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Organisation Details

Is this submission presented on behalf of an organisation:

Yes

Name of organisation

Portable

Position in organisation

Design Researcher

Nature of submission: public or confidential

I have read the information about this Project concerning publication, confidentiality, and privacy obligations at

Yes

I would like my submission to be treated as confidential

No

Human rights and technology

2. Noting that particular groups within the Australian community can experience new technology differently, what are the key issues regarding new technologies for these groups of people (such as children and young people; older people; women and girls; LGBTI people; people of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples)?

New technologies should be designed for everyone. Given the power of technology as a platform for change, minority groups should be involved early

and often into the design process. Without consultation, technological progress has the capacity to create social imbalances.

Consultation in design research means explicitly considering the social and political power structures in place when developing technology, considering how technology will broaden our capacity to experience the world, and reigning in the capacity for new technologies to exploit, surveil, or disenfranchise minority groups.

For example, as the justice sector continues to modernise and bring its services online, consultants, designers, and developers should prioritise learning from people with different needs and lived experiences to consider how they access information or experience legal systems. This can be through including persons with disabilities in co-design and user testing, or researching the perspectives of minority groups. This is especially important as an exercise to uncover those groups whose lives won't be improved by technological change.

The goal of this is to create a culture of technological development that doesn't need to be regulated and reigned in retrospectively, after it has already been shown to harm particular groups, as some of the discriminatory algorithms of automated home loan valuation services or hiring technologies have been shown to do in the United States. The aim of designing technology in a democratic society that values human rights is to conduct adequate research and consultation to ensure every Australian is included in design, development, and implementation of new technologies.

Accessible technology for people with a disability

10. How can the private sector be encouraged or incentivised to develop and use accessible and inclusive technology, for example, through the use of universal design?

New technology should be made with the people who use it in mind. When it's not, implicit biases that reflect the lived experience of its designers may negatively affect how other users access technology, especially those whose needs weren't considered in the design process.

One way in which diverse members of the community can feed into technology design is through implementing a culture of co-design and consultation during the early stages of technological development. Co-design provides an avenue for inclusively in that it structures the conversation around how a person experiences a product or service. Properly done, co-design brings unique and

different experiences and ideas in to the room, synthesises what is good about each of these ideas, and feeds their unique perspective into the final design product. Of course, this is an iterative process, and should include multiple checks and tests to ensure that technology being designed is truly inclusive.

One way in which the government can promote the use of universal design principles in technology design is to include co-design and human centred design research phase early in its project plans. Tenders for new technology or (or service re-design) should include research phases that bring diverse voices into the room and include as many perspectives as possible.