
Call for Abstracts

AI-Imaginations: The Future of AI and Public Safety

International and Transdisciplinary Symposium on the AI We Could Have Had

Date: 19-20 June, 2025

Location: Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands

Submission deadline abstract: 15 February, 2025

AI and algorithms have profoundly reshaped the field of public safety. From the spread of deepfakes and disinformation to issues of algorithmic profiling and the increasing dependence on Big Tech: AI challenges social conditions underpinning democratic values, including privacy, non-discrimination, and an equal playfield between public and private sectors. These real risks — public values at stake and overreliance on commercial companies — do not yet receive enough attention in the debate on AI and public safety. The dominant perspective is that “everything” can be captured in data and that safety issues can be more “effectively” and “efficiently” tackled with the latest AI-tools in the service of “law & order.”

We need better AI. The goal of this symposium is to envision different approaches from the prevailing paradigm of “law & order,” with its vocabulary of “fighting” and “precautionary thinking.” To find a way forward, we need to create socio-technological imaginaries of “AI to come”: new ways of understanding, envisioning and implementing AI that promotes more equitable, humane, and sustainable societies, in which we focus on empowerment instead of repression. These AI-Imaginations can be used as critical drivers of change in our algorithmic society. To paraphrase sociologist David Lyon: “What might happen if AI were guided by an ontology of *peace rather than violence*, an ethic of *care rather than control*, an orientation toward *forgiveness rather than suspicion*?”

We invite contributions exploring AI-Imaginations. This includes:

- Can AI be designed in radically new ways that amplify safety by prioritizing virtues as “care,” and “trust”? If so, how?
- How can AI generate ideas of “goodness” and what society ought to be?
- What can we learn from Speculative Fiction and the use of AI in Art?
- Can AI be used as a source of inspiration for innovative research methods to elucidate the status quo and future of public values and safety? If so, how?
- In what ways can AI be applied to broaden our understanding and imagination of public safety? Can it challenge our assumptions about security?
- How can new AI-tools be designed with respect to human rights and values as “well-being” and “inclusion” within our communities?
- In what ways can AI and human imagination come together in shaping future communities?
- What are empowering tactics of individuals and groups to counter public and private AI-tools, protecting us against the misuse and dangers of AI?
- How do political ideologies affect the imaginaries of AI and vice versa?

By merging research and design — science and art — we aim to create two days for interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration between scientists, artists and practitioners. This symposium will be a space where innovative ideas can flourish, allowing us to explore the potential of AI and thought-provoking discussions that explore the relationship between AI-imaginings and public safety. In our aim to move beyond current security paradigms, we especially welcome contributions that take a creative approach or form to the topic.

Submission

The deadline for proposals is February 15th, 2025. E-mail in a single, combined pdf file (file name = your name) the following to storbeck@law.eur.nl: title, abstract (300 words, in English), contact details, affiliation. The symposium is free of charge and has limited spaces.

A small fee is possible for artists showing their work.

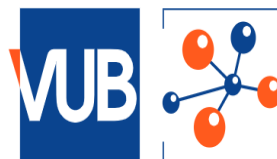
Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

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