



D3.2 Call for innovative RRI practices

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CO-CHANGE

Executive Summary

The Co-Create Change in Research Funding and Performing (Co-Change) project applies an innovative systemic approach to boost the transformative capacity and leadership for responsible research through change labs. The project activates change coalitions around each lab, paying particular attention to interactions and dependencies of actors. The project has established eight Co-Change labs which are built at research performing (RPO) and research funding organisations (RFO) and at universities.

To widen our impact and to learn from other actors, the project has published a call, inviting European organisations to Co-Change activities through this international call for innovative RRI related institutional change ideas. These ideas were assessed against the criteria established by the Project Management Committee.

The objective of this Deliverable *D3.2 Call for innovative ideas* is to present the process and the results of the call and to provide a synthesis of the evaluation. A general eligibility check was followed by an evaluation by the Project Management Committee members which focused on the following requirements: **Topical Relevance (25%), Innovativeness (25%), Replicability (25%) and Impact (25%)**

The results obtained are the following:

- 1st prize: Empowering Diversity in Recruiting Project DEBIAS
- 2nd prize: Women in Artificial Intelligence in Austria
- 3rd prize: X-cite

This document is structured in five sections and four annexes that provide an overview of the call for innovative practices. The first section explains the process employed to develop the call, the second is a brief recap of the evaluation methods and steps. The third and fourth sections focus on applications and the prizes. The last section refers to the next steps.



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1.Aim

Increased interactions between R&I stakeholders in our societies require changes at research funding and performing organisations. These institutions need to accept inputs from citizens and organisations that used to be considered outsiders to the world of research and innovation. At Co-Change we believe it is our responsibility to connect science with society. Co-Change inspires such changes by introducing new practices in the areas of research ethics, open access, citizen engagement, gender equality and science education, among others.

This activity is part of WP3, “Co-Change Labs”, which aims at building transformative capacity and leadership for RRI through systemic change coalitions around different change labs. Eight change labs are co-creating and testing RRI related practices for institutional change.

In this context, task 3.2, “Call for innovative RRI practices”, wants to widen the impact of the change labs through an international call for innovative RRI related ideas. The goal is to extend the project outreach and include new practice partners into project workshops and the final conference, involving experts directly through related innovation ecosystems. The call is asking for solutions that address the societal challenges defined by the European Commission. In this sense, this initiative rewards ideas that generate a change in practical terms, f.e. in procedures, routines or guidelines throughout the research cycle. Contributions should improve Co-Change theory and practice, and/or complement the labs. They should provide the team with fresh ideas and challenges and enrich project discussions to open up in different directions.

Organisations participating in the competition should be involved in the project, disseminate its objectives in their innovation ecosystems and provide feedback on how transferrable and scalable its methods are. At least the three winners of this call will have the possibility to present their innovative ideas at a workshop and in select cases also at the final conference. These teams will receive mentoring by the project team to further develop their initiatives. Their visibility will be increased through a presentation on the project website and in the Co-Change final toolbox book.

2.Process for the Call

The Call for innovative ideas was developed within the Co-Change project for its Community with the objective to:

- identify good practice cases
- identify innovators in the proposed categories
- foster future matchmaking opportunities

The call has been oriented to innovators (individuals, teams and organisations) from all over the world to come up with solutions tackling the SDGs or the societal challenges defined by the EC through an ecosystem approach.

The first competition call was launched at the end of February 2021 with a deadline by the end of March. The call was looking for any ideas that create change in terms of practices, procedures, routines or rules along the research cycle and asked for solutions that address the societal challenges defined by the European Commission.

After an intensive dissemination campaign, only three applications were received by the end of March. The coordinator and the WP leaders came to the conclusion that the competition needed to provide more attractive incentives for participation. Therefore, incentives were significantly improved, and the deadline was extended until May 23rd. The applicants who participated in the first round were invited to improve the quality of their applications.

