

Meet the Founding Members

Partner Organizations

Center for Democracy and Technology

Represented by Emma Llansó

The Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) is a 25-year old 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization working to promote civil rights and civil liberties in the digital age. CDT has sought to shape technology's potential for positive social change, while mitigating the unintended consequences of rapid technological evolution and deliberate attempts to exploit and control the systems, laws, and policies that govern the digital ecosystem without regard for the human costs of these actions. Based in Washington, D.C. and Brussels, Belgium, CDT works inclusively across sectors to find tangible solutions to today's most pressing technology policy challenges. Their team of experts includes lawyers, technologists, academics, and analysts, bringing diverse perspectives to all of our efforts.



Emma Llansó

Emma Llansó is the Director of CDT's Free Expression Project, where she works to promote law and policy that support Internet users' free expression rights in the United States, Europe, and around the world. Emma's work spans many subjects, including human trafficking, privacy and online harassment, online child safety, terrorist propaganda, and disinformation. In particular, she focuses on the capabilities and limitations of machine learning techniques and other forms of automation in content moderation and analysis of online speech.

Dangerous Speech Project

Represented by Professor Susan Benesch and Tonei Glavinic

The Dangerous Speech Project was founded in 2010 to study speech (any form of human expression) that inspires violence between groups of people – and to find ways to mitigate this while protecting freedom of expression.



Susan Benesch

Professor Susan Benesch is Faculty Associate of the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. She founded and directs the Dangerous Speech Project, to study speech that can inspire violence - and to find ways to prevent this, without infringing on freedom of expression. To that end, she conducts research on methods to diminish harmful speech online, or the harm itself.



Tonei Glavinic

Tonei Glavinic is Director of Operations at the Dangerous Speech Project. Tonei's work at the DSP includes managing strategy, communications, and administration, and working with coalitions related to content moderation and internet governance including the Christchurch Call Advisory Network (of which they are co-chair), the Global Network Initiative, and Change the Terms.

Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD)

Represented by Milo Comerford and Henry Tuck

Founded in 2006 in London as the first international ‘think and do tank’ dedicated to countering the rise of hate, extremism, terrorism and disinformation in all its forms, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) is recognized as one of the leading global organisations in our domain, with a unique track record in powering solutions to the exploitation of the internet and online platforms with teams in Washington D.C., Berlin, Amman, Nairobi, and Paris. For over 15 years, ISD has worked with a broad range of sectors and stakeholders, from grassroots civil society engagement to policy advisory work at the highest levels of government and the private sector. We combine sector-leading expertise and research in global extremist movements with an advanced digital analysis capability to identify and track online manipulation, disinformation, hate and extremism in real time.



Milo Comerford

Milo Comerford is Head of Policy & Research, Counter Extremism, leading ISD’s work developing innovative research approaches and policy responses to extremism. Milo regularly briefs senior decision makers around the world on the challenge posed by extremist ideologies, and advises governments and international agencies on building effective strategies for countering extremism.



Henry Tuck

Henry Tuck is Head of Digital Policy, leading ISD’s work on digital regulation and tech company responses to terrorism, extremism, hate and dis/misinformation online. Henry oversees ISD’s Digital Policy Lab (DPL) programme and advisory work on key digital regulation proposals in Europe and Five Eyes countries, and collaborates with ISD’s Digital Analysis Unit to translate research into actionable digital policy recommendations.

Kinzen

Represented by Founders Mark Little and Áine Kerr



Kinzen helps protect online communities and conversations from dangerous misinformation and hateful content. Based in Ireland with a distributed team of analysts across the globe including in Germany, Spain, Brazil, and Russia. Kinzen supplies data and analysis that helps technology companies, content moderation services and health organizations make more precise decisions about online information that causes real-world harm. Kinzen combines human expertise and machine learning to provide early-warning of the spread of harmful content in multiple languages. The company has developed unique technology which helps editors review large volumes of audio and video content, and is particularly optimized for podcasting/voice dominated social platforms.

Mark Little



Mark Little is the CEO and co-founder of Kinzen. He is also the founder of social news agency, Storyful. After Storyful, Mark led Twitter's media team in Europe where, as VP for Media Partnerships, he was responsible for making Twitter valuable to a wide range of creative talent in TV, sports, news, government, music and publishing. Mark was also a former TV news anchor and foreign correspondent. Mark is focused on building 'human in the loop' solutions to the information crisis for editors, moderators and trust and safety teams.

