

Cultural Rights, Innovation, and Development in the AI moment

Towards a public domain framing

Event Report: IT for Change with UNESCO
Global CSOs and Academic Network on
AI Ethics and Policy – A hybrid
roundtable

17th February 2026

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Participants:

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5. Debby Kristen, EngageMedia
6. Dhanaraj Thakur, Emerging Technology Initiative–Multiracial Democracy Project, George Washington University
7. Hesham Dinana, EiTESAL (joined virtually)
8. Jai Vipra, Cornell University
9. Jim Thomas, Scan the Horizon (joined virtually)
10. KM Gopakumar, Third World Network
11. Laura Mantilla-León, Derechos Digitales
12. May Siksik, Innovation Network Global
13. Merrin Muhammed Ashraf, IT for Change
14. Mila Samdub, AI Now Institute
15. Nandini Chami, IT for Change
16. Nina Sangma, International Land Coalition
17. Pam Dixon, World Privacy Forum
18. Paul Keller, Open Future Foundation (joined virtually)
19. Pooja Sood, Khoj International Artists' Association (joined virtually)
20. Ramya Chandrasekhar, French National Centre for Scientific Research (joined virtually)
21. Ranjit Singh, Data and Society (joined virtually)
22. Rohini Lakshané, Independent Technologist and Researcher
23. Saloni Mishra, IT for Change
24. Shobhit S, IT for Change
25. Sriram Emani, IndianRaga (joined virtually)
26. Sundar Athreya H, KIIT Law School
27. Swaraj Paul Barooah, SpicyIP
28. Valentine Goddard, AI Impact Alliance
29. Victor Pavarin, InternetLab

1. Introduction

Mainstream trajectories of AI development enclose and privatize the knowledge and cultural commons without replenishing the public domain. An intense, competitive race among AI companies to secure high-quality, human-generated data needed to train large language models (LLMs) and other AI systems has led to a scramble for training data. Peer-produced information and knowledge archives on the open internet have become a 'free-for-all' resource for a few large corporations to profiteer from.

The upshot is that the economic/livelihood and moral rights of artists, content creators, and cultural workers are endangered. Equally, the free development of culture is compromised, with the disembedding of cultural knowledge from its original context and its pervasive commodification. At the same time, AI developers and public interest technologists from the Global South are left with another quandary: How can the representational injustice in training data be addressed to build contextually grounded solutions? How can the situated knowledge of communities in the Global South be used to enrich living cultures through AI innovation that is locally shaped and controlled?

Current debates in the AI context turn to prevailing Intellectual Property (IP) frameworks and their applicability to the AI moment. Yet, this only intensifies the crisis of the knowledge commons. As [experts](#) have noted, on the one hand, copyright frameworks and their 'fair use' exemptions may not be fit-for-purpose to deal with questions of data/knowledge in AI-related learning systems. On the other hand, an overbroad application of [trade secrets](#) by first-mover platforms to enclose data resources in perpetuity forecloses democratic, pluralistic, and public-interest AI innovation pathways, particularly in the Majority World.

IP frameworks have therefore contributed to both the cannibalization of public domain knowledge as well as its impoverishment through private enclosures of data and knowledge resources, disincentivizing reciprocities and responsibilities vital for the protection and promotion of cultural rights and vibrant knowledge societies.

Together with UNESCO's Global CSOs and Academic Network on AI Ethics and Policy, IT for Change convened a civil society roundtable on the sidelines of the India AI Impact Summit to turn the spotlight to the public domain challenge within the policy debate on AI innovation, cultural rights, and development.

The event, organized in a hybrid format, was held at the India International Centre, New Delhi, on 17 Feb 2026. It brought together 22 policy and legal experts, creators, artists, researchers, digital rights and development organizations, for a vibrant debate. The roundtable was structured around three rounds of catalyst presentations followed by open discussion, guided by the following questions:

- 1. What are the impacts of the dominant AI innovation paradigm for cultural rights and development?**
- 2. Are existing IP regimes adequate to redirect AI development pathways towards local needs and local control of the knowledge infrastructures of tomorrow?**
- 3. How can we build an AI commons that fosters a flourishing public domain? Is IP reform a part of this agenda?**

Insights from this roundtable, with due acknowledgment of participants' contributions, will feed into a policy brief for the sub-group on IP and Culture that IT for Change co-leads under UNESCO's global network.

