



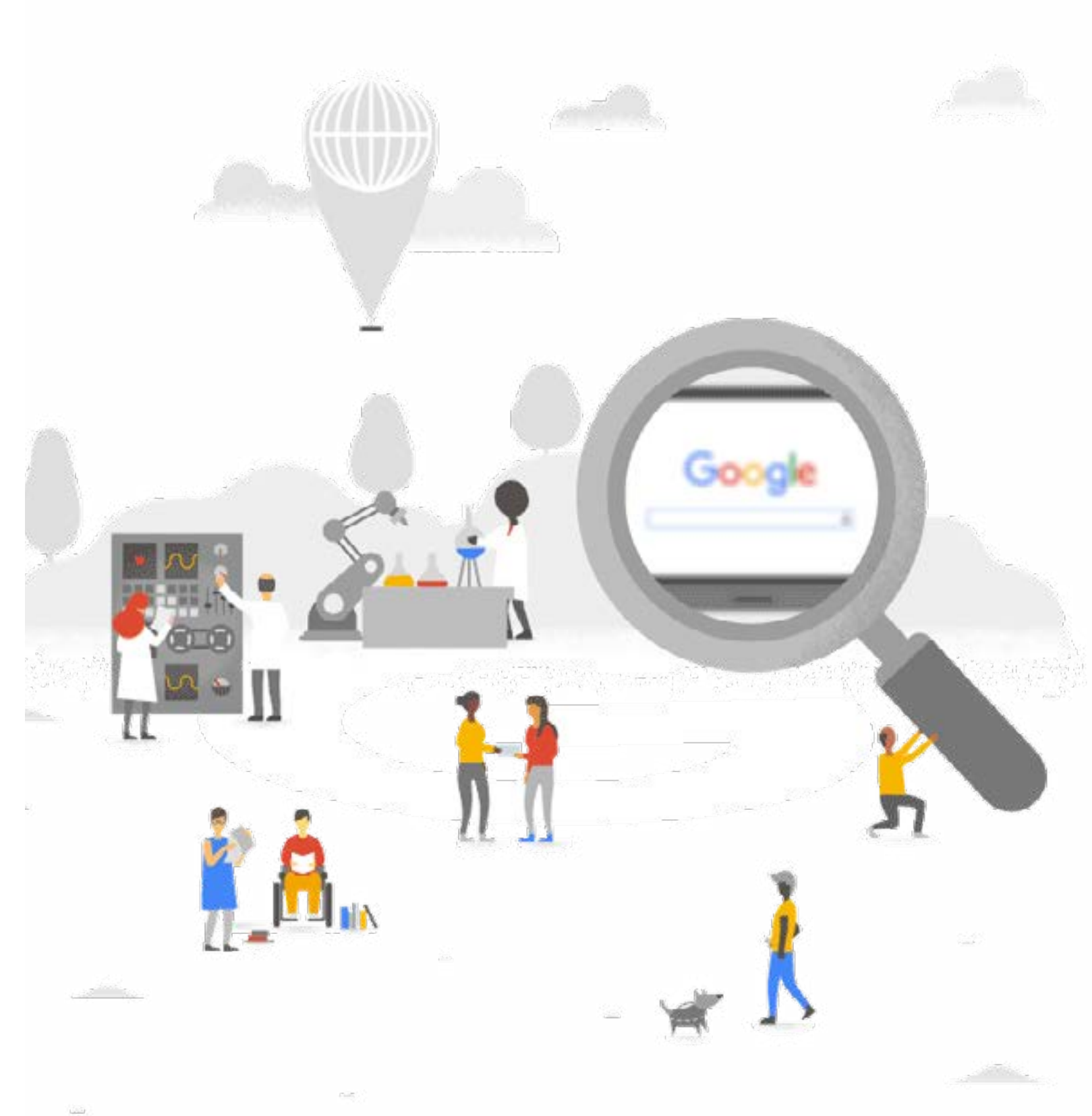
2022 Yearbook

Responsible Innovation Fellowship



The Responsible Innovation Team

New Perspectives from RIF: Meet José, Kwaku & Mumtaz



José C. Sánchez Curet



"I reached out to leaders in the computer science department at my university to offer to share my learnings so other students can benefit from a similar experience."

