CCC
Computing Community Consortium
Catalyst

Visioning Workshop Report: The Future of Research on Social Technologies

The workshop brought together over 50 information and computer scientists, social scientists, communication and journalism scholars, and policy experts. The group focused on two questions: *what should we know about social technologies, and what is needed to get there?*

Report

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Workshop Goals

The goals of the workshop were to address widespread problems like harassment, disinformation, information access, and mental health concerns, and to rethink the foundations of how social technologies are designed, sustained, and governed.

- Address gaps in existing scholarship and the methods, resources, access, and collective effort needed to address those gaps.
- Identify approaches for translating scholarship for various audiences—including citizens, funders, educators, industry professionals, and policymakers.

Research Directions

Workshop activities outlined five themes that explored areas of social technologies that require more community study and increased research funding.

- Rethink the design of social platforms to build quantitative and qualitative methods to measure and assess the health of social platforms and online communities.
- Identify opportunities at the intersection of social technologies and democracy.
- Explore new challenges for social technologies and how AI is being incorporated into these systems and identify and increase funding for current challenges.
- Highlight the importance of training computing researchers to translate work for broader audiences.

Themes

1. Rethinking Social Platform Design

Researchers can help inform the governance of social platforms to promote ethical and legal considerations, and to enhance the ways in which users interact on these platforms.

2. Social Technologies and Democracy

Researchers can significantly shape the design and study of social technologies to encourage democratic principles and protect against threats.

3. Social Tech and AI

Researchers have an opportunity to build and test new designs for social platforms that recognize the presence of AI-generated content.

4. Research Access and Practice

Researchers should explore opportunities to develop shared infrastructure and practices for data collection and sharing, and experimental work.

5. Impact Beyond Academia

Researchers can explore new models of research that move beyond individual research projects towards collective efforts.

Learn more

How to Cite this Report

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