

STORIES OF THE FUTURE:

YOUTH SHAPING THE ROLE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN DEMOCRACY

Researchers

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Additional information

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Description

The centrality of artificial intelligence (AI) in contemporary and future societies requires that all stakeholders, including youth, have a nuanced and critical understanding of this technology and its societal implications. The time is ripe for educators, civil society and political institutions to think creatively about youth digital literacy. While digital skills are often mastered by the younger generation, there is a conspicuous absence of digital literacy, coupled with a limited recognition of the political nature and societal implications of AI technologies. In this context, we are implementing a pioneering two-year scientific communication project in Switzerland to contribute to increasing AI literacy among youth.

Drawing on the principles of youth participatory action research, design fiction, and civic education, our project adopts a 'futurity' approach that recognises young people as active contributors and partners in shaping the future(s). Between May 2023 and March 2024, we conducted approximately 40 narrative foresight workshops throughout Switzerland, reaching over 800 students from all linguistic regions and from a wide range of school types, and social and economic backgrounds.

To date, our young participants have collectively created over 160 short stories about the societal implications of an AI-enhanced object of the future. For the second part of the project, we are collaborating with young artists from art schools in Geneva, Zurich and Ticino to create various forms of interactive art (e.g. interactive posters, art installations), which, together with fictional AI trials, will contribute to bringing the debate about the role of AI in democracy to the general public.