What are some new perspectives you gained from the program?

I realized the importance of inclusion in developing fair algorithms. Even when inclusion and fairness are considered, there often still are biases and unintended consequences in these systems.

What surprised you the most throughout RIF?

After meeting several members of the Responsible Innovation team, I was surprised by the diversity of backgrounds. I learned that voices from non-technical fields, such as psychology and political science, are important and add value to responsible innovation.

How do you plan on applying learnings from RIF in the future?

I reached out to leaders in the computer science department at my university to offer to share my learnings so other students can benefit from a similar experience. I hope to teach seminars about AI ethics and foster conversations on responsible technology development.



Kwaku Baffour-Awuah

What are some new perspectives you gained from the program?

It's important to think about innovating responsibly, because innovation just for innovation's sake can be dangerous. While you might not design technology to cause harm, bad actors can use the technology to achieve their goals. Also, responsible innovation isn't always intuitive, so it's important to have a defined set of principles to guide ethical practice.

What surprised you the most throughout RIF?

I was impressed by the diversity in background, socio-economic status, and thought. People came from different sectors of life and brought their own lived experiences. One Googler in particular stuck out to me - he's a second generation immigrant from West Africa, just like me. It was incredible to see someone from the same background.

How do you plan on applying learnings from RIF in the future?

I hope to apply my learnings beyond the AI space, because they're useful wherever people use abstraction to find solutions, such as research and academia. I plan to apply responsible innovation principles to my research, coursework, and future career.



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Mumtaz Fatima



“After RIF, I was able to get a position at a research lab that focuses on using technology to explore other perspectives.”

What are some new perspectives you gained from the program?

RIF helped me think about how students can get involved in responsible innovation early on. If we can become more ethical developers, we'll be able to creatively solve problems in a way that is also ethical.

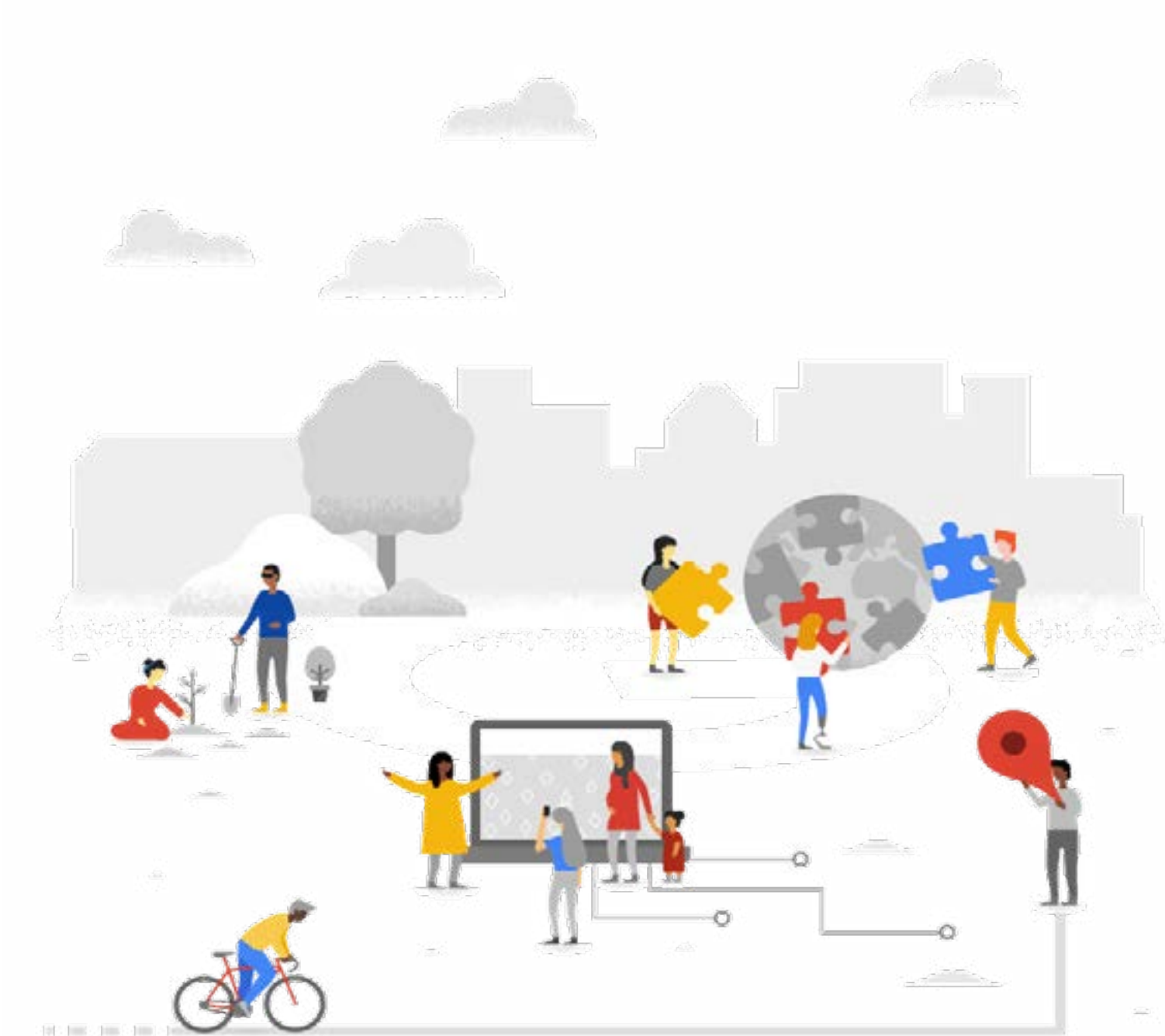
How do you plan on applying learnings from RIF in the future?

