

PUBLIC INTEREST TECHNOLOGY

Meet the future of tech - #PublicInterestTech

Technology is transforming every area of our lives. But as it opens new avenues and shows us fresh possibilities, tech can also deepen existing inequalities. We believe in harnessing technology to serve justice and the public interest—and we see a wealth of opportunities to do so.

That's why the Ford Foundation is working with a community of partners to develop a path for people to use their technology skills to change the world for the better: the professional field of public interest technology. Public interest technology is just what it sounds like—technology used to serve the public good. That can mean working to ensure that as the US census goes online for the first time, it is accessible and accurate. It can mean researching the negative side effects of using artificial intelligence in our criminal justice system, or even developing technical standards that emphasize privacy and free expression.

Transcript begins.

[A medley of diverse tech fellows and tech inequality experts from all over the world.]

Matt Mitchell: Hi. I'm Matt, and I'm a hacker.

Sid Rao: My superpower is to protect your digital privacy.

Ettienne Maynier: What is the most pressing digital threat today? Digital surveillance. Everything we do is recorded by someone, somewhere.

Matt Mitchell: The issue is about privacy, because without privacy there can be no democracy.

Berhan Taye Gameda: My access to information is a right. My right to express myself freely is also a right.

Eireann Leverett: The Internet is one of the greatest public commons we have. It's a shared safe space and should remain so.

Sid Rao: As a public interest technologist, we have to bridge the gap between what technologists are trying to build and what social scientists are trying to solve.

Jennifer Helsby: In the future, I hope that the field of public interest technology can be seen on par with going to Google or Facebook or another tech giant.

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