Áine Kerr



Áine Kerr is COO of Kinzen. Previously, Áine led global journalism partnerships at Facebook, overseeing a team in New York focused on building products, tools and services for journalists and also working to improve news literacy for news consumers. Before Facebook, she spent five years at Storyful, where she served as head of content and political editor before being appointed managing editor in December 2011 at the time of the company's acquisition by News Corporation. Prior to that, Áine spent over seven years working as a political correspondent and news reporter with The Irish Times, The Irish Independent and The Irish Examiner.

USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative

Represented by Stacy L. Smith, PhD and Katherine Pieper, PhD

The Annenberg Inclusion Initiative is the leading think tank in the world studying diversity and inclusion in entertainment through original research and sponsored projects. Beyond research, the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative develops targeted, research-based solutions



Dr. Stacy L. Smith

Dr. Stacy L. Smith, PhD is the Founder of the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, the leading global think tank studying inequality in entertainment. Dr. Smith's groundbreaking research examines inclusion (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, the LGBT community, people with disabilities, mental health) across film, TV and digital platforms, the music industry, and film criticism. She has authored over 100 articles, book chapters, and reports, and is covered regularly in popular press outlets. Dr. Smith crafts compelling and innovative solutions to inequality. In partnership with TIME'S UP, Tessa Thompson, and others, she launched the #4percentchallenge.



Dr. Katherine Pieper

Dr. Katherine Pieper, PhD is the Program Director at the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, where she oversees the day-to-day operations of the Initiative's research and advocacy efforts. In her work with the Initiative, Dr. Pieper has co-authored and contributed to more than 40 studies on diversity and inclusion across entertainment and media industries. As the leading global think tank studying inclusion in media, the Initiative examines the prevalence and portrayal of girls/women, people of color, the LGBTQ community, people with disabilities, and mental health conditions on screen across film, episodic, and short film content. Behind the camera, the Initiative has examined the barriers and opportunities facing women and people of color behind the camera in film, the animation and visual effects industries, and the music business.

Partners



Danielle Citron

Professor Danielle Citron is the Jefferson Scholars Foundation Schenck Distinguished Professor in Law, Chapman and Caddell Professor of Law, at the University of Virginia School of Law where she teaches and writes about information privacy, free speech, and civil rights. She is a 2019 MacArthur Fellow and the Vice President of the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative. For the past decade, Citron has worked with lawmakers, law enforcement and tech companies to combat online abuse around the globe. She is the author of "Hate Crimes in Cyberspace" (Harvard University Press 2014). Her book "The Fight for Privacy: Protecting Dignity, Identity, and Love" in the Digital Age is forthcoming in W.W. Norton and Penguin Vintage UK in the fall of 2022.



Dr. Mary Anne Franks

Dr. Mary Anne Franks is an internationally recognized expert on the intersection of civil rights and technology. She is a Professor of Law and the Michael R. Klein Distinguished Scholar Chair at the University of Miami as well as the President and Legislative & Tech Policy Director of the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to combating online abuse and discrimination. Her areas of expertise include law and technology, First Amendment law, criminal law and procedure, and family law. She is the author of the award-winning book, *The Cult of the Constitution: Our Deadly Devotion to Guns and Free Speech*; an Affiliate Fellow of the Yale Law School Information Society Project; and a member of the American Law Institute. Dr. Franks holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School as well as a doctorate and a master's degree from Oxford University, where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar.



Alex Holmes

Alex Holmes is founder of a powerful peer to peer Ambassador program, which empowers youth and schools across the globe to tackle harmful behaviors and attitudes they see on and offline. He is Deputy CEO at non-profit The Diana Award, a legacy to Princess Diana's belief young people have the power to change the world, empowering youth and educators.

Outside of this, Alex works with several social media and tech companies across the globe, looking at online harms, acting as an advisor on global advisory boards often being called upon to consult on trust and safety issues, as well as providing thought leadership for media, podcasts, and industry summits and conferences. Alex has collaborated with governments and nonprofits across the world on online safety and was a key advisor for His Royal Highness Duke of Cambridge, Royal Foundation Taskforce on the Prevention of Cyberbullying.

His areas of expertise include tackling online harms, particularly in hate speech, bullying and harassment, wellbeing and mental health as well as supporting development of product safety tools, media literacy education and has led on a number of marketing and communication safety campaigns, particularly targeting educators, parents and youth.