2. Key Insights from the Roundtable

2.1 Challenges for cultural rights and development in the dominant AI innovation paradigm

The first round of catalyst presentations and discussion delved into the challenges for cultural rights and development, focusing on how the relationship between human creativity and the knowledge commons is reordered in the AI moment.

Provocations by our lead speakers – Rohini Lakshané, Ranjit Singh, Victor Pavarin, and Valentine Goddard – in this segment, helped frame the discussion:

Rohini Lakshané | Independent Technologist and Researcher

The systematic extraction of cultural labor and knowledge into private AI infrastructures without consent, context, or accountability is the top challenge today. Commons-based resources such as Wikipedia and works under Creative Commons licensing regimes that were intended to foster shared knowledge are being absorbed into proprietary AI systems. This converts public and volunteer labor into private profit without any form of reciprocity. There are three ways in which cultural rights are being compromised in the AI context: appropriation of creators' work without compensation; disembedding of cultural knowledge from its context, authorship, and community meaning; and commodification, whereby AI systems compete with the very creators whose work trained them. The impact of erosion of cultural rights falls disproportionately on creators, women, marginalized communities, and the Global Majority, revealing an AI innovation model driven by extraction rather than stewardship of the commons.

Ranjit Singh | Data and Society

The scramble for training data needs to be examined for not only what AI takes from the commons, but also what it returns as the baseline version of culture. Generative AI thus functions not merely as a productivity tool, but as an engine of cultural common sense, wherein certain lives are rendered the default while others are invisibilized. Generative AI obscures bias by producing endless, ephemeral outputs, making underrepresentation harder to detect and contest compared to traditional media. By abstracting and decontextualizing situated knowledge into seemingly neutral data, AI reorganizes the commons around what is most legible to the machine. Enclosure in the AI era, therefore, is not only about the enclosure of content but also about the enclosure of legibility, stabilizing a narrow baseline world and returning it as common sense.

The accountability approach needed in this context is a governance framework that requires digital platforms to measure and disclose what becomes standard or normative in their AI outputs. Generative AI needs to be governed as a technology of cultural visibility in order to protect the public domain not only as a resource to be drawn from, but as a space of plural meanings. No single baseline gets to pass as 'the human' simply because it's easier for the generative AI system to reproduce.

Victor Pavarin | InternetLab

Cultural sovereignty and the low cultural representation of the Global South in the predominant AI models need to be problematized. When cultural production is mediated by algorithms trained predominantly on data from the Global North, we run the risk of creating a scenario where only certain forms of expression are valid. The solution, however, does not lie in feeding more data into the AI models, as this reinforces colonial structures. This would only further peripheralize countries like Brazil, reducing them to mere data providers and passive consumers of a technology whose rules are dictated by foreign corporations and foreign states.

Progressive local initiatives struggle due to structural dependence on foreign infrastructure and components across the AI development chain. There needs to be more strategic attention to the question of how Global South countries can build culturally rooted AI models that respect linguistic and cultural diversity, while breaking cycles of technological dependence.

Valentine Goddard | AI Impact Alliance

Industry efforts to reshape the definition of art in the context of AI will have profound legal and economic consequences. At the heart of this debate is a fundamental tension between democracy and the market. Artists are as essential as independent media to democratic societies. They must have their economic rights protected in order to exercise their freedom of expression. However, the same IP regimes designed to safeguard creators are also being used by industry forces to consolidate control, create data silos, and restrict broader participation in digital and creative economies. As the creative economy becomes one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, policy discussions on AI design, data ownership, and profit models must also center gendered impacts across the entire cultural production pipeline, including increased violence, loss of safety, and structural inequalities affecting women creative professionals and those from marginalized locations.

The open discussion following the lead speakers' interventions brought to the fore additional critical points:

- The example of the *Māori Data Sovereignty Charter* highlights the importance of developing AI governance frameworks with the participation of communities, giving due regard to their culture and tradition. The blind transplanting of governance frameworks is therefore inimical to cultural rights.¹
- Consent, credit, and continuity are necessary for the creators whose works are used for AI training purposes. We need to safeguard artists' ability to continue and thrive in the creative ecosystem without being displaced by AI. There is a need to resist the legitimization of outputs of AI systems, given that these are neither representative nor inclusive.²
- Style is a distinct and essential dimension of artistic creation. We should therefore avoid collapsing art into a question of content alone in conversations around AI and IP³
- Styles and manners need to correspond to the way in which communities want to express themselves and be represented in the technology.⁴
- Technological sovereignty is about community control over its data. On-site training through federated learning rather than sending data to external cloud systems is a technological choice that can protect privacy, cultural autonomy, and community sovereignty over their data.⁵
- Community-driven AI initiatives are an important alternative to Big Tech-driven large AI models. They can be a means of resisting data dispossession.⁶

¹ Input from Pam Dixon, World Privacy Forum.

