DATA DELIBERATIONS

A Discussion Series by Aapti Institute

THE DATA ECONOMY LAB

ROUNDTABLE BRIEF

UNPACKING COMMUNITY CONSENT & COLLECTIVE MODELS FOR DATA STEWARDSHIP

6TH AUGUST 2020 | 6:00 - 7:30 PM IST

There is general and growing consensus that individual rights in data are critical, and that people must have a greater say in how their data is collected, used, and managed. Innovations such as personal data stores facilitate greater individual control over data for a number of purposes, including sharing and monetising one's personal data. Monetisation of personal data is also being considered in the form of monetary dividends. This focus on individual entitlements in the data economy ignores that people, in their atomised online existence, cannot negotiate with technology companies for their data rights. For instance, expecting people to navigate privacy policies, irrespective of design, puts an undue burden of consent on individual users. Individual consent is broken, and remedies for isolated grievances do not lead to systemic changes in the data economy.

To remedy this, community rights and collective bargaining are being considered by scholars and thinkers. This makes sense as data is only valuable as a large collected resource – the value of the network is critical. Insights about individuals are drawn through networks and communities we inhabit. Digital exhaust, or data about us from ambient environment – cctv, satellite imagery, IoT machines is also representative of the community. Further, in some interpretations datasets of value are a result of labour performed by a number of groups of people online – therefore decisions on data should be made by representatives of these groups. It is also apparent that exercising individual data rights in some cases might compromise those of the community. Viewing community data as a public resource can help unlock data for the benefit of the community itself.

The idea of community ownership and governance of data and decisions around it needs to be reworked to bring offline support systems and voice to online action can help restructure some of the injustices of the data economy, and lead more decentralised ideas of power and control. There is some scattered activity on this, for instance in indigenous data sovereignty – the rights of Indigenous peoples and tribes to govern the collection, ownership, and application of their own data". More recently, movements like BlackLivesMatter, aim to use data to empower communities of colour.

In this panel we discuss, decentralised systems of data governance through community action, and draw lessons for a reimagination and renegotiation of data rights.

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KEY QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to think about community data ownership and governance?

- What are some alternative approaches to governance that can be applied to data – what can we learn from ecological, indigenous approaches?

- How can community based ownership and governance help negotiation better data rights including distributing economic value?

- What is the role of data stewardship in this context – can trusts, collaboratives help implement community data rights?

- What are the social, legal, technological and regulatory mechanisms required to actualize community ownership and decision-making on data?

PANELLISTS

PARMINDER JEET SINGH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF IT FOR CHANGE

His areas of work are ICTs for development, Internet governance, e-governance, and digital economy. He is a part of the non-personal data committee constituted by the Government of India.

JASMINE MCNEALY
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF TELECOMMUNICATION, COLLEGE OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA,

Jasmine studies information, communication, and technology with a view toward influencing law and policy. Her research focuses on privacy, online media, and communities.

ANOUK RUHAAK
MOZILLA FELLOW

Anouk is a Mozilla Fellow (2019-2020) associated with Algorithm Watch. Anouk creates new models of data governance for the public good. As an architect and advocate of data trusts, she promotes governance models that safeguard privacy and protect society from the negative externalities of data sharing.

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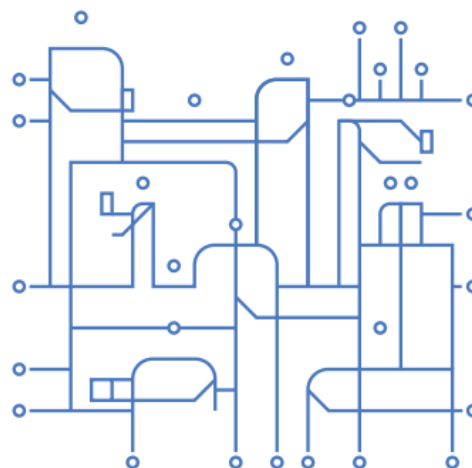
ADDITIONAL READING & MATERIALS

- Ruhaak, Anouk. When One Affects Many: The Case for Collective Consent. 20 Feb. 2020, https://medium.com/@anoukruhaak/when-one-affects-many-the-case-for-collective-consent-97dbce94d34f

- Tisné, Martin. "The Data Delusion: Protecting Individual Data Isn't Enough When The Harm Is Collective." Edited by Marietje Schaake, Cyber Policy Center - Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies., Stanford University , July 2020, https://cyber.fsi.stanford.edu/publication/data-delusion

- Singh, Parminder Jeet. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung , 2020, Economic Rights in a Data-Based Society - Collective Data Ownership, Workers' Rights, and the Role of the Public Sector, http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/16034.pdf

- McNealy, Jasmine. An Ecological Approach to Data Governance. Databite No. 127: Jasmine McNealy, Data & Society Research Institute, Jan. 2020, www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1796&v=jB5_NrdWH7k&feature=emb_logo.

DATA STEWARDSHIP

Data stewardship enables an intermediary to facilitate consent and decision-making on behalf of users, to balance individuals and community data rights with the use of data for societal good.

Read our full report here:
https://thedataeconomylab.com/2020/06/24/data-stewardship-a-taxonomy/

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