Call for Contributions

STS Conference Graz 2021, May 3-5

Session: Transdisciplinary Approaches to tackle Societal Issues in the realm of Artificial Intelligence

Sexist recruiting tools, racist facial recognition, algorithmic detection of human rights violation via satellites, AI-controlled misinformation in social networks, AI-supported wildlife conservation, fully autonomous weapon systems ... Whichever the negative or positive consequences of current artificial intelligence (AI) systems, it is undeniable that the impact of AI on our society is growing steadily. The speed of further AI-development is so rapid that technology assessment can hardly keep up. Therefore, different approaches are needed to tackle societal issues of artificial intelligence in a timelier manner.

Given the enormous and unpredictable impact of AI systems on society, a transdisciplinary approach to AI development seems particularly beneficial. Transdisciplinary research has claimed to produce "robust knowledge" and user-friendly designed innovations by incorporating knowledge beyond academia. Keywords like stakeholder engagement, participatory design, and responsible research and innovation (RRI) all conveyed the promise that different perspectives on the social impact of the technology developed would be considered during the design or research process.

But does this assertion also apply to a technology such as artificial intelligence, which—at least at first glance—seems incomprehensible to a layperson? Further, what knowledge and which perspectives do we need in order to design ethical, secure, and social just AI-systems? And how do we ensure that all relevant knowledges are included? Who defines what is relevant? And what about people who are opposed to certain AI technologies and find it hard to imagine living in a world full of 'intelligent systems'? Are these voices worth be included, or do we only foster participation of 'the willing'? The planned session aims to answer such and similar questions.

We invite researchers, developers as well as all other people who want to contribute, to present successful, unsuccessful or merely envisaged transdisciplinary AI-projects, and critically reflect on topics like 'politics of knowledges', issues of responsibility, ethics, techno-feminism or social justice.

Please send your abstract (max. 500 words, incl. title, authors, and 5 keywords) by the 29th of January 2021 to sts-conf-graz@tugraz.at.