Dr. Jonas Kaiser

Dr. Jonas Kaiser is an Assistant Professor for Communication and Journalism at Suffolk University and Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University. His work is located at the intersection of online journalism, political and digital communication, and computational methods. A native of Germany, Jonas has published on topics such as mis/disinformation, far-right extremism in Germany and the United States, content moderation strategies like deplatforming, bot detection methods, and algorithmic recommendation systems. At the Berkman Klein Center, Jonas heads the Misinformation Working Group.



Dr. Ronaldo Lemos

Dr. Ronaldo Lemos is the co-founder and Chief Science Officer of the Institute for Technology and Society. He is a partner at Renno Penteadó, a leading law firm in Brazil, and has twenty years of experience in the private and public sectors, specializing in technology, intellectual property, media and public policy. Dr. Lemos was a Visiting Scholar at Oxford, Princeton, the MIT Media Lab and a Visiting Professor at the Columbia School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). He co-created Brazil's Internet Bill of Rights Law (2014) and Brazil's National IoT Plan (2018) and served on the Boards of the Mozilla Foundation, Access Now and other non-profit organizations. Previously, Dr. Lemos was Vice-President of the Social Communication Council in the National Congress in Brazil. Dr. Lemos served for 5 years as an artist curator for Tim Festival, one of Brazil's largest music festivals. Dr. Lemos writes weekly about law and technology for Folha de S. Paulo, one of Brazil's most widely read newspapers.



Dr. Christer Mattsson

Dr. Christer Mattsson is an associate professor and Director of the Segerstedt Institute at the University of Gothenburg. An internationally recognized scholar in the field of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism, his research is mainly qualitative and focuses on radicalization processes, life inside hate movements, and the prerequisites for disengagement and deradicalization. As part of this work, he has studied the role of ideologies, conspiracy theories, and how key messages are coded, distributed and encoded in these movements. He has focused in particular on the role of antisemitism, due to its key function in most extremist milieus. His research in this area is conducted in the Western world, with a focus on Northern Europe. Dr. Mattsson has also conducted research on radicalization into violent Islamist groups. In addition to this, he has a special interest in the prevention of radicalization into violent extremism, and in this area also the role of education and schooling.



Dr. Tanu Mitra

Dr. Tanu Mitra is an Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, Information School, where she leads the Social Computing research group. She studies and builds large-scale social computing systems to understand and counter problematic information online. Her research spans auditing online systems for misinformation and conspiratorial content, understanding digital misinformation, unraveling narratives of online extremism and hate, and building technology to counter these problems. Her work employs a range of interdisciplinary methods from the fields of human computer interaction, data mining, machine learning, and natural language processing.

Dr. Mitra's research has been recognized through multiple awards and honors, including an NSF-CRII, an early career ONR-YIP, and an Adamic-Glance Distinguished Young Researcher award, along with several best paper honorable mention awards. Dr. Mitra received her PhD in Computer Science from Georgia Tech's School of Interactive Computing and her Masters in Computer Science from Texas A&M University.



Desmond Upton Patton, PhD, MSW

Dr. Desmond Upton Patton is a professor of Social Work, Sociology and Data Science, and Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs and Curriculum Innovation at Columbia University and the incoming Brian and Randi Schwartz University Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. He is a leading pioneer in the field of making AI empathetic, culturally sensitive and less biased. Patton helps organizations develop a better approach to diversity and inclusion that includes fairer practices that address the challenge of prejudice, rather than contribute to it. Professor Patton's groundbreaking research into the relationship between social media and gang violence has led to his becoming the most cited and recognized scholar in this increasingly important area of social science. Further, Patton's insights on creating non-biased and culturally nuanced algorithms give tech companies a holistic perspective on various business and social issues. The companies that adopt these proactive measures are then able to ensure they are not unintentionally propagating bias.



Megan Phelps-Roper

Megan Phelps-Roper has championed the power of empathetic dialogue to change minds and connect with those we may disagree with. As a former spokesperson for Westboro Baptist Church, Megan played a central role in spreading hateful rhetoric to a global audience. However, after interacting with calm, civil, and genuinely empathetic individuals online—including one user who would eventually become her husband—Phelps-Roper began to question the dogmatic assertions of her faith and its celebrations of human tragedy. Her inspiring, moving, and deeply human story of change is the subject of her memoir, called *Unfollow: A Memoir of Loving and Leaving the Westboro Baptist Church*. As a keynote speaker and educator, she engages with schools, faith groups, law enforcement, and anti-extremism organizations on strengthening human bonds through better public discourse. She has been covered, most significantly, by *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *VICE*, *The Globe and Mail*, *NPR*, and other international organizations.