

MD4SG

Mechanism Design for Social Good

NEWSLETTER #6

FALL SEMESTER 2023

MD4SG

Mechanism Design for Social Good

Dear MD4SG/EAAMO Community,

We are thrilled to present a recap of the highlights from the recent semester. Let's begin by providing a snapshot of the third annual ACM Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization (EAAMO '23). Beyond EAAMO, our community has remained vibrant with a plethora of activities, including socials, dynamic working groups, colloquium talks, and various initiatives dedicated to enhancing equity and access to opportunities.

The Community Engagement team has been active in organizing in-person social events at various conferences. Additionally, the Conversation with Practitioners Working Group has contributed impactful articles on Medium.

MD4SG is committed to advancing equality, fostering diversity and inclusion, and cultivating collaboration and responsible human-centered research. Our organized events, spanning virtual socials, colloquium talks, and conferences, serve as platforms that bring together researchers and practitioners from diverse disciplines. These gatherings provide invaluable opportunities for discussions on shaping and achieving our community's shared goals.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your consistent efforts, engagement, and support, without which none of these activities would be possible. Thank you for being an integral part of MD4SG.

Warm regards,
MD4SG/EAAMO Organizers

EVENTS

ACM Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization (EAAMO '23)

The ACM Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization (EAAMO '23) was held from **October 30 to November 1, 2023, at Boston University in Boston, MA, USA**. This marked the third occurrence of the EAAMO conference series, following the initial in-person gathering at George Mason University for EAAMO '22 and the virtual launch during EAAMO '21.

The conference program showcased contributions spanning the research-to-practice pipeline, with a focus on enhancing access to opportunities for historically underserved and disadvantaged communities. Additionally, it aimed to address issues related to inequitable and unsafe outcomes by drawing on insights from the social sciences and humanistic studies.

Program Chairs:

Vahideh Manshadi, Yale University

Celestine Mendler-Dünner, Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems

Elissa Redmiles, Georgetown University

Maria Rodriguez, University at Buffalo

General Chairs:

Abraham Flaxman, University of Washington

Saiph Savage, Northeastern University

Adam Smith, Boston University



EAAMO '23

The conference drew around **300 participants**, showcasing a rich mix of in-person and virtual engagement. A notable **215 attendees gathered on-site**, representing over 12 countries, while an additional **90 joined virtually** from 21 nations. Impressively, the event saw a robust presence of student participants, with around 120 students presenting their work in person and an additional 70 participating via Zoom.

Adding to the conference's success was the commendable gender diversity, with approximately 52% of participants identifying as female, 44% as male, and 1.5% as non-binary.

EAAMO'23 featured a diverse range of participants. The conference proudly welcomed individuals from various demographics, with a significant representation from LatinX, Black, Middle Eastern, North African, and indigenous backgrounds. This diverse blend of racial identities not only enriched the conference but also fostered an atmosphere of inclusivity, unity, and diversity, contributing to the overall vibrancy of the event.



EAAMO '23

We are excited about the papers sent to EAAMO '23 with **177 submissions from authors in over 15 countries**. Spanning diverse fields like research, policymaking, and expertise, these contributions share a common commitment to improving equity in areas such as education, labor, environment, healthcare, algorithmic fairness, and digital platforms. The conference's interdisciplinary nature attracted a diverse group of participants from computer science, operations research, economics, public policy, and the humanities. Many papers showcased a fusion of methodologies and insights from various domains, reflecting the conference's holistic approach. A big thanks goes to the dedication of 80 reviewers and 20 area chairs who ensured a high-quality review process.

We selected **30 papers for oral presentations**, and an additional **58 for the poster session**. Papers selected for oral presentations are available in the third volume of the Proceedings of EAAMO '23: Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization published by the ACM.

The conference provided many opportunities for interdisciplinary conversation and connections between researchers and practitioners. The program was very diverse, including three keynote speakers and a panel discussion *From Theory to Practice: Exploring Academia-Adjacent Partnerships for Change in Mexico*.

The conference-related social events, poster sessions, doctoral consortium, and faculty network helped scholars to meet their peers and connect for further research.



EAAMO '23

We would like to highlight our keynote talks and the panel session, all of which raised meaningful discussions.

Professor Ridhi Kashyap, Professor of Demography and Computational Social Science at the University of Oxford, delved into the profound implications of the digital revolution, particularly the widespread use of the internet and mobile phones in achieving gender equality. Ridhi addressed questions surrounding the impact of digital technologies on women's empowerment in low- and middle-income countries, exploring gender gaps in the adoption of internet and mobile technologies across the globe.