² Input from Sriram Emani, IndianRaga.

³ Input from Mila Samdub, AI Now Institute.

⁴ Input from Ranjit Singh, Data and Society.

⁵ Input from May Siksik, Innovation Network Global.

⁶ Input from Laura Mantilla-León, Derechos Digitales.

- LLMs risk reinforcing existing linguistic hierarchies between high-resource and low-resource languages, especially in multilingual contexts where historical power dynamics shape how languages are valued and used. Smaller, community-owned, and context-specific models may offer a more equitable alternative to general-purpose models.⁷

Key Takeaways from Round 1:

- The ongoing scramble for training data has eroded the artistic freedoms and economic rights of cultural professionals, especially women, and those hailing from marginalized social locations. This trend is concerning not only for the labor displacement risks it poses, but also for the potential negative impacts on freedom of expression, the reinforcement of gendered, socio-structural inequalities in the cultural industry, and the vibrancy of the public sphere.
- Dominant trends in AI innovation are driven by a logic of commodification that engulfs society as a whole. The absence of appropriate stewardship has disembedded cultural knowledge from its original context, authorship, and situated politics. Ideas of machine-readability and legibility for platform algorithms reduce complex, pluralistic cultural worlds to narrow, machine-legible data typologies. When cultural visibility is tied to algorithmic legibility, there are profoundly negative consequences for representational justice. This disproportionately impacts communities in the Global South, who have very limited control over the directions of AI development and deployment.
- Addressing the knowledge coloniality of AI infrastructures is not reducible to the building of representational training data sets for the Global South. In the current paradigm, where AI infrastructures are owned and controlled by a handful of digital corporations in advanced economies, such a project would only reinforce neo-colonial relationships in the digital economy. The need of the hour is to invest strategically in pathways to autonomous digital data and AI infrastructure for developing countries that enable them to break out of technological dependence.

2.2 IP Regimes, mainstream AI Innovation models, and implications for the public domain

This round critically examined the relationship between prevailing IP regimes and mainstream AI innovation models, unpacking implications for the public domain.

Provocations by our lead speakers in this segment helped frame the discussion:

Akshat Agarwal | AASA Chambers

We may be committing a category error by using the copyright framework to respond to challenges raised by the AI moment. Copyright protects specific works or objects, not the creative roles that AI is displacing. AI does not simply compete in terms of work-for-work; rather, it restructures labor by threatening large-scale role displacement. This is a problem that falls outside the scope of the copyright law.

⁷ Input from Dhanaraj Thakur, Emerging Technology Initiative–Multiracial Democracy Project, George Washington University.

We need to be alert to the ‘double enclosure’ that is ongoing. Digital corporations extract publicly available knowledge to build proprietary AI models. They also go on to restrict meaningful access to these models and their inferences, thus outcompeting others at scale. The real issue we should be concerned about is not copyright infringement but a fundamental transformation of work and resource distribution under capitalism. This requires labor and policy reforms beyond the IP framework.

Jai Vipra | Cornell University

The current AI moment is marked by contradictions and uncertainty, especially around intellectual property (IP), which was once seen as restrictive, and is now invoked as protection, while markets and key actors in AI are still unsettled. AI represents a new phase of enclosure in the arc of capitalism and platform capitalism – this time, over economically relevant intellectual capacity – driven by capital accumulation and default market practices formed in legal vacuums. In fact, the monopolization of the digital economy began with the monopolization of art and culture, and this led to the individualization of art.

“Artistic and intellectual production is essentially social production or products of collective labor. Hence, there is a need for a social model of governance as opposed to the current individualized and propertized notion of intellectual property. Here, Thomas Paine’s theory of ground rent under capitalism could be extended to the AI moment to build institutional mechanisms to ensure that the value from AI-driven enclosure of intellectual capacity is redistributed.”

But artistic and intellectual production is essentially social production or the product of collective labor. Hence, there is a need for a social model of governance as opposed to the current individualized and propertized notion of intellectual property. Here, Thomas Paine’s theory of ground rent under capitalism could be extended to the AI moment to build institutional mechanisms to ensure that the value from AI-driven enclosure of intellectual capacity is redistributed. We need to look beyond large language models and even deep learning, as these are statistical systems that make approximations based on large datasets that only Big Tech can enclose due to their capital and scale of operations, which enables them to move fast.

