



**INSTITUTE FOR ETHICS
AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**

2022 Progress Report & 2023 Plans

December 2022

Introduction

As you can tell from this report, thanks to you, we have been able to dramatically scale our reach and impact this year. Our amazing team at the IEET has grown this year, given our close collaboration and co-funding with the Applied Ethics Center at the University of Massachusetts Boston.

Aside from our aim to always be transparent in our progress, we share this with the hope that you join us in expanding our work in a critical 2023. The IEET's continued goal is the advancement of technoprogressive values through foundational research as well as working across sectors to build bridges to make theory a reality. Do you want to help IEET break new ground towards these goals? The choice is yours!

Below you find our 2022 progress highlights and 2023 plans to grow.

Research Fellowships

2022

Over the course of the next decade, the IEET aims at promoting and exploring technoprogessivism through academic research. In order to break new ground and to do this successfully, new postdoctoral fellowship programs have been designed to set up new doctoral graduates to promote the exploration of technoprogessivism and its intersectional domains at a high academic level. Thanks to donations received in 2020, we have successfully funded the first of our three proposed fellowships.

The IEET has partnered with the Applied Ethics Center (AEC) at the University of Massachusetts Boston to offer a full-time Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship (24 months) on the Future of Work (2021-2023) to Alec Stubbs. Some forecasters believe automation and other emerging technologies will cause a rapid loss of traditional employment in the coming decades. Other forecasters argue that there will not be a net loss of jobs, but foresee instead a rapid innovation of new jobs, and transformation of existing jobs. Policies to address the rapidly changing labor market include reforming higher education and job re-training, shortening the workweek, a federal jobs guarantee, and a universal basic income. Whether work is threatened or not, some see a post-work future as a desirable goal of public policy, while others believe work is essential to meaning and social engagement. How can higher education focus more on non-automatable skills like creativity and social-emotional intelligence? What are the impacts of employment versus guaranteed income? Many of us find the primary locus of meaning in our work. Would living in a world with less, or transformed, work be less meaningful? Or do we generate a newer version of Athens, this time without slave labor, a society in which work is not the main context in which we meet and value each other? The Alec Stubbs will help the AEC and the IEET research the academic and policy work being done on these questions.

2023

As part of the IEET's continued aim at fostering research towards technoprogessivism, the IEET is looking to fund a new postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Turin (Italy) focusing on human enhancement, the second major IEET research program (see IEET Programs).

Open Access Research

Central to IEET's goal in the promotion of technoprogressive research is in the publication of peer-reviewed papers in high impact journals. However, in order to promote transparency as well as stimulate the dissemination of this important knowledge, the IEET aims to publish their papers Open Access (OA).

Why is Open Access Important?

The majority of publishers, not the authors, own the rights to the articles that are published in their repertoire of journals. Anyone who wants to read the articles in these journals faces a paywall and must pay to access them. Universities and similar research institutions, as well as some libraries often negotiate subscriptions to these journals to help their affiliated researchers and students to have access. Despite this access, students, researchers, or any other individuals can reuse any part of that research without permission from the publisher, often at the cost of an additional fee. The burden of OA however lies at the feet of the individual researcher to cover the fee that the publisher would otherwise lose given its free distribution and their forfeiting of copyright. Open Access, then is an affirmation of true scientific progress and directly aligned with the enlightenment values central to technoprogressivism, more specifically, in the free and ubiquitous dissemination of knowledge.

With your donations, the IEET can become a force multiplier in the promotion of technoprogressivism by providing its research to all interested parties free of charge, and encourage its dissemination and promotion across all domains.