Yeukai Chideya, a clinical social worker and Founder of the Ruremekedzo Project, shed light on the challenges faced by asylum seekers and refugees in South Africa and advocate for the collaborative use of technology to alleviate their suffering and restore dignity.

Mayank Varia, an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Computing & Data Sciences at Boston University, delved into the promise of cryptography in making data science more accessible, enabling collaborative data pooling for socially beneficial analyses. More specifically, the talk showcased the design of equitable and scalable systems for cryptographically protected data science, with practical applications ranging from measuring gender and racial wage gaps in Boston to facilitating privacy-respecting matches for survivors of sexual assault.



RIDHI KASHYAP



YEUKAI CHIDEYA



MAYANK VARIA



EAAMO '23

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our generous sponsors for their support and commitment to EAAMO'23. The conference is legally and financially sponsored by ACM Special Interest Groups on Artificial Intelligence ([ACM SIGAI](#)) and on Economics and Computation ([ACM SIGecom](#)) for sponsoring the conference for the third year in a row. In addition, a special thanks goes to [University of California, Berkeley](#), [Boston University](#), [Rafik B. Hariri Institute for Computing and Computational Science & Engineering](#), [Artificial Intelligence Journal](#), [Schmidt Futures Foundation](#), Public Interest Technology University Network ([PIT-UN](#)), U.S. Consular Services and in particular the U.S. Embassy in CDMX, and the Government of Mexico. Their support has been essential in allocating funds to under-represented groups for participating in the conference. Our funders' support has been used for travel grants for students, registration fee waivers, and speaker honoraria, which has contributed to a diverse and multi-disciplinary program.



Rafik B. Hariri Institute for Computing
and Computational Science & Engineering



PIT CASES



GOBIERNO DE
MÉXICO



EAAMO '23



We are thrilled to share the following awards given at EAAMO '23:

The Best Paper award winners are:

- "Equal Pay for Similar Work" authored by Diego Gentile, Fuhito Kojima, and Bobby Pakzad-Hurson.

Best Student Paper Award:

- "30 Million Canvas Records Reveal Widespread Sequential Bias and System-design Induced Surname Initial Disparity in Grading" authored by Jiaxin Pei, Zhihan Wang, and Jun Li.

New Horizons Award:

- "Common Voice and Accent Choice" authored by Kathy Reid and Elizabeth T. Williams.

New Horizons Honorable Mention:

- "A Critique of the 2021 National Institute of Justice Recidivism Forecasting Challenge" authored by Tobi Jegede, Marissa Gerchick, Amreeta Mathai, and Aaron Horowitz.

Theory Track Paper Award:

- "Design on Matroids: Diversity vs. Meritocracy" by Isa Hafalir, Fuhito Kojima, M. Bumin Yenmez, and Koji Yokote.

AI Track Paper Award:

- "Setting the Right Expectations: Algorithmic Recourse Over Time" authored by Joao Fonesca, Andrew Bell, Carlo Abrate, Francesco Bonchi, and Julia Stoyanovich.

The Area Chairs of each track were previously asked to combine rankings of papers within each track. The papers with the top review scores from each track were collected, re-ranked, and voted upon with additional considerations.

EAAMO '23

The success of the EAAMO '23 conference relies on the contributions of many individuals and organizations. The biggest thanks goes to all the authors who submitted work to the conference. We thank our organizers, listed below:

Program Co-Chairs:

- Vahideh Manshadi, Yale University
- Celestine Mendler-Dünner, Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems
- Elissa Redmiles, Georgetown University
- Maria Rodriguez, University at Buffalo

General Chairs:

- Abraham Flaxman, University of Washington
- Saiph Savage, Northeastern University
- Adam Smith, Boston University

Executive Committee:

- Rediet Abebe, Harvard Society of Fellows
- Kira Goldner, Boston University
- Maximilian Kasy, University of Oxford
- Jon Kleinberg, Cornell University
- Illenin Kondo, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis
- Sera Linardi, University of Pittsburgh
- Irene Lo, Stanford University
- George Obaido, University of California Berkeley
- Araba Sey, University of Washington Information School
- Ana-Andreea Stoica, Max Planck Institute for Intelligent Systems



EAAMO '23

A big thanks goes to the dedication of 80 reviewers and 20 area chairs who ensured a high-quality review process.