Jim Thomas | Scan the Horizon

My research on generative biology demonstrates how Generative AI systems are extending beyond the text and media into the realm of living systems. Today, digital versions of genetic sequences are being used to train large AI models to generate new proteins, DNA strands, or even virus sequences. This development exacerbates the issue of biopiracy. When tech companies extract biological and digital genetic data (often originating from indigenous or local communities) and enclose it within proprietary AI models, it undermines access and benefit-sharing arrangements under the Convention on Biological Diversity.⁸

⁸ The Convention on Biological Diversity sought to establish a comprehensive international regime for the sustainable management of biological resources. Article 15 of the Convention requires parties to facilitate access to genetic resources for environmentally sound uses and to take legislative, administrative, and policy measures to ensure the equitable sharing of benefits arising from such uses. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from biodiversity is one of the central objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The Nagoya Protocol (2010), a supplementary agreement to the CBD provides a legal framework to implement access and benefit sharing by requiring prior informed consent (PIC) and mutually agreed terms (MAT) before accessing genetic resources.

Recent developments, such as the establishment of the Cali Fund⁹, acknowledge that companies using digital sequence information should return benefits to source communities. The shift toward such pooled compensation mechanisms, however, risks diluting direct community participation and decision-making agency over the use of their genetic resources. A vital question remains: if we frame our demands solely in the narrow language of benefit-sharing for data extraction, how do we address the deeper challenge of safeguarding the public character of innovation itself?

The open discussion that followed the lead interventions surfaced a range of additional pressing considerations:

- IPR is a limiting and inadequate framework for addressing AI-related extraction and injustice. It ignores the incremental and collective nature of knowledge production. While access and benefit-sharing models offer a more promising alternative, mechanisms like the Cali Fund remain limited, voluntary, and less responsive to national sovereignty and community-level control. It is important to safeguard the data sovereignty of communities by giving them legal personality and protection, and the state has a key role to play in this regard.¹⁰
- Copyright law is inherently in tension with the idea of the public domain. The recently released *Working Paper on Generative AI and Copyright* by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Government of India, illustrates the pitfalls of dealing with the issue of AI enclosure of creative work through copyright reform.¹¹
- Even as we acknowledge the serious limitations of IP frameworks, it may be important not to dismiss them entirely. Moral rights, which are a part of this framework, can play an important role in protecting artists and Indigenous living knowledge systems. Any effort to rethink or reform IP must therefore retain and strengthen these protections, ensuring they remain responsive to cultural rights and community-defined understandings of intellectual property.¹²
- There is a need to build community expertise and resilience in their interactions with technology. We need to ensure that community-driven AI initiatives are not co-opted by Big Tech. Toolkits, collective strategies, and solidarity-based practices are needed to enable communities to assert ownership, refuse harmful technological systems, and reimagine cultural production as a collective rather than individual endeavor.¹³
- Proactive standard-setting processes that are inclusive and representative are needed in order to prevent norms and power structures from being entrenched in emerging technologies. Knowledge extraction and displacement—through urbanization, digitization, and AI systems—erode the collective memory and cultural continuity of indigenous communities.

⁹ At COP 16, Colombia (November 2024), the 196 governments under the Convention on Biological Diversity established Cali Fund as the financial arm of Multilateral Mechanism for the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits from the Use of Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources that was established at Biodiversity COP15 in 2022 and operationalized through COP16 Decision

16/2 in 2024. Cali fund is intended to “receive payments from businesses and institutions that rely on digital sequence information and distribute these funds to developing countries and those with economies in transition, as well as indigenous peoples and local communities in both developing and, where appropriate, developed countries.” See, Guide to the Cali Fund: <https://www.cbd.int/califund>

¹⁰ Input from KM Gopakumar, Third World Network.

¹¹ Input from Sundar Athreya H, KIIT Law School.

¹² Input from Valentine Goddard, AI Impact Alliance.

¹³ Input from Baarish A, Tattle.