Main Categories

The call has been oriented to a range of topics including, but not limited, to the following:



1. Meaningful changes in culture, structures and practices for more responsible R&I policies and practices, e.g. by bringing different levels and scales of change together.

2. Diversity and democratisation of governance in science and research.

3. Empowered communities of practice, e.g. through building coalitions or sharing access to resources.

4. Experiments, mechanisms and reflection formats that catalyse; create dialogue and understanding among stakeholders.

Submission of proposals

The submissions should be sent via email and include a description of the idea (+- 500 words) with the following structure:

- Title
- Description: Highlight why the challenge is being conducted and what you hope it will achieve
- Additional information: Please feel free to include supporting information such as related documents, PPTs, videos and graphics

When needed, participants received further clarifications about the topic and the terms of conditions.

Timeline

Call for Proposals Opens	February 30th, 2021
Proposal Deadline	May 23rd, 2021
Evaluation Results	June 21st, 2021
Communication of Results	June 30th, 2021

Dissemination

The call has been widely published on the project website, websites of project partners, via mailing lists and social media. Project members used discussion lists, professional associations, personal networks etc. to disseminate the call.

3. Evaluation Phases and Steps

All applicants had to abide to the general requirements described to be considered eligible for the Call for innovative practices. Three finalists have been selected from all eligible entries received by the deadline. The evaluation method and criteria are described in the following section.

Phase 1: General eligibility check

The Evaluation Committee (AIT, TECNALIA) first checked the eligibility criteria that consisted of the following:

- Submission of the application within the deadline (23rd May 2021)
- Fulfilment of the criteria defined by the call
- Applications coming from any of these entities: Universities, RTOs and RFOs, Business and industry, Citizens and civil society organizations, Policy makers or any entities that have research and development as their main activity
- Applications written in English, as it is the official language of the project

Phase 2: Evaluation by the consortium (Project Management Committee) partners

The eligible proposals were assessed by the Project Management Committee members via email. The Committee checked the candidatures against predefined criteria (see table below), using a 7-point Likert scale¹. The scores enabled a ranking of applications to identify the best cases.

Criteria	Assessment
Topical Relevance (25%) <i>Submissions on a range of topics including to the following:</i> <i>1. Meaningful changes in culture, structures and practices for more responsible R&I policies and practices, e.g. by bringing different levels and scales of change together.</i> <i>2. Diversity and democratisation of governance in science and research.</i> <i>3. Empowered communities of practice, e.g. through building coalitions or sharing access to resources.</i> <i>4. Experiments, mechanisms and reflection formats that catalyse; create dialogue and understanding among stakeholders.</i>	As for the scores, each application will be scored from 0 to 7 based on the following assessments: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 0—Fail: proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.• 1—Very poor: criterion addressed in an unsatisfactory manner and should be discarded if only this criterion was considered.• 2—Poor: serious inherent weaknesses and the criterion is very poorly met.▪ 3—Below average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but with significant weaknesses that would need correcting.▪ 4—Above average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion but does not stand out. In top 50% tier for this criterion.