Area Chairs

- Michael Best, Columbia University
- Caterina Calsamiglia, CEMFI
- Krishna Dasaratha, Harvard University
- John Dickerson, University of Maryland
- Nina Grgic-Hlaca, Max Planck Institute for Software Systems (MPI-SWS)
- Yoan Hermstrüwer, University of Zurich
- Christoph Kern, LMU Munich
- Smitha Milli, University of California, Berkeley
- Faidra Monachou, Yale University
- Bobby Pakzad-Hurson, Brown University
- Elisabeth Paulson, Harvard University
- Manish Raghavan, MIT
- Sekou Remy, IBM
- Alex Teytelboym, University of Oxford
- Dhanaraj Thakur, Center for Democracy & Technology
- Mamello Thinyane, United Nations University institute on Computing and Society
- Nick Vincent, Northwestern University
- Ingmar Weber, Saarland University
- Lirong Xia, RPI
- Can Zhang, Duke University
- Juba Ziani, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Miri Zilka, University of Cambridge



EAAMO '23

A huge thanks goes to the people behind the scenes who made EAAMO '23 joyful for everyone.

Doctoral Symposium co-chairs

- Miri Zilka, University of Cambridge
- Juba Ziani, Georgia Institute of Technology

Travel grants and registration co-chairs

- Chinasa Okolo, Cornell University
- Sandro Radovanovic, University of Belgrade

Poster co-chairs

- Matheus Venturyne, Harvard University
- Paula Rodriguez, Harvard University

Fundraising chair

- Francisco Marmolejo-Cossio, Harvard University

Social co-chairs

- Jessie Finocchiaro, Harvard University
- Lily Xu, Harvard University

Social media co-chairs

- Raysa Benatti, University of Campinas
- Mir Masood Ali, University of Illinois Chicago
- Alex DiChristofano, Washington University in St. Louis
- Rhea Tibrewala, Refeyn

Accessibility chair

- Sara Kingsley, Carnegie Mellon University

Proceedings co-chairs

- Gourab Patro, IIT Kharagpur
- Felipe Verastegui-Grunewald, Columbia University

Treasurer

- Federico Bobbio, Université de Montréal

Operations chair

- George Obaido, University of California, Berkeley

Local Student chair

- Bhushan Suwal, Boston University



MD4SG HIGHLIGHTS

SELECTED PROJECT

REDNACECYT-MD4SG 2023 SUMMER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM



The Summer of Science Program is dedicated to **empowering female students from indigenous communities in Mexico**, supporting them as they conceive and implement research projects aimed at enhancing their localities. Applicants, enrolled at various postgraduate education levels, created proposals employing techniques from algorithms, optimization, and mechanism design, combined with insights from the social sciences and humanistic studies to address pertinent issues within their communities. Applicants collaborated with mentors from MD4SG throughout the summer, culminating in a poster presentation at the ACM Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization (EAAMO).

In the prior iteration, the "COPOCYT-MD4SG Summer of Science" welcomed eight female indigenous students from the Huasteca region of San Luis Potosí, Mexico. These students, hailing from Tének and Nahuatl-speaking communities, presented posters at EAAMO '22, hosted by George Mason University in the United States. Their diverse projects focused on preserving indigenous language and culture, addressing affordable housing, and ensuring equitable access to healthcare for indigenous communities.

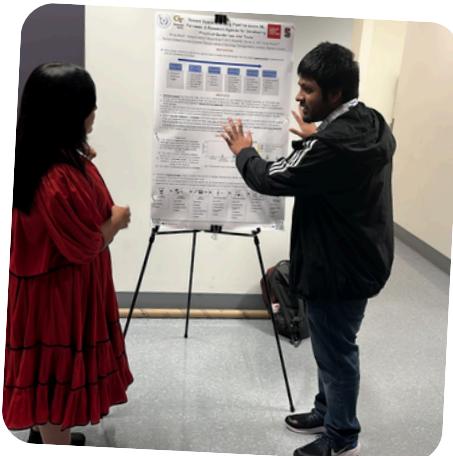
This year's program, a collaborative effort between the MD4SG research initiative and the National Network of Councils and State Organizations of Science and Technology (REDNACECYT), proudly accepted **20 female students from various Mexican states, representing 11 indigenous communities**. The proposed projects span a wide range of topics, including collective decision-making, cultural preservation, healthcare and housing equity, and environmental policy perceptions within local indigenous communities.



SELECTED PROJECT

REDNACECYT-MD4SG 2023

SUMMER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM



SELECTED PROJECT

REDNACECYT-MD4SG 2023

SUMMER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM



Francisco Marmolejo-Cossío, a postdoctoral researcher at Harvard and MD4SG Organizer, co-founded the Summer of Science program in collaboration with MD4SG and the National Network of Councils and State Organizations of Science and Technology in Mexico. The program aims to connect Spanish-speaking MD4SG members with Indigenous female student researchers from Mexico to work on projects addressing community challenges. The program emphasizes a two-way exchange of knowledge between the researchers and community members.