After RIF, I was able to get a position at a research lab that focuses on using technology to explore other perspectives. For example, when looking at product reviews, people tend to consider the top positive and negative reviews, so users end up making decisions based on the outliers. In this scenario, we would explore how moderate reviews impact decision making for users and tools that reduce user bias.

Do you have any advice for future RIF cohorts?

Always be open to hearing other perspectives. We often think about our opinions as set in stone, but if you're open minded, you can learn a lot from others who have had different educations, backgrounds, and perspectives.





Applying RIF Insights Outside of Tech: Meet April, Christina & Nafeesah



April LaGrone

How do you see responsible innovation impacting your field of study?

As a public health student, I'm passionate about equitable research, ensuring research study participants have control, power, and a voice. Through RIF, I was able to see how strategies in equitable technology translate to health, and it's inspired me to seek more intersections in the fields.

What do you wish people from your field knew about technology?

The concept of explainability also rings true in public health. In the same way that technology and AI literacy is important, we need to focus on health literacy so users understand what their rights are, become educated on their health care options, and advocate for themselves.

Do you have any additional thoughts or insights?

One of the most impactful things was how diverse the RIF fellows and Google leaders were. There isn't one path into tech, and it's daunting if you don't have a technical background. But non-technical fields like social sciences are important. It was inspiring to meet people who look like me and who have had similar journeys because I know I can do it as well.



"It was inspiring to meet people who looked like me and who have had similar journeys as me because I know I can do it as well."





“We’re creating the next generation of innovators, and I hope to teach little minds how to be responsible with technology.”

Christina Carpenter

How do you see responsible innovation impacting your field of study?

I’m going to school to become a teacher, and I hope to share my insights with people in my field so we can incorporate responsible technology into education. We’re creating the next generation of innovators, and I hope to teach little minds how to be responsible with technology and the negative impacts of certain types of technology use.

How will you apply RIF insights, outside of your career, in your everyday life?

I’m a mom, and my 9-year-old son has grown up with electronics his whole life. This is when he needs to learn how to be responsible with it. He’s been asking me about social media, and I’ve had to explain negative things you can see online like clickbait.