¹ Likert, Rensis (1932). "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes". Archives of Psychology. 140: 1–55
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<p>5. Others (explain why)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5—Good: proposal addresses the criterion well, but some improvements are necessary. In top 40% tier for this criterion. ▪ 6—Very good: proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question, with some minor shortcomings. In top 25% tier for this criterion. ▪ 7—Excellent: proposal is outstanding in all aspects for this criterion. In top 10% projects according to this criterion.
<p>Innovativeness (25%)</p> <p><i>Development or implementation of a new skill, process, tool with the aim of improving efficiency/ effectiveness</i></p>	<p>As for the scores, each application will be scored from 0 to 7 based on the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0—Fail: proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information. • 1—Very poor: criterion addressed in an unsatisfactory manner and should be discarded if only this criterion was considered. • 2—Poor: serious inherent weaknesses and the criterion is very poorly met. ▪ 3—Below average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but with significant weaknesses that would need correcting. ▪ 4—Above average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion but does not stand out. In top 50% tier for this criterion. ▪ 5—Good: proposal addresses the criterion well, but some improvements are necessary. In top 40% tier for this criterion. ▪ 6—Very good: proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question, with some minor shortcomings. In top 25% tier for this criterion. ▪ 7—Excellent: proposal is outstanding in all aspects for this criterion. In top 10% projects according to this criterion.
<p>Replicability (25%)</p> <p><i>Transferability of the activities/ project/ case to other contexts (with some adaptations or not)</i></p>	<p>As for the scores, each application will be scored from 0 to 7 based on the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0—Fail: proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1—Very poor: criterion addressed in an unsatisfactory manner and should be discarded if only this criterion was considered. • 2—Poor: serious inherent weaknesses and the criterion is very poorly met. ▪ 3—Below average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but with significant weaknesses that would need correcting. ▪ 4—Above average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion but does not stand out. In top 50% tier for this criterion. ▪ 5—Good: proposal addresses the criterion well, but some improvements are necessary. In top 40% tier for this criterion. ▪ 6—Very good: proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question, with some minor shortcomings. In top 25% tier for this criterion. ▪ 7—Excellent: proposal is outstanding in all aspects for this criterion. In top 10% projects according to this criterion.
<p>Impact (25%) <i>creating change in terms of practices, procedures, routines or rules along the research cycle.</i></p>	<p>As for the scores, each application will be scored from 0 to 7 based on the following assessments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0—Fail: proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information. • 1—Very poor: criterion addressed in an unsatisfactory manner and should be discarded if only this criterion was considered. • 2—Poor: serious inherent weaknesses and the criterion is very poorly met. ▪ 3—Below average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but with significant weaknesses that would need correcting. ▪ 4—Above average: proposal broadly addresses the criterion but does not stand out. In top 50% tier for this criterion. ▪ 5—Good: proposal addresses the criterion well, but some improvements are necessary. In top 40% tier for this criterion. ▪ 6—Very good: proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the

	<p>criterion in question, with some minor shortcomings. In top 25% tier for this criterion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 7—Excellent: proposal is outstanding in all aspects for this criterion. In top 10% projects according to this criterion.
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Phase 3. Publication of results:

The results will be communicated to the winners by the end of June 2021. The official announcement of the winners will be done by email and in the website of the project.

4.Applicants and winners

The project team received five responses to the call:

1. Lab for Social Innovations in home care (LabSI)
2. Growing vegetables in school gardens for the improvement of children's overall well-being
3. X-cite
4. Empowering Diversity in Recruiting Project DEBIAS
5. Women in Artificial Intelligence Austria

The PCM members were contacted to assess the five proposals on 11th June. Seven assessments were received by the deadline on 24th June. The following table shows the scores received in the defined criteria.

	CRITERIA				TOTAL
	Topical Relevance	Innovativeness	Replicability	Impact	
Lab for Social Innovations in home care (LabSI)	34	27	38	34	133
Growing vegetables in school gardens for the improvement of children's overall well-being	28	27	36	36	127
X-cite	39	34	35	37	145
Empowering Diversity in Recruiting Project DEBIAS	44	38	38	41	161
Women in Artificial Intelligence Austria	44	37	39	38	158

Table 1: Total votes by criteria

The winner of this Call, “Empowering Diversity in Recruiting” Project DEBIAS, received a total of 161 points and stood out in the Impact and Innovativeness criteria. The second finalist, “Women in Artificial Intelligence Austria”, stood out in the Replicability criterion. Both had the best scores in the Topical Relevance criterion. The third winner “X-cite” performed well in both the Topical Relevance and the Impact criteria. Importantly, also the other two projects are understood to be interesting and may be considered for further interactions, time and capacity provided.