"WHAT'S ALWAYS RESONATED WITH ME IS THE EXPRESS VALUE MD4SG AND EAAMO PLACE ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT PEOPLE FROM IMPACTED COMMUNITIES CAN HAVE ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS."

"IT WAS A TWO-WAY EXCHANGE: WE COULD TEACH THEM THE TECHNOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES OF THEIR PROPOSALS, WHILE ALSO LEARNING FROM THEM THE CONSTRAINTS THEY FACE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES."

[Article](#)





MD4SG

COMMUNITY BUILDING

SOCIAL EVENTS

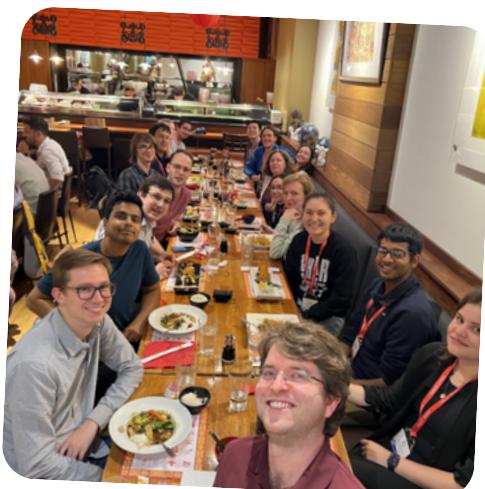
We're excited to share some highlights from our recent activities organized by the MD4SG Community Engagement team. Our team is dedicated to fostering meaningful connections and discussions within our diverse community, which is exemplified in our recent meetup that attracted a global audience, bringing together participants from the United States, Europe, and Asia.

In the past, MD4SG introduced the Mentorship Program, creating opportunities for both junior and senior members to engage in enriching collaborations. Additionally, the team organized engaging online movie sessions, offering a fun and relaxed way for our global community to connect beyond academic discussions.

MD4SG @FAcCT '23

The ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAcT) in Chicago from June 12 to June 15, 2023, amid growing public awareness of AI challenges, specifically focused on the implications of new computational tools on human rights, democracy, equality, and inclusion. During the conference, the MD4SG community organized an informal meeting, offering attendees an opportunity to discuss papers, exchange ideas, and enjoy a communal dinner. This relaxed setting facilitated valuable connections and collaborations among MD4SG community members.

A big thanks to Corinna Hertweck, Thomas Gilbert, and Shubham Singh for making this meeting happen!



SOCIAL EVENTS

MD4SG @EC '23

The ACM Conference on Economics and Computation (EC '23) was a highly anticipated event that unfolded from July 9 to July 12, 2023, at the King's College London. This gathering brought together a multitude of experts and enthusiasts – and among them members of the MD4SG community. They engaged in dynamic discussions that spanned a wide range of topics pertaining to the intersection of economics and computation methods. Please take a look at the papers that were co-authored by MD4SG members.

Blockchain Mediated Persuasion, Kimon Drakopoulos (USC); Irene Lo (Stanford University); Justin Mulvany (USC)

Welfare-Maximizing Pooled Testing, Simon Finster (CREST-ENSAE); Michelle González Amador (UNU-MERIT & Maastricht University); Edwin Lock (University of Oxford); Francisco Marmolejo Cossio (Harvard University); Evi Micha (University of Toronto); Ariel Procaccia (Harvard University)

Leveraging Reviews: Learning to Price with Buyer and Seller Uncertainty, Wenshuo Guo (UC Berkeley); Nika Haghtalab (UC Berkeley); Kirthevasan Kandasamy (UW Madison); Ellen Vitercik (Stanford University)

Capacity Planning in Stable Matching: An Application to School Choice, Federico Bobbio (University of Montreal); Margarida Carvalho (University of Montreal); Andrea Lodi (Jacobs Technion-Cornell Institute, Cornell Tech); Ignacio Rios (The University of Texas at Dallas); Alfredo Torrico (Polytechnique Montreal)

In Defense of Liquid Democracy, Daniel Halpern (Harvard University); Joseph Halpern (Cornell University); Ali Jadbabaie (MIT); Elchanan Mossel (MIT); Ariel Procaccia (Harvard University); Manon Revel (MIT, Harvard University)

A special congratulations goes to Paul Götz, our Civic Participation working group organizer, whose dissertation entitled “Social Choice for Social Good: Proposals for Democratic Innovation from Computer Science” got an honorable mention.



