Data Ethics Canvas

Data Sources

Name/describe your project's key data sources, whether you're collecting data yourself or accessing via third parties.

Is any personal data involved, or data that is otherwise sensitive?

Rights around data sources

Where did you get the data from? Is it produced by an organisation or collected directly from individuals?

Was the data collected for this project or for another purpose? Do you have permission to use this data, or another basis on which you're allowed to use it? What ongoing rights will the data source have?

Limitations in data sources

Are there limitations that could influence your project's outcomes?

Consider:

> bias in data collection, inclusion/exclusion, analysis, algorithms

> gaps or omissions in data

> provenance and data quality

> other issues affecting decisions, such as team composition

Ethical and legislative context

What existing ethical codes apply to your sector or project? What legislation, policies, or other regulation shape how you use data? What requirements do they introduce?

Consider: the rule of law; human rights; data protection; IP and database rights; anti-discrimination laws; and data sharing, policies, regulation and ethics codes/frameworks specific to sectors (eg health, employment, taxation).

Ongoing implementation

Are you routinely building in thoughts, ideas and considerations of people affected by your project? How?

What information or training might be needed to help people understand data issues?

Are systems, processes and resources available for responding to data issues that arise in the long-term?

Your reasons for using data

What is your primary purpose for collecting and using data in this project?

What are your main use cases? What is your business model?

Are you making things better for society? How and for whom?

Are you replacing another product or service as a result of this project?

Positive effects on people

Which individuals, groups, demographics or organisations will be positively affected by this project? How?

How are you measuring and communicating positive impact? How could you increase it?

Negative effects on people

Who could be negatively affected by this project?

Could the way that data is collected, used or shared cause harm or expose individuals to risk of being re-identified?

Could it be used to target,profile or prejudice people, or unfairly restrict access (eg exclusive arrangements)?

How are limitations and risks communicated to people?

Minimising negative impact

What steps can you take to minimise harm?

How could you reduce any limitations in your data sources? How are you keeping personal and other sensitive information secure?

How are you measuring, reporting and acting on potential negative impacts of your project?

What benefits will these actions bring to your project?

Reviews and iterations

How will ongoing data ethics issues be measured, monitored, discussed and actioned?

How often will your responses to this canvas be reviewed or updated? When?

Engaging with people

How can people engage with you about the project?

How can people correct information, appeal or request changes to the product/service? To what extent?

Are appeal mechanisms reasonable and well understood?

Communicating your purpose

Do people understand your purpose – especially people whom the data is about or who are impacted by its use?

How have you been communicating your purpose? Has this communication been clear?

How are you ensuring more vulnerable individuals or groups understand?

Openness and transparency

How open can you be about this project? Could you publish your methodology, metadata, datasets, code or impact measurements?

Can you ask peers for feedback on the project? How will you communicate it internally?

Will you publish your actions and answers to this canvas openly?

Sharing data with others

Are you going to be sharing data with other organisations? If so, who?

Are you planning to publish any of the data? Under what conditions?

Your actions

What action will you take before moving forward with this project?

Will you openly publish your actions and answers to this canvas?