Governance frameworks must remain grounded in lived community realities, rather than reduce people and their knowledge systems to abstract inputs within a cyclical economic model.¹⁴

- IP protections are being used by Big Tech actors to shield AI systems from public scrutiny and transparency mandates. This undermines the ability of creators and communities to understand or opt out of how their cultural materials are used.¹⁵
- For AI innovation, governance mechanisms rooted in collective rights are important since individual rights structures are inadequate to address collective harms.¹⁶

Key Takeaways from Round 2:

- AI does not just copy and reuse creative work; it encloses the creative and knowledge commons in a manner that leads to labor displacement and socio-economic inequalities. The moral rights dimension of copyright law and access and benefit-sharing regimes can play some role in protecting artists and living knowledge systems in the immediate term. But such frameworks for compensation fail to address the fundamental problem of the erosion of the publicness of innovation in AI extractivism.
- Currently, the IP regime glosses over the incremental and collective nature of knowledge production. It is, oftentimes, a tool for Big Tech to lock up critical data sets, proprietary algorithms, and infrastructural knowledge. This entrenches monopolistic control over AI development, creating high entry barriers for small actors and innovators, particularly from the Global South. There is thus a need to reconfigure the balance between proprietary rights on the one hand and transparency, accountability, and public interest on the other.
- A comprehensive solution to AI extractivism needs a starting point that is different from the individualistic and proprietarian moorings of Intellectual Property regimes.

2.3 Legal-policy pathways to enrich the data and AI commons

This round reflected on strategies for enriching the data and AI commons beyond the IP regime, moving emerging debates in IP reform and other legal-policy pathways towards public AI futures.

Ramya Chandrasekhar | French National Centre for Scientific Research

Generative AI systems are fundamentally public in nature because they rely on the commons for their development – drawing from the digital public domain, openly licensed materials, and other publicly available knowledge.

At the same time, the commons is essential not only for AI innovation but for human flourishing, and should be understood not merely as an economic resource but as a system of communal production sustained by webs of social relations, material infrastructure, and labor. Enriching the commons, therefore, should go beyond compensation for the reuse of creative work and informational resources.

¹⁴ Input from Nina Sangma, International Land Coalition.

¹⁵ Input from Laura Mantilla-León, Derechos Digitales.

¹⁶ Input from Pam Dixon, World Privacy Forum.

Hence, rather than using IP regimes to enclose knowledge, it is important to explore licensing contracts and social agreements to redistribute value back to the communities that sustain the commons. Equitable or community-driven licensing frameworks such as the *Nwulite Obodo Open Data License* for sharing African datasets are a useful exemplar. The focus should be on ensuring meaningful remuneration and public support for the commons, while resisting expanded intellectual property regimes that deepen enclosure.

Paul Keller | Open Future Foundation

Generative AI technology must be approached as a public technology infrastructure, as it mediates the socio-technical process of how humans access, interpret, and consume information. Yet it is increasingly being enclosed and commodified by a small number of commercial actors, leading to centralized control over information flows. To preserve its public character, we require investment in AI infrastructures that are placed under public control (not necessarily state control), drawing upon parallels from historical models such as public broadcasting.

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IP frameworks are ill-suited to steer the development of AI and to redistribute the value that it creates back to the commons. They narrowly focus on the training stage, where value is diffuse and hard to attribute due to widely distributed inputs. Therefore, instead of a consent-based approach at the training stage, mechanisms such as levies or taxes are required at the deployment stage to redistribute value back to creators and to support the development of public AI infrastructures. Without this, society risks becoming fully dependent on commercial actors who shape and control AI systems.

Swaraj Paul Barooah | SpicyIP

Today’s power brokers prioritize efficient commodification, and unless this reality is confronted, efforts to challenge the concentration of market power in digital innovation cannot take off. We need to tackle value extraction – the commodification of the knowledge commons and their enclosure by a few large players, along with addressing the question of public value creation.

Public value creation is about furthering innovation cultures for human flourishing, democratic participation, and social capabilities. It is important to articulate and measure public and cultural value in order to defend and strengthen the commons and the public sphere against fragmentation and centralized informational control. Towards realizing this, the state needs to take on a proactive role in not just shaping technological progress, but also actively promoting cultural production and enriching the cultural corpus of the country.

The open discussion added other interesting dimensions to the issue at hand:

- Even if AI companies compensate creators through copyright or contractual payments, this does not solve the deeper problem of competitive exclusion and long-term displacement of artists and creators.