5.Prizes

The winners will benefit from:

- Widespread visibility on the project website and in the Co-Change final toolbox book
- Visibility through attendance in project meetings as well as other relevant project events, such as the Final Conference
- Networking opportunities and the ability to connect with and contact potential partners, stakeholders, etc.
- Cooperation with project teams in publication activities (peer-reviewed journals, newspapers etc.)
- Specific guidance and mentoring by the project team to further develop their initiatives

Apart from these general benefits, the three finalists will be awarded with the following prizes:

1st Prize:

- The winner will be awarded a guided tour around the following Tecnia's Labs and innovative installations located in Derio, 7km away from Bilbao City (Spain):
 - Kubik building, Micro and [Nanofabricating](#) Laboratory, [Smart Grid](#) and Distributed Generation Laboratory, [Nautilus](#): Development of floating-platforms for the offshore wind market, [Autolab](#): Electrification of special vehicles. Tecnia Research & Innovation will offer a free lunch and a presentation about the RRI activities of the organisation.
 - Alternatively, the winner can choose to visit the underground passages of the fortress of the town of Novi Sad (Serbia). The University of Novi Sad will offer a free lunch and a presentation of their RRI activities. (Travel and accommodation costs for up to two people will be covered by Co-Change in both cases.)
- Participation and presentation of their idea in the final conference of the Co-Change Project. (Travel and accommodation costs are covered by Co-Change in case of in person held conference in Vienna, November 2022.)
- A hard copy of the book "Assessment of Responsible Innovation: Methods and Practices" (in value of 100 euros), edited and autographed by our partner Emad Yaghmaei
- CEN/WS 105 Guidelines developed by Delft University of Technology and its partners: a pre-standard to develop long-term strategies (roadmaps) to innovate responsibly

2nd Prize:

- Participation and presentation of your idea in the final conference of the Co-Change Project. (Travel and accommodation costs are covered by Co-Change in case of in person held conference in Vienna, November 2022.)
- CEN/WS 105 Guidelines developed by Delft University of Technology and its partners: a pre-standard to develop long-term strategies (roadmaps) to innovate responsibly.

3rd Prize:

- Participation and presentation of your idea in the final conference of the Co-Change Project. (Travel and accommodation costs are covered by Co-Change in case of in person held conference in Vienna, November 2022.)
- CEN/WS 105 Guidelines developed by Delft University of Technology and its partners: a pre-standard to develop long-term strategies (roadmaps) to innovate responsibly.



6. Next steps

The aim of the Call for innovative practices is to widen the impact of the change labs and to extend the project outreach by including new nodes in our project networks and also the project activities. In WP3 the Co-Change team aims at implementing the knowledge and inspiration gained through project activities to achieve profound and sustained changes.

The change labs tackle different scientific and operational areas, ranging from digital safety and security, entrepreneurship and development of new business opportunities, human-technology interaction, governance and regulation to good scientific conduct and others. The three winners of the call fit well into the activity spectrum of the change labs and will be involved in the project, providing the team with fresh ideas and challenges and inspiring project discussions to open up in different directions.

For this purpose, the following next steps are foreseen in relation to the call:

1. The results will be communicated to the participants and widely disseminated through the project website and social media.
2. The winner will receive a hard copy of: Assessment of Responsible Innovation: Methods and Practices book and CEN/WS 105 Guidelines developed by Delft University of Technology.
3. The project team will organise the guided tour in Spain or Sebia for the winner of the 1st prize.
4. Forum 3 on experimentation (Autumn 2021) will focus on experiment-to-experiment learning across labs. It will integrate inspirations from the Call for Innovative RRI Practices, resulting in pathways for institutional change (embedding, scaling, diffusing, etc.) in lab organisations.
5. Winners will receive mentoring by the project team to further develop their initiatives.
6. Developed ideas will be feeding into and enriching our toolbox and field book (WP4).
7. Winners will be invited to participate and present their idea and implementation experience in the final conference of the Co-Change Project in Vienna, November 2022

Annex 1. Brochure

Call for participation in

CO-CHANGE IDEA COMPETITION



At Co-Change we believe that as research organisations it is our responsibility to connect science with society. We call innovators (individuals, teams and organisations) from all over the world to come up with solutions tackling the SDGs or the societal challenges defined by the EC through an ecosystem approach. Any ideas that create change in terms of practices, procedures, routines or rules along the research cycle are very welcome.