Open Access Articles Published in 2022

- Assessing Trustworthy AI in times of COVID-19. Deep Learning for predicting a multi-regional score conveying the degree of lung compromise in COVID-19 patients
- Designing Genetic Engineering Technologies for Human Values
- Should the colonisation of space be based on reproduction? Critical considerations on the choice of having a child in space
- The Role of Engineers in Harmonising Human Values for AI Systems Design
- Designing AI for Explainability and Verifiability: A Value Sensitive Design Approach to Avoid Artificial Stupidity in Autonomous Vehicles
- Responsible Nudging for Social Good: New Healthcare Skills for AI-Driven Digital Personal Assistants

Working to Ensure that Humanity Survives and Thrives in the 21st Century

The Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies is a nonprofit think tank which promotes ideas about how technological progress can increase freedom, happiness, and human flourishing in democratic societies. We believe that technological progress can be a catalyst for positive human development so long as we ensure that technologies are safe and equitably distributed. We call this a “technoprogressive” orientation.

WHAT WE DO

The Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies was formed to study and debate vital questions such as:

- Which technologies, especially new ones, are likely to have the greatest impact on human beings and human societies in the 21st century?
- What ethical issues do those technologies and their applications raise for humans, our civilization, and our world?
- How much can we extrapolate from the past and how much accelerating change should we anticipate?
- What sort of policy positions can be recommended to promote the best possible outcomes for individuals and societies?

MISSION

The IEET’s mission is to be a center for voices arguing for a responsible, constructive, ethical approach to the most powerful emerging technologies. We believe that technological progress can be a catalyst for positive human development as long as we ensure that technologies are safe and equitably distributed. We call this a “technoprogressive” orientation.

We aim to showcase technoprogressive ideas about how technological progress can increase freedom, happiness, and human flourishing in democratic societies. Focusing on emerging technologies that have the potential to positively transform social conditions and the quality of human lives—especially “human enhancement technologies” — the IEET seeks to cultivate academic, professional, and popular understanding of their implications, both positive and negative, and to encourage responsible public policies for their safe and equitable use.

HISTORY

The Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies was founded in 2004 by philosopher Nick Bostrom and bioethicist James J. Hughes, and is incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the United States. The IEET's Board of Directors currently come from Canada, the UK, and the United States. By promoting and publicizing the work of thinkers who examine the social implications of scientific and technological progress, we seek to contribute to the understanding of the impact of emerging technologies on individuals and societies. We also aim to shape public policies that distribute the benefits and reduce the risks of technological advancement.

IEET's PURPOSE

The liberal democratic revolution, centuries old and still growing strong, has at its core the idea that people are happiest when they have rational control over their lives. Reason, science, and technology provide one kind of control, slowly freeing us from ignorance, toil, pain, and disease. Democracy provides control through civil liberties and electoral participation.

Technology and democracy complement one another, ensuring that safe technology is generally accessible and democratically accountable. The convergence of nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology, and cognitive science in the coming decades will give us unimaginable technological mastery of nature and ourselves. That mastery requires progressive democratization.

Our purpose, therefore, is to stimulate and support constructive study of ethical issues connected with these powerful emerging technologies.

The Debate Over Emerging Technologies

In the next fifty years, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, genetic engineering, and cognitive science will allow human beings to transcend the limitations of the human body. Healthy lifespans will extend well beyond a century. Our senses and cognition will be enhanced. We will have greater control over our emotions and memory. Our bodies and brains will be surrounded by and merged with computer power. We will use these technologies to redesign ourselves and our children in ways that push the boundaries of "humanness."

The prospect of rapid change in the human condition understandably worries many people. Now a loose coalition of groups has emerged to forbid human enhancement—from genetic therapies and psychopharmaceuticals to prosthetic organs and nanomedical robotics. This "bioconservative" coalition is diverse, including some bioethicists, religious conservatives, disability rights, and environmental activists, and leftist critics of biotechnology.

The IEET believes this debate desperately needs voices that avoid these extremes, voices that argue for the potential benefits of new technologies while proposing realistic policies to mitigate their risks within a strong democratic framework.

Defending Rights While Taking Risks Seriously

Responding to the polarization of the debate between technophobes and anti-regulatory technophiles, an emerging global network of technoprogressive thinkers are defending individuals' rights to use human enhancement technologies, while taking seriously the need to regulate their safety and social consequences. Technoproggressives address questions such as peoples' right to use—and not use—cognitive enhancement technologies in an increasingly competitive society.

