberty, and even life itself. To that end, the TechBrief recommends that enabling safer algorithmic systems requires organizational human-centered safety cultures based on a high research and policy priority of governments and all stakeholders.

2 Facial Recognition

Lead Author Joshua A. Kroll

The focus is on policy issues raised by facial recognition and its use by governments and the private sector. Noting that “facial recognition use is increasing despite the technology’s fundamental limitations, creating profound privacy and ethical challenges,” the TechBrief covers the myriad problems with such technology including that facial recognition is not a single, dependable technology, the inherent dangers to personal privacy, the evidence that bias in facial recognition systems is pervasive and profound. Responsible application of facial recognition technology requires careful, scientifically informed, and ongoing governance.

3 Smart Cities

Lead Author Chris Hankin

This TechBrief focuses on the concept of Smart Cities and how to deploy information and communication technology (ICT) to create such cities without compromising either personal or societal freedoms. Concerns raised by such emerging tech include: cybersecurity risks at every stage of every smart city technology’s life cycle; effective privacy protection mechanisms as an essential component; transparency and fairness to all city users, not just residents; and understanding the climate impact of smart city infrastructures both during design and after deployment.

4 Upcoming TechBrief: Generative AI

Lead Authors David Leslie and Francesca Rossi

The rapid commercialization of Generative AI (GenAI) poses multiple large-scale risks to individuals, society, and the environment. The issues require rapid, international response to mitigate negative outcomes. Comprehensive and coherent guidelines are needed for the development and deployment of GenAI systems whose proliferation may create massive individual, societal, and socioeconomic risk. Swift but proportionate policy action is needed at local, national, and international levels to meet the challenges posed by the expanding scale and scope of GenAI-related risks. Wide disparities in the economic influence of GenAI on stakeholders have the potential, if not fully addressed by policymakers,

to amplify inequality and thwart innovation and competition.

AI Policy Matters

Future columns will feature emerging AI public policy issues, projects, and resources. We look forward to blog discussions on these important topics. ACM and USTPC always seek participation by the experts at SIGAI to help identify topics and draft documents on emerging issues, help brief policymakers, and participate in events like [HotTopics Webinars](#). I welcome your ideas in messages to medsker@acm.org and through participation in the [SIGAI Policy Blog](#).



Larry Medsker is a Research Professor at The George Washington University, where he was founding director of the Data Science graduate program. He is currently a faculty member in the

GW Human-Technology Collaboration Lab and Ph.D. [program](#). His research in AI includes work on artificial neural networks, hybrid intelligent systems, and the impacts of [AI on society and policy](#). He is Co-Editor-in-Chief for the [journal *AI and Ethics*](#), Public Policy Officer for the ACM SIGAI, and Chair of the ACM Technology Policy Committee.