Name: _____   Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Ethics for Digital Projects & Research

Institutional Ethics

CUNY HRPP or IRB review is required when ALL of the criteria below are met:
>The investigator is conducting research or clinical investigation;
>The proposed research or clinical investigation involves human subjects; AND
>CUNY is engaged in the research or clinical investigation involving human subjects.

Will you apply for HRPP or IRB approval?   YES   or   NO   or   TBD

Ethics Beyond Compliance

For each activity, think about the digital project or research you are /will be working on.

Activity 1. Thinking through ethics beyond compliance

1. Describe in 2-3 sentences to a non-expert audience the design of your project.
   a. What human labor is required to do it?
   b. Do you need to collect data? From where or who?
   c. Would there be any consequences if someone else got a hold of that data?

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2. Next, describe in 2-3 sentences to a non-expert audience the purpose of your project.
   a. It a tool that will organize data?
   b. Will it produce new knowledge?
   c. Who can access it?

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Name: _____   Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Activity 2. Thinking through level of impact #1

    a. Does your project collect data from human subjects? Or digital information that may be an extension of the self?

    b. Do you plan to conduct informed consent with such human subjects?

    c. Would it be harmful if others could access this data? If yes, do you have a plan in place to anonymize and/or further protect the data, including on cloud and other data storage platforms? Are the benefits worth the risk - for who, respectively?

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Activity 3. Thinking through level of impact #2

1. What is an example of a category or boundary you have to establish when making a dataset, algorithm, or map?

    a. Are you basing the categor(y/ies) or boundar(y/ies) you use off already established ones? Established by who? Where?

    b. If you are establishing your own categor(y/ies) or boundar(y/ies), what decisions did or do you have to make?

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2. What may be some of the possible social, political or economic effects of creating or re-creating these categories or boundaries?

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Name: _____   Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Activity 4. Thinking through level of impact #3

    a. Whose labor and what materials do you rely upon to do your work?
    b. Could your research or project be used to justify or facilitate potentially harmful control or surveillance - by e.g. the state, a vigilante group, an abusive partner?
    c. How could your work cause changes to or justify social, economic or political discourses?
    d. Will your work be used for profit, for who?

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Activity 5. Thinking through the range of impact

    a. Who will be able to access your research or project?
    b. Where will it be accessible?
    c. Will it cost money to access?
    d. Will it be accessible in different languages?
    e. Will it be accessible to the visually, hearing or otherwise physically impaired?

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Additional notes:

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