What do you wish people from your field knew about technology?

It doesn’t have to be scary and you don’t have to know everything about it. My background is not technical, so I was intimidated going into the program, but I quickly realized that I could keep up.



Nafeesah Wazir

How do you see responsible innovation impacting your field of study?

Within political science, I hope to hold myself accountable. I want to make it a point to voice my opinion and not be afraid of negative responses. Sometimes it's difficult, and it can feel safer not to speak up, but when it comes to trying to make a positive impact, your voice is important.

What do you wish people from your field knew about technology?

I think people should be more open to technology because it's only going to continue to grow. We need an all-hands-on-deck mentality and an open mindset because technology doesn't have to be all bad. This program taught me to be more open to multiple perspectives - that not everything is black and white.

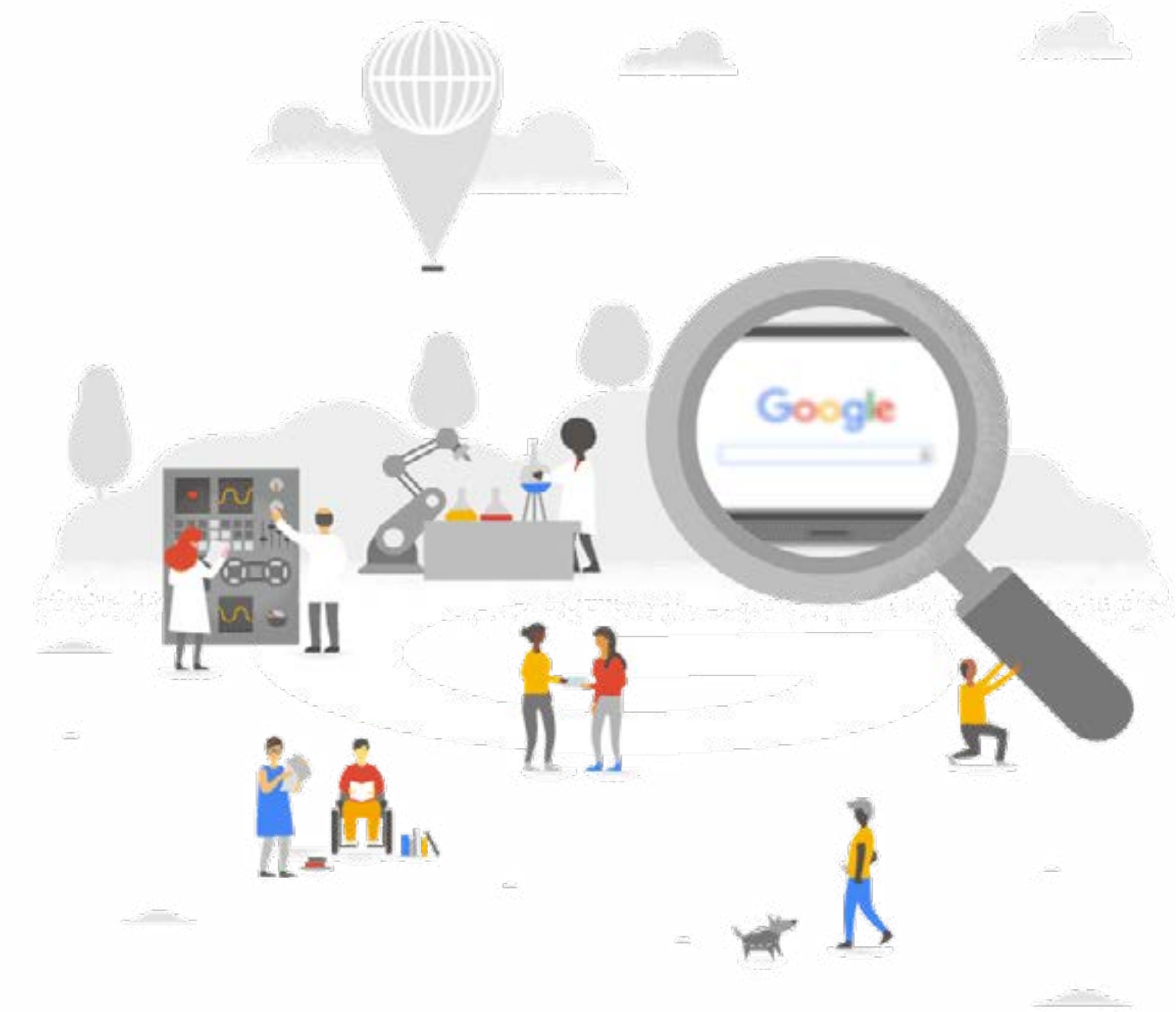
Do you see this changing your career trajectory?