How much clinical testing will be necessary to ensure the safety of genetic enhancements? How can we regulate psychoactive drugs in a way that respects cognitive liberty? When should parents be permitted to genetically enhance their children? How can we avoid exacerbating inequality as human enhancement technologies spread? Which enhancement therapies should be provided through the market and which as a right of citizenship through universal health plans?

As yet there has been no institutional home for the consideration of these ethical challenges of emerging technologies free from both technophobic red herrings, such as anxieties about transgressing the boundaries of humanness and human reason, and from anti-regulatory dogmas that reject democratic public policy as an avenue to address future risks. The Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies intends to fill that gap.

A Focus on Individuals and Societies

Personal enhancement—potentially transforming some humans into posthumans—is an obvious and necessary area of study for the IEET. But the recognition that all individuals exist within societies, and that personal choices may overlap the rights of others within those societies, makes the work of IEET scholars more complex and also more urgent.

As technoproggressives, we want to see all sentient beings protected in their rights for self-augmentation, enhancement, or modification, and we want everyone to have fair and equal access to such treatments. However, we believe those technologies must be tested for safety and efficacy, and made universally accessible. Their consequences for society will be profound, and need to be thoroughly considered.

Similarly, we affirm the possibility of a bountiful technological future. But we believe robust efforts are required to ensure that the path of technological development is safe, sustainable, and offers abundance for all.

We desire to live in a world where peace and security are considered a given everywhere around the globe. Thus, we encourage activism that reaches across ethnic, cultural, and geographic lines, especially when those initiatives involve transnational cooperation.

We strongly support the use of emerging technologies to extend human capacities for knowledge, understanding, communication, and wise decision-making.

Ultimately we want to see the enforcement of international law and human rights agreements, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, promising fundamental freedoms, health, welfare, and education for all. We also want to see an extension of international human rights to include the rights to bodily autonomy, reproductive choice, and cognitive liberty for all persons.

We place great value on a healthy biosphere, realized through a combination of wise democratic action and the responsible deployment of powerful new technologies. We favor expanded, enlightened definitions of personhood, to take in all sentient beings, whether human in origin or not. We look forward to increased equality of opportunity, decreased suffering, and flourishing diversity in human and posthuman development.

IEET Activites

Over the last eighteen years, the IEET has built a network of the most visionary thinkers and activists working on the policy implications of emerging technologies.

Fellows and Interns – Since 2004 IEET Fellows have written hundreds of op-eds, journal articles and book chapters, and the IEET has promoted their work through the IEET website and publications. About ten interns have worked with our fifteen fellows, doing research, editing manuscripts and assisting with IEET projects.

Media outreach – Through social media and the provision of qualified spokespersons, the Institute disseminates key policy ideas that address emerging technologies. The IEET community is active on Twitter and Facebook and maintains a Youtube channel.

Networking Scholars and Organizations - We are building a database of scholars and networking with organizations working on our topics from similar points of view.

Conferences, Speaker Tours, and Speakers Bureau - The IEET has organized speaker series, conferences, and one-day seminars in Europe and North America to promote discussion of techoprogressive policy ideas.

IEET Publications

JEET

The IEET publishes the *Journal of Ethics and Emerging Technologies* (formerly the Journal of Evolution and Technology) on the IEET website. JEET is a scholarly peer-reviewed journal, publishing since 1998. JEET welcomes submissions on subject matters that many mainstream journals shun as too speculative, radical, or interdisciplinary relating to emerging technologies and the future. JEET's editor-in-chief is the philosopher Mark Walker.

