

Preface

Thomas Olsson¹, Otto Sahlgren², Jaana Parviainen², Salla Westerstrand³, J. Tuomas Harviainen¹, Arto Laitinen², and Juho Rantala²

¹ Tampere University, Faculty of Information Systems and Communication Sciences, Tampere, Finland

² Tampere University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere, Finland

³ University of Turku, Information Systems Science, Turku, Finland

The 7th Conference on Technology Ethics (TETHICS2024) was held in Tampere, Finland, on 6.-7.11.2024. The organizing committee included Thomas Olsson, Otto Sahlgren, Jaana Parviainen, J. Tuomas Harviainen, Arto Laitinen, and Juho Rantala from Tampere University as well as Salla Westerstrand from the University of Turku, with assistance from the previous organizers from the Future Ethics research group. TETHICS2024 continues a trend of steady growth, gathering a number of high-quality papers which span a range of academic disciplines and concern diverse, topical issues regarding ethics and information technologies. This year's event also broke the previous record for attending participants. Still, like in previous years, the conference was kept quite small to provide participants opportunities to discuss their research in person and to form connections.

The conference programme consisted of two keynote speeches, thirteen paper presentations split into six sessions, a poster presentation session, and an interactive session on technology ethics education. The keynote speeches were held by John Danaher (University of Galway) and Anna Metsäranta (Solita), respectively. Danaher's keynote speech defended the idea that technologies and technological advances can affect and change moral paradigms, providing illustrative historical examples in support of this philosophical argument. Metsäranta's keynote speech focused on sustainable artificial intelligence (AI), shedding light on what sustainability means in the practice of designing, developing, and using AI technologies and what kinds of challenges frequently arise. Following this practical orientation, an interactive session on technology ethics education was organized by Ville Vakkuri, Kai-Kristian Kemell, and Lauri Tuovinen, who planned the session together with Tero Vartiainen. The session provided participants with the opportunity to discuss the current state of technology ethics education, and to envision ways forward.

On the first day, paper presentations started with Joni-Roy Piispanen presenting a paper co-authored with Tinja Myllyviita, Ville Vakkuri, and Rebekah Rousi which examined privacy and data protection issues in Replika AI, a popular conversational AI application. The second session included two presentations focusing on the ethical and political dimensions of Big Tech power. Jani Koskinen presented his joint work with Salla Westerstrand, wherein they argue that platformisation colonises the human lifeworld by implementing economic, administrative, and political power *through* technology. Jaana Parviainen's presentation cast light on Big Tech's political and economic capturing of AI ethics, in which Big Tech companies harness AI ethics research, and suppliers of that research, to exercise political power. In the third session, the focus turned towards the theory and practice of AI ethics. Kai-Kristian Kemell presented a paper co-authored with Jukka K. Nurminen and Ville Vakkuri, which focuses on the real-life monitoring of machine learning systems' compliance with ethical principles. Lauri Tuovinen, presenting a paper written with Kimmo Halunen, demonstrated how the common ethical principles of 'security' or 'safety' are still lacking in terms of proper definition and operationalization, leading to corresponding ambiguity about what counts as an 'AI vulnerability'. The third presentation of the session presented the results of a systematic literature review on ethical issues in large language models conducted by Atte Laakso, Kai-Kristian Kemell, and Jukka K. Nurminen. The final session of the first day included presentations by Firuza Huseynova on

Proceedings of the 7th Conference on Technology Ethics (TETHICS2024), November 6–7, 2024, Tampere, Finland

✉ thomas.olsson@tuni.fi (A. 1); otto.sahlgren@tuni.fi (A. 2); jaana.parviainen@tuni.fi (A. 3); salla.westerstrand@solita.fi (A. 4); tuomas.harviainen@tuni.fi (A. 5); arto.laitinen@tuni.fi (A. 6); juho.rantala@tuni.fi (A. 7)

📄 0000-0002-1106-2544 (A. 1); 0000-0001-7789-2009 (A. 2); 0000-0002-7838-592X (A. 3); 0000-0002-1441-8673 (A. 4); 0000-0002-6085-5663 (A. 5); 0000-0002-4514-7298 (A. 6); 0000-0002-6507-6749 (A. 7)



© 2024 Copyright for this paper by its authors. Use permitted under Creative Commons License Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0).

human-AI augmentation and deskilling in the workplace, and by Dominik Schlienger on misconceptions about the autonomy of AI systems, respectively.

The second day's paper presentations started with a session on ethics in technology design. Johanna Ahola-Launonen presented a critique of instrumentalist approaches to technology evaluation and assessment, while Rebekah Rousi presented joint work with Jaana Leikas, Hannu Vilpponen and Pertti Saariluoma which focused on ethical perspectives related to technology design for the elderly. Aida Kalender discussed how community-based art organisations could be included as collaborative partners in achieving design justice in smart city contexts, as examined in their paper co-authored with Giovanni Sileno and Sennay Ghebreab. The final paper presentation session included empirical studies on technology ethics in education, including a study on data privacy and ethics in university education by Rebekah Rousi, Hanna-Kaisa Alanen and Anne Wilson, and a study on how responsible AI perspectives could be included in technical education curricula by Rhoda Abadia.

This year's conference proceedings are the result of the hard work on part of the organizing committee, the authors, and our international group of reviewers, but also our collective effort to not only sustain but steadily improve TETHICS. Therefore, the organizing committee extends their gratitude to the conference's authors, reviewers, and participants for their assistance, participation, and kind feedback. Special thanks go to our sponsors including Solita Group Ltd., the research DigiSus research platform, the research project Dig1t0, and the Future Ethics research group, whose support has been integral to ensure that TETHICS can be made affordable, especially for undergraduate and PhD students.