

FACTSHEET #3

Social Computing Compass and Democratic Design Justice Framework

The Social Computing Compass and Democratic Design Justice Framework will provide software developers with two unique tools by which to assess the impact of their work on civic participation and democracy more widely.

They will expand the notion of the ethical standards software design should meet, which can be enforced through regulatory and governance frameworks. These tools foster bottom-up self-regulation and self-assessment by software developers. This work will produce a democratic design justice framework to ensure that whoever designs, develops, and uses AI can do so in a just manner, inspired by democratic principles and public good.

Who is involved in the development process



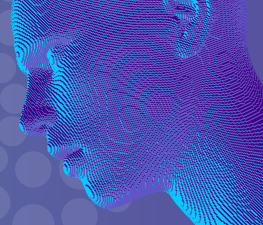
Stakeholders and testing

Using a participatory design approach, the tools will be developed by experts in culture and democratic participation, in close conversation with software developers from academia and industry. Starting with a design session in late 2023, the tools will be presented to community and released for wider use in 2025.

CHALLENGES / Why is it important?

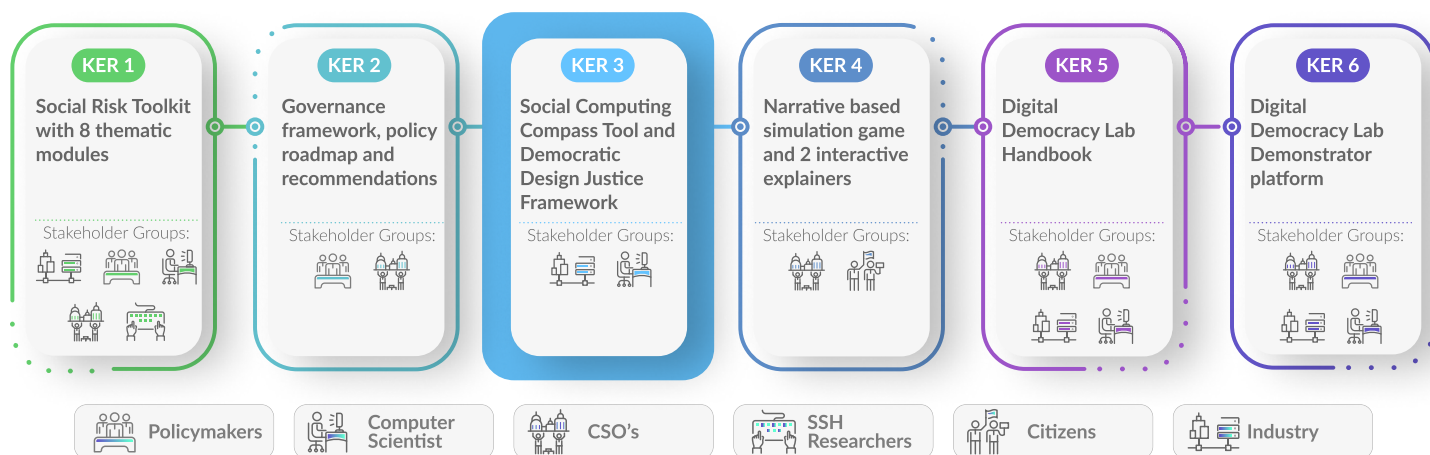
Research has shown clearly that both data and perspectival biases affect the creation and implementation of software tools. Ethical guidelines and toolkits exist, but they don't necessarily help software developers to imagine how their work might be used or misused, by or to the detriment of people very different from themselves. The Social Computing Compass and Democratic Design Justice Framework will provide culturally attuned instruments to add to the current toolbox to support ethical tech.





Benefits and beneficiaries

The tools will be primarily aimed at software developers looking for innovative ways to inform their design and innovation processes. Policymakers and citizens may also find them useful, however, as a tool for assessing the risks of a new technology in a cultural context.



"We have become accustomed now to speaking about the importance of ethics in software design and deployment, but a strict adherence to ethics, that assumes right and wrong answers, will only take us so far. The Social Computing Compass and Democratic Design Justice Framework will help us to build software where its impact can be more holistically understood and assessed in the context of cultural and demographic difference, and the power asymmetries that come with them."

Jennifer Edmond, KT4D project Coordinator

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We will publish contents and materials and host webinars to harness the benefits of knowledge technologies to foster more inclusive civic participation in democracy.



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