Recent articles published by JEET include:

- Mostafa Saket "Putting Values in Context: an augmentation of Value Sensitive Design"
- Edmund Terem Ugar "Remember Me: Memory and Forgetting in the Digital Age"
- Marc Cheong "Review of AI Assistants by Roberto Pieraccini, 2021, MIT Press."
- James Hughes "The Deskilling of Teaching and the Case for Intelligent Tutoring Systems"
- Gopinaath Kannabiran "A Humanist Review of a Posthumanist Speculation"

<https://jeet.ieet.org/>

Medium

Until 2019 the IEET published thousands of essays at our website. Those essays are now archived at ieet.org. Since then we have been using the Medium platform for publishing. Recent essays we have published at Medium include:

- James J. Hughes “Shaping the Technoprogressive Tendency into a Political Agenda”
- Andre Sevenius Nilsen “Artificial Consciousness Is Irrelevant”
- John G Messerly “How Democracies Die”
- James J. Hughes “The Politics of Human Enhancement Today”
- indi.ca “Extinctionist, Activist, or Humanist? Which doomer are you?”
- Marcelo Rinesi “Decolonizing the Smart City for Fun and Profit”
- James J. Hughes “Three Topics in the Ethics of Military AI”

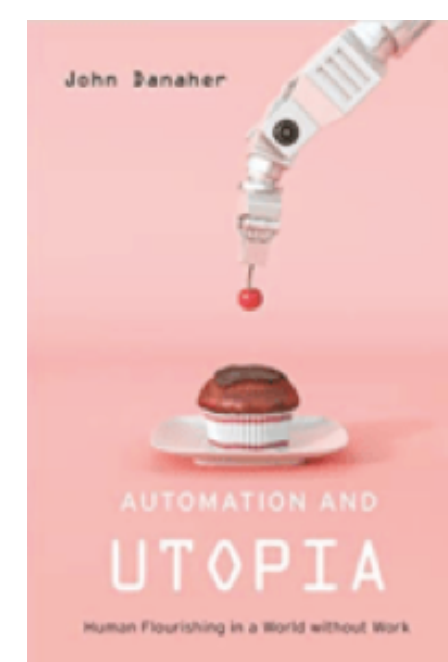
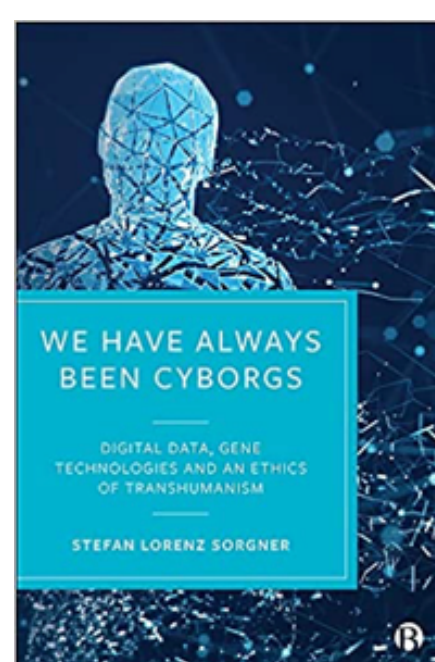
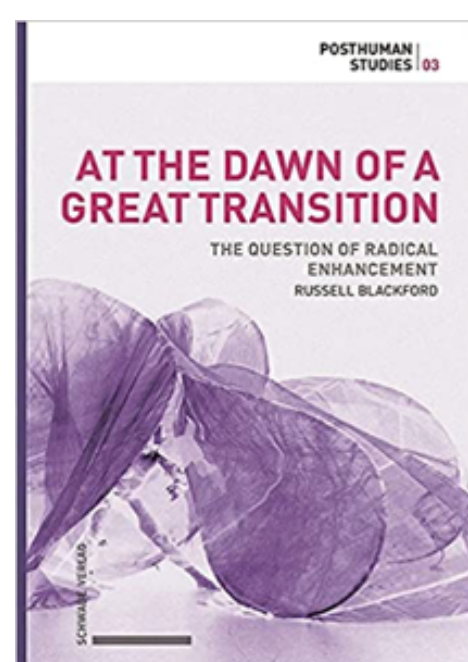
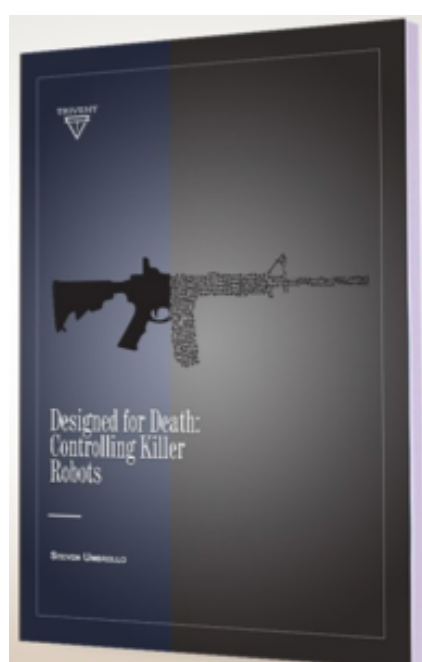
White Papers

