# NR50 / Human Futures of AI: Foresight and Public Policy

**Topic :** Research

**Chair :** Preeti Raghunath (University of Sheffield)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

This panel seeks to bring together scholars and practitioners focused on developments in forms of Artificial Intelligence, and corresponding and adjacent Public Policies. In doing so, the panel will create space to engage with AI futurisms, practical methods to explore building foresight knowledge and pathways for near-futures, and engaged and ethnographic research. The objective of this panel is to centre Human Futures in times of AI, and should be of interest to both scholars and practitioners working at the intersections of Time, Policy and Technology, broadly put.

The Research Questions that papers on this panel could explore are:

1. How does futures thinking manifest in policymaking for AI? Who futures are these? What values and ideologies are championed in the process?

2. To what extent and how do AI policies and their futures-orientation impinge upon, interact with and shape (or not) sectoral public policies? How does this change the ways in which these sectors shape human lives, livelihoods and opportunities?

This panel welcomes a variety of formats, including and beyond traditional papers, such as experimental thinking, creative-academic engagements, foresight and strategic position papers, and more. Authors are particularly encouraged to go beyond binaries of AI as good/bad, and help us expand our understanding by unravelling the complexities of human lives that interface with AI.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Globally, surveys of citizens and members of the public reveal the lack of trust in what are increasingly AI-embedded public-private products and services across key sectors. While there is growing recognition of the benefits of AI, with medical diagnostics, improved access to learning materials, language and translation or automation of mundane tasks, there’s a lot of skepticism as well. These concerns are around unanticipated and hidden risks, especially around time-bound imaginaries, such as near- and long-termism and risks associated with each of them. There also exists a huge evidence gap in that we know very little about how citizens/users/consumers across contexts and settings approach and use AI. We do not know much about peoples’ aspirations for AI, why resistance exists today and how they’d respond in future risk scenarios.

Foresight and behavioural methods offer insights on behaviours, needs and capabilities in confronting risks, and building capacities for Safer AI. This panel, therefore, aims to bring together research and practices on a human-first approach to AI policy, where the focus is not on developing foresight for AI Futures, but for Human Futures amidst advanced AI.

The panel aims to centre “Lived policy”, which are “how public policies are lived by those impacted by them” (Ali, 2023) and Deliberative Policymaking (Raghunath, 2020) for AI. Towards this, this panel aims to facilitate conversations on foresight and futures approaches in combination with qualitative, ethnographic

and behavioural methods, to collectively think about near-future lived experiences of diverse groups of people in a range of sectors. Drawing on a range of behavioural and futures methods (eg. rapid ethnographic assessments, scenarios-building, ethnographic experiential futures), this panel will explore themes at the intersections of Time, Policy and Technology.

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