This program has definitely expanded my interests, and it's shown me there's not one route that I have to take. There are so many roles within technology and politics that I could now see myself in. It's hard to gauge where exactly I'll play, but I'm excited by the opportunities ahead.



"This program taught me to be more open to multiple perspectives - that not everything is black and white."





Pursuing Careers in Responsible Tech: Meet Akosua, Fathia & Sharon



Akosua Wordie

How did you first get interested in responsible technology?

I was initially a film major, and as an elective, I took classes that combine film and computer science. After studying with professors in the Afrotechtopia space, I became more interested in the digital divide and accessibility of technology, as well as data privacy. I now hope to focus on advocacy in the intersection between film and computer science.

How did RIF influence your plans to pursue a career in responsible technology, if at all?

It was interesting to hear from different roles and perspectives on the Responsible Innovation team. One Googler, who serves as an ethics consultant, gets paid to think, and it was cool to see how various traditions like ancient philosophy are relevant today.

What type of impact do you hope to have in your career?

I hope to one day be a digital rights attorney and a consumer protection advocate working in the House. Consumer protections are lacking for the technologically illiterate, and through my career, I hope to support them.



"I hope to one day be a digital rights attorney and a consumer protection advocate working in the House."



Fathia Tayib

How did you first get interested in responsible technology?

I've been interested in responsible technology since attending a conference in Australia. The keynote speech made me think about how many developers that are not Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) do not fully understand the impacts that certain technology has on BIPOC individuals. Being a woman of color, I hope to bring my lived experience and diversity of thought to the technology space.

How did RIF influence your plans to pursue a career in responsible technology, if at all?

I've been interested in the responsible technology space for a while, but I didn't feel confident because I thought that I had to have a certain type of degree and experience with internships. But hearing about the unconventional career paths of many Googlers made the technology field feel more accessible. RIF also opened my mind to different possibilities within the responsible technology space, including topics like harms and explainability.

What type of impact do you hope to have in your career?

I want to make sure the technology space includes more people of color who are decision makers, developers, and influential people. I want to ensure lived experiences and cultural understandings are incorporated and prioritized. As a Black Muslim woman, my intersecting identifies are a superpower in this space, and I hope to bring this intersectional lens to understanding how technology can impact different groups of people.

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Sharon Mega

How did RIF influence your plans to pursue a career in responsible tech, if at all?

Listening to all of the Googler's journeys and stories, I was surprised that no one said they knew they were going to work in this field. Everyone had such different trajectories, and it was inspiring to see how each person developed their own niche and path to becoming a responsible innovator.

What type of impact do you hope to have in your career?

Because of my learnings from RIF, I'm leading a club called the Black STEM Coalition on campus. I bring speakers in to educate our group about important STEM-related topics. Beyond school, I hope to work in tech and urge people to consider different anti-racist lenses through their work. Thanks to RIF, I have a lot of the tools and evidence I need to advocate for responsible technology.

What was your biggest takeaway from RIF?

The RIF cohort was so varied, not only with people from different fields of study, but also with people from different walks of life. Despite our diverse backgrounds, we were able to engage each other really well, with conversations that were well-rounded and with great diversity of thought.



"I hope to work in tech and urge people to consider different anti-racist lenses through their work."