The IEET publishes position papers that address the benefits and risks of emerging technologies from a technoprogressive point of view. The IEET and the AEC are currently working on a whitepaper concerning the Metaverse.

Books

Collectively IEET Fellows and staff have authored dozens of books on technoprogressive themes. Currently, we are outlining a book on the politics of human enhancement to be published by de Gruyter.

Recent books from the IEET community include:



IEET Programs

The IEET is currently focused on two broad areas of emerging technologies, human enhancement and artificial intelligence. These programs are supported by your gifts, and by a generous bequest from the Otten Trust.

Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Work

From 2022 to 2024, in collaboration with Applied Ethics Center (AEC) at the University of Massachusetts Boston, we will be focusing on the impacts of AI and automation on the future of work. Alec Stubbs, the first IEET/AEC Postdoctoral Fellow on the Future of Work, will be the cornerstone for this project. Alec's focus is broadly on automation, artificial intelligence and the digital economy, with a particular focus on democratizing digital platform work. Alec's most recent publication is "Digital participatory democracy: A normative framework for the democratic governance of the digital commons" in the Journal of Social Philosophy.

In the Spring of 2022, we hosted four talks on the future of work:

- Kevin la Grandeur Ph.D. on "AI: from human imitation to human subjugation?"
- Anders Sandberg Ph.D. on "Why do we work? Do we have to?"
- Rida Qadri Ph.D. on "The Worker in Future(s) of Work"
- John Danaher Ph.D. on "Automation and the Future of the Work Ethic"

In the Fall of 2022, we launched another series of talks on the future of work, open to the public, and with recordings posted to our Youtube channel. We are also soliciting manuscripts on the future of work for the Journal of Ethics and Emerging Technologies. We will be hosting a meeting on this topic in the Spring of 2023, and a concluding meeting in 2024.

Human Enhancement

Our program on human enhancement will be centred under the direction of Dr. Umbrello at the University of Turin and anchored by a postdoctoral fellow that we intend to hire there in 2023. As with the Boston-based program on the future of work, the Turin-based program will include talks, meetings and special issues of JEET on the theme of human enhancement ethics and policy. The IEET is also organizing a special volume on the politics of human enhancement to be published by de Gruyter.

IEET Finances

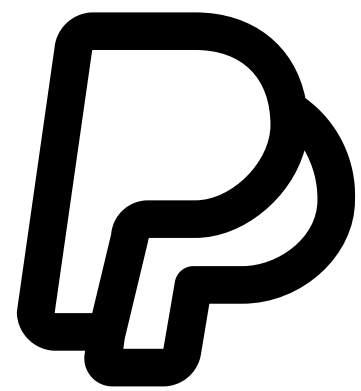
In 2020 the IEET began to receive a bequest from the Otten Trust, established by the late Klaus Otten. The bequest was restricted to the support of programs investigating the ethical and policy implications of artificial intelligence and human enhancement. Thus far the IEET has received roughly \$434,000 of roughly 1.1 million dollars. In the last two years we also received \$800 in small donations. In the coming years, as our new program of work matures, we look forward to substantially expanding our fund-raising program.

How to Contribute to the IEET's Work

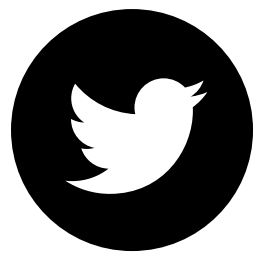
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