Please send your submissions with the following structure (around 500 words) to: antonia.bierwirth@tecnalia.com and petra.wagner@ait.ac.at by **March 31, 2021**:

Title:

Description: Highlight why the challenge is being conducted and what you hope it will achieve.

Additional information: Please feel free to include supporting information such as related documents, PPTs, videos and graphics.



When needed, participants will receive further clarifications about the topic and the terms of conditions. Out of the total of eligible entries received by the deadline, three semi-finalists will be selected by the end of April 2021. These teams will receive mentoring by the project team to further develop their initiatives. Their ideas will be published on the project website and will be included in the Co-Change final toolbox book. To be able to network with other organisations and potential partners in their field, the semi-finalists will be invited to take part in project meetings as well as in other relevant project events.

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Annex 2. Evaluators' obligations

The following conditions are shared with the experts appointed as Evaluators to ensure their alignment with the project's principles in terms of evaluation:

1. The evaluator is required to participate in a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the procedures described in this Guide. They must display best efforts, closely following instructions given by the project team and deliver high quality work.
2. Evaluators will work as independent persons in a personal capacity, not representing any organisation.
3. By doing so, the evaluators commit to strict confidentiality and impartiality. Evaluators having a conflict of interest with a proposal must declare this to the responsible contact person designated by the evaluation organisers as soon as awareness of this is made.
4. Evaluators may not discuss any proposal with others, including other experts or evaluation organisers personnel not directly involved in the proposal evaluations, except during formal discussions at the meetings moderated by or with the knowledge and agreement of the responsible contact person from the Co-Change Team.



Annex 3. Processing of personal data

Evaluators shall comply with the data management procedures of the Co-change project and have the following obligations:

- To process personal data in accordance with the project rules
- To use personal data included in the application forms only to evaluate those proposals, which means:
 - Personal data will not be applied or used for any purpose other than the evaluation of the assigned proposals.
 - Personal data will not be transmitted, not even for its preservation, to any third party.
 - No data included in the proposal will be copied.
 - No access to the applications will be provided to any other person and/or institution.
 - All technical and organizational security measures adequate to the level of risk that secure personal data will be applied.
 - Applicants have been informed that their ideas will be published.

Annex 4. Applications

Lab for Social Innovations in home care (LabSI)

The Federation of social NGOs in Bulgaria (FSSB) was founded end of 2011 as initiative of several NGOs active for many years in the field of social services and non-formal education in Bulgaria. The idea was to join efforts, exchange experiences and transfer valuable know-how from its partners from Germany, Austria and later the Netherlands. Shared understanding is that we need to contextualize any foreign approaches or models to the Bulgarian specifics and level of development of the local organizations.

Introducing the German know-how in dual education for social professions is our first attempt in doing so – from primary large scale, hours-long, in-house training model to small-scale, mobile and on-demand training offer. We are still developing our business model in terms of sustainable financial flow, but we were able to adapt it to what potential beneficiaries would seek without any compromise with the quality of education. At roughly the same time three years ago we've started preparing a project proposal within our partner network in the Danube region in introducing the Lab approach to the social sector. Meanwhile the project led by Diakonie Baden was approved (Interreg Danube Transnational Program) and started in July 2020.

As part of consortium of 26 organizations from 9 countries the FSSB is right now building regional Lab for Social Innovations (LabSI). The first pilot cycle of LabSI will be dedicated to home care innovations (starting in September 2021). The project uses methodology to facilitate the design/implementation of community-based home care innovations (regional D-Care Lab as bottom-up, integrative, need- and solution-oriented approach) and methods to encourage interregional collaboration and co-creation (Transnational Lab, communitybuilding approaches). Demand for home care services both in quantity and quality will increase because of aging population, emigration and increasing health and social issues demand of the citizens. The person-centred approach in home care services will be the future coupled with improved coverage and efficiency.