As AI extracts value from embedded meta-information rather than direct copying, new support mechanisms are needed. Nepal's folk culture protection model, where mandatory fees collected from users fund the broader development of cultural traditions instead of compensating individual artists, is a useful case study.¹⁷

- Discussions about cultural production often overlook the demand side. Demand for cultural content is shaped by cultural tastes developed over decades, not by accident. To meaningfully shift the trajectory of AI-driven cultural production, we must engage with how tastes are formed and transformed over time, rather than focusing solely on supply and production mechanisms.¹⁸
- It is important to be cautious in what we are calling for in the expansion of the public domain. There is some tension between bringing knowledge into the public domain and collective cultural rights. For instance, indigenous communities do not consider their knowledge and culture as part of the public domain, as it is dynamic and collectively held rather than being freely available.¹⁹
- AI innovation also calls for a re-examination of patent regimes. For example, in biotech, as AI lowers innovation costs, the justification for patent monopolies weakens, creating an opportunity for reform.²⁰ Section 3(k) of the Indian Patents Act, 1970, excludes computer programs per se from patentability. However, in practice, this exclusion has been very narrow and it is a challenge to keep software in the public domain. We need to strengthen these provisions and also examine how competition law and policy are also important instruments in addressing data and AI enclosures.²¹
- The increasing use of synthetic data and autonomous AI agents that generate and exchange information opens up new questions and complicates the rights discourse.²² Data- and digital literacy are important to ensure that open access to knowledge is meaningful and accessible. Participatory AI design processes that foster dialogue between companies, communities, and creators are essential. Similarly, the labor rights that tend to be absent from current IP and AI policy debates must be brought to the center, especially given the precarious conditions of labor in the AI paradigm.²³
- Current debates on AI and IP risk becoming insular and disconnected from the communities they aim to support, and this gap should be bridged to ensure justice for impacted communities.²⁴
- Many generative AI systems are violent, which potentially explains women's massive underuse of such systems. Gendered cultural erasure is a risk that we need to address, and artists, cultural organizations, and especially women creators, must have meaningful representation in shaping AI systems to correct systemic imbalances.²⁵

¹⁷ Input from Akshat Agarwal, AASA Chambers

¹⁸ Input from Mila Samdub, AI Now Institute.

¹⁹ Input from KM Gopakumar, Third World Network.

²⁰ Input from KM Gopakumar, Third World Network.

²¹ Input from Swaraj Paul Barooah, SpicyIP.

²² Input from Dhanaraj Thakur, Emerging Technology Initiative-Multiracial Democracy Project, George Washington University.

²³ Input from Laura Mantilla-León, Derechos Digitales.

²⁴ Input from Nina Sangma, International Land Coalition.

²⁵ Input from Valentine Goddard, AI Impact Alliance.

- Power asymmetries persist in AI platform ecosystems just as they did under traditional copyright regimes. Artists remain structurally disadvantaged at the bottom of the value chain, suggesting that without structural change, AI will simply reproduce existing inequities.²⁶
- Individualistic compensation models such as through data exchanges and data marketplaces, may not be viable. We need alternative frameworks for building the AI commons – leveraging large public datasets for non-commercial, public-interest research, moving beyond market-based approaches to value distribution.²⁷
- A degrowth approach to technological progress is necessary, as opposed to Silicon Valley's 'move fast and break things' approach. Slower innovation will create space for labor rights, community participation, and democratic oversight. This requires an industrial policy approach that complements a robust governance framework for safeguarding the publicness of the cultural commons.²⁸

Key Takeaways from Round 3:

- AI systems must be governed as public technology infrastructures as their development is predicated on the societal knowledge commons that should not be monopolized by a few private actors. Shaping AI innovation trajectories for public value is not just about building compensation frameworks for training data. It is about ensuring that the public domain is not vitiated. This requires boundary-setting processes attentive to two aspects. First, determining the terms on which the knowledge commons may be datafied, in consultation with the concerned source communities, with a right to opt out. Second, ensuring mechanisms for distributing innovation dividends that are able to go beyond the narrow frame of compensation to creators and to sustain the necessary conditions for creativity and cultural production. For example, licensing fee mechanisms that pool mandatory fees from actors using the knowledge commons for private innovation, and societal schemes to encourage the free development of culture (scholarships for artists, establishment of cultural institutions etc).
- The state should play a proactive role in the promotion of cultural production and the safeguarding of knowledge and cultural commons, while actively steering AI development towards the creation of public value rather than narrow commercial gain.

²⁶ Input from Sundar Athreya H, KIIT Law School.

²⁷ Input from Abhineet Nayyar, IT for Change.

²⁸ Input from Swaraj Paul Barooah, SpicyIP.