The public authorities (state agencies, municipalities etc.) will play still crucial role, though we are expecting that there will be new models of financing and increased public-private partnerships. As for the general innovation environment not only in the social field the improvements are inevitable. Cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary cooperation is the main way out from the current chaotic and fragmented social service delivery. The Lab approach is the suitable solution in delivering a secure space for collaboration, experiment and development of working tools and approaches. We see our approach as an important step of empowerment of communities of practice with sharing access to different type of resources and building long-term coalitions to bring sustainable social change according to the UN SDGs.

Growing vegetables in school gardens for the improvement of children's overall well-being

Through this initiative, meaningful changes will be brought to the communities and consequently to the entire world because we will take action, put our skills to good use and shape a better future for the next generations.

Goal

The goal of this project is to increase children's overall well-being through the program where they are going to be taught how to grow vegetables.

The main idea of the project

With this project, we aim to educate children (starting from kindergarten and well over into their primary school education) on how important it is to be physically active and eat healthily. The project would be executed through voluntary workshops where children can not only gain theoretical knowledge related to vegetables through contemporary methods and content adequate for their age but also if they want, they can actively participate in growing vegetables. Furthermore, they will acquire skills and form long-lasting habits which could be useful in managing day-to-day life and becoming a highly functioning member of society.

Project duration

Taking into consideration the nature and potential of this project it would be defined as a long-term project with no termination date.

Experimentation phase

This phase would be dedicated to finding the right approaches and tools. Our idea included in the Co-Change final toolbox book will have a great impact on attracting organisations and potential partners in the field of agriculture such as universities, ministries, seed companies and non-governmental organizations. Moreover, with established partnerships, we can start developing tools that will be most suitable for our project and which will bring the desired result. Creating a website that will be available in several languages would be a perfect way to establish international cooperation. Also, creating a YouTube channel is going to be a perfect platform for children to see how they should grow vegetables starting from sowing or planting till the fruit is picked. In the experimentation phase, we will gather and work with the equipment and material such as soil and seeds of different plants and varieties. Last but not least, we will be naming our workshops.

Project implementation on a local scale

Once we have the best possible approach and tools from the experimentation phase the most important phase can begin. We thought about two possibilities. First is that this project could promote plant breeding, seed production companies and local vegetable producers in a way where they donate their material for planting in schools and kindergarten and they get people to know about them and it is a cost-free advertisement. In the society that we live in today, it is of utmost importance for companies to care for their employees, have a sustainable way of doing business and as well to have CSR and marketing budgets. Through this initiative, companies will

have the opportunity to support practices that not only will improve their image but also their employees with no prior experience in gardening can participate in activities.

Project implementation on a global scale

Workshops can exceed local territories and become a way for international cooperation between children from all around the globe where they can exchange experiences and particularly participate in exchanging seeds and this act alone has the potential for massive improvement of biodiversity because of introducing new plant species in areas they have not been cultivated yet. With the content we create in the shape of videos, reports and research we could gain the support of international biodiversity and educational organizations such as FAO, Food Plants International and Food Plant Solutions. The aim of this project is as well to promote gender equality and a special accent would be put on encouraging young girls and teaching them the importance of education because in third world countries, they are often deprived of it.

Objectives

- Raising awareness on how significant is for children to practice active lifestyle and increase healthy food choices
- Raising awareness about the importance of teamwork and working in local communities
- Children will be physically active, they will be directly linked with soil and plants and as a result of that interaction, they will develop empathy towards a plant and become curious about nature and its resources
- The exploration of new cultures, traditions in vegetable consumption and the possibility to learn a new language represent a way to gain the support of international organizations from all around the world.

Expected results

During this long-term project, children from all around the globe will have the opportunity to acquire valuable knowledge, skills and attitudes. Moreover, when considering social benefits, it is of absolute importance to say that children will socialize with their peers and learn from a very young age how fundamental working in a team is. Children will as well give their massive contribution to the improvement of biodiversity and learn how important it is to put in the effort to get desired results.



Empowering Diversity in Recruiting Project DEBIAS

DEBIAS aims to tackle the challenge of (unconscious) bias in recruiting through an interdisciplinary, socio-technical approach that values human agency over algorithms in this process. As many practitioners in recruiting and researchers in computer science follow the 'Siren's call' of AI / ML approaches that promise faster, more efficient and supposedly more objective assessment of applicants through big data analysis, many of the solutions currently available are ridden with issues of pre-existing, technical and emergent bias themselves, and raise numerous questions toward accountability and transparency that remain hitherto unanswered. The consequences these techno deterministic approaches have in common remains the same throughout the field: instead of giving humans the tools to counter their own cognitive biases when screening and interviewing applicants, they often reduce human agency and involvement in the process to rubber stamping decisions suggested by algorithmic systems. For project DEBIAS, we attempt to take a more human-centric approach. Instead of trying to solve the problem of bias in recruiting by developing increasingly opaque and complex technologies, we tap into the rich body of work in management studies and psychology on the nature of human bias and translate these findings into a practical system that empowers recruiters and job applicants alike by instrumenting anonymization, parallelization and structure. First and foremost, the interview process is structured into two parts – an anonymous textual chat, structured by the same questions in the same order for all interviewees for one position, and a personal (face-to-face or video chat) interview part that allows for a more free discussion.

By forcing recruiters to define structured interview questions and criteria DEBIAS ensures fairness across multiple interviews, and allows for a parallel comparison of job applicant performance for each question, thus reducing the danger of common cognitive biases such as the leniency/strictness effects, affinity bias or confirmation bias. At the same time, the first, anonymous interaction puts the focus on skills and abilities and counteracts bias such as the so-called 'beauty-premium'. Finally, the system itself transcends the technical implementation as a web-based recruiting tool by being intertwined with a series of workshops tailored to recruiters and applicants, raising awareness for the issues at hand and helping them understand the reasoning and values driving the system's design. Project DEBIAS is a small, ongoing initiative in cooperation between the Centre for Informatics and Society (CIS) and the TU Career Center and funded by the Vienna Chamber of Labor (AK Wien). Currently, we have implemented a working prototype and tested it as part of a series of recruiting events called 'Voice of Diversity', hosted and organized by the TU Career Center. First analysis shows promising results in terms of user satisfaction (both from job applicants and recruiters), the potential for raising awareness and improving fairness, equity and equality in the recruiting process. Our goal for the next phase of the project is to promote the tool to the general public and expand its capabilities to make it fit for pilot studies in other contexts, specifically within the context of public administration to effect institutional change in recruiting practices. Finally, we see Project DEBIAS as a best-practice example of responsible research and innovation that combines interdisciplinary approaches with a strong human-centric and value-based foundation to empower the recruiting communities of practice rather than attempt to replace them by technology.

X-cite

It's an election year. After watching crisis after crisis hit the news in recent years, you think politicians aren't doing enough, so this time you want to make your vote count. You want to make an informed decision, so on the debate night, you put on some tea, get a pen, and turn on the television to watch and take notes. The first topic to arise is the COVID-19 crisis. While one candidate says studies show curfew can save lives, the other states their research says the opposite. After that first round, the politicians avoid quoting science and appeal primarily to morals and values, even when discussing important issues such as climate change, cybersecurity, and migration. After the debate, you are even more confused and suspicious of politicians. Is there any scientific basis for their government plans? What is the rationale behind their proposed policies? Everything sounded like it could be fake news. To find out, you take the time to go online to investigate what science has to say about the topics raised in the debate.

After struggling to find academic papers about the issues, you realize you can barely make sense of all the jargon and technical language. Despite your best intentions and effort, you couldn't easily evaluate the truthfulness and efficacy of each candidate's proposals. This is, of course, not just a hypothetical scenario but a genuine and recurring situation. Political parties often don't refer to scientific research and findings to determine and communicate policy plans, which hinders citizens from evaluating the rationale behind specific policy measures. Moreover, even if these people manage to fact-check policy interventions, scientific papers are often too technical for most of the population. This leads to discussions that are not fact-based and leads to an easy introduction of misinformation. To help tackle that problem, we present X-Citing Policy: an easily accessible online platform where citizens can check for themselves the science behind political parties' policy plans in an approachable language. X-Citing Policy allows political parties to upload their policy plans, based on which a university-based network composed of students and professors parse through related academic literature and add supporting scientific papers showing evidence for and against the parties' claims.

Additionally, aiming at making science more understandable for the general public, the platform will also simplify and highlight the main findings of the papers using Artificial Intelligence technology. It will improve the quality of the political debate and use cutting-edge technology to make science more inclusive. It will also foster cooperation and promote closer ties among higher education institutions across the EU. Now go back to the debate and take a moment to think about how much easier it would have been to fact-check the politicians' policies. Easily digestible summaries of scientific consensus or disagreements regarding a specific policy just a few taps away in your smartphone.

That is why X-Citing Policy helps in exploring politics, explaining the science behind policies, and expanding the quality of the debate. Explore, Explain, Expand: X-cite

Women in Artificial Intelligence Austria

Women in Artificial Intelligence Austria seeks to create a network for all people, regardless of gender, education, and professional activity, with the goal of promoting and strengthening the participation and representation of women and girls in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Austria. Our mission is to ensure that technology benefits all people and society as such, leaving no one behind, by increasing diversity and inclusion from the planning and development to the deployment of AI. The association is non-partisan, non-profit and non-denominational and its purpose is in line with a humanistic view of humanity.

Founded in November 2020, we currently have 24 active full members working or studying in highly diverse fields – from industrial applications for AI to law, marketing or auditing. Our regional teams for Carinthia, Upper Austria and Vienna are actively building local communities of members, affiliations with research or educational institutions, and partner organisations as well as sponsors.

Through our community, we enable women to exchange experiences and expertise with others and in particular with women working in AI-related fields. Our working groups propose and work on projects ranging from public events to articles, often in cooperation with other groups working in the same field, e.g. Women in Data Science.

One of our regular events, the Networking Lunch, offers a format to introduce your own work and get to know others working on similar topics. Other events in the past have focused on making AI applications, such as AI for breast cancer detection, or issues related to AI systems, such as freedom of speech, more accessible and understandable to non-experts. For this purpose, we also partnered with TheNewITGirls and The Female Factor, are dedicated to promoting women in their carriers, entrepreneurship and MINT fields.

With WAIccelerate, we have created a start-up accelerator programme in cooperation with Women in Artificial Intelligence Germany. One of the central features of the accelerator is sharing knowledge within the community to empower aspiring female entrepreneurs to realise their AI business ideas trying to fulfil the SDGs.

Our work related to policy is informed by a strong fundamental rights perspective. With our contributions to various consultations at the national, European or international level, we elaborate our views on topics that are connected to AI or issues related to AI. Beyond formulating our positions and representing the interests of our members, we try to make policy discussions and proposed legal acts more accessible to our members, e.g. by designing posters to clarify the responsibilities and logic of the proposed AI Act.

Through our activities, we support the visibility of women working in AI in Austria, particularly our members. We also work to interconnect the many subdisciplines developing in AI and bridge professional knowledge-silos. Above all, we try to anchor a humanistic vision for the development of AI in our projects and through our relations with other organisations.

With the Co-Change project we want to reach partners who are interested in collaborating with us making sure that AI is developed to serve society as a whole, leaving no one behind.