SOCIAL EVENTS

MD4SG @EC '23



MD4SG @INFORMS '23



MD4SG SELECTED READINGS AND VIDEOS



MD4SG COLLOQUIUM TALKS



KAREN MACOURS

CHAIRED PROFESSOR, PARIS SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

MEASURING THE LONG-RUN IMPACT OF CASH TRANSFERS

Cash transfer programs are the prime example of a social innovation that has scaled rapidly across the globe. Such programs often have multiple objectives, from providing short-term safety nets to the long-term ambition of breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty. A lot of empirical evidence has been accumulated on the short term goals. 25 years after the start of the first national programs in Mexico and Brazil, we can also start taking stock of the long-term objectives. This presentation will first discuss the methodological challenges for studying long-term returns, focusing on common pitfalls and potential solutions. It will then lay out a framework to consider the different pathways and mechanisms towards long-term returns to clarify the type of outcomes and contextual variables to measure both on the intermediate and long run. Given the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the theory-of-change for long-term impacts, we then draw lessons from different studies, following the framework. We first highlight the evidence on long-term returns to conditional cash transfers (CCTs) that operate through returns on investments in education and skills. A lot of this evidence draws on the first generation of CCTs in Latin America, but we also link to the emerging evidence from other regions. We then turn to evidence on unconditional cash transfers (UCTs), which is particularly prominent for Sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on a wider set of investments and behavioral changes with evidence on impacts years after the end of the transfers.

[YouTube link](#)



MD4SG COLLOQUIUM TALKS



JOSHUA BLUMENSTOCK

CHANCELLOR'S ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UC BERKELEY

APPLICATIONS OF MACHINE LEARNING TO THE TARGETING OF HUMANITARIAN AID

Targeting is a central challenge in the design of humanitarian programs: given available data, how does one identify the individuals and households with the greatest need for assistance? Here we show that machine learning, applied to non-traditional data from satellites and mobile phones, can improve the targeting of anti-poverty programs. Our analysis is based on data from three field-based projects—in Togo, Afghanistan, and Kenya—that illustrate the promise, as well as some of the potential challenges, of this new approach to targeting. Collectively, the results highlight the potential for new data sources to improve humanitarian response efforts, particularly in crisis settings when traditional data are missing or out of date.

[YouTube link](#)



INTERVIEW WITH VERITY FIRTH



HON. PROF. VERITY FIRTH, AM

The MD4SG Conversations with Practitioners working group had the pleasure of interviewing The Hon. Prof. Verity Firth, AM, in collaboration with the Australian Education Markets (AusEM) academic network. In the interview, Prof. Firth shared her perspective on the Australian education system, drawing from her experience as the New South Wales Minister for Education and Training, a role she held from 2008 to 2011.

One of the most significant challenges in the Australian education system is segregation. Public secondary schools in Australia typically operate on a "catchment area" basis, where students are assigned to schools based on their place of residence. This approach differs from many other countries that employ "school choice" systems, where students can apply to schools across a broader district and beyond.

The reliance on school catchment areas in the Australian public secondary school system has resulted in segregation by socio-economic status.

Furthermore, the Australian funding model has led to the "residualisation" of public schooling. Schools in Australia are generally classified into three categories: public, private, and religious. Private schools tend to be wealthier, which is primarily due to Australia's distinctive government funding system. Despite the fact that private schools are only open to fee-paying students, they receive funding from the government, along with public schools.

[Read the article](#)



INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN KALUNGU



STEPHEN KALUNGU

Stephen Kalungu is the Country Director of GiveDirectly's Kenya office, a non-profit organization that distributes cash grants to impoverished and vulnerable households globally. With his previous experience as a field manager, Stephen has interacted with grant beneficiaries, gaining first hand insights into their needs and challenges. Furthermore, his extensive experience managing the disbursement process from the Kenya office enables him to consider multiple perspectives when addressing the complexities involved in assisting those in need.

In this interview, Stephen addresses the challenges of scaling aid programs, targeting beneficiaries, and the difficulties of implementing seemingly simple processes in the field.

Stephen notes that GiveDirectly has funds that can be used for any purpose and donor-restricted funds designated for specific uses. Although GiveDirectly provides unconditional cash transfers, certain aspects of their program can be customized to suit the needs of a particular project or funder. Stephen explains that scaling can be an issue, with the fundamental question always being about the who-why-where.

In addition to funding, infrastructure poses another challenge to scaling. GiveDirectly transfers cash using digital payments, such as mobile money transfers. However, some areas lack the financial infrastructure necessary for beneficiaries to receive digital payments and spend their transfers. Also, Stephen highlights how programs that appear straightforward when designed at the head office may be impractical to implement in the field.

[Read the article](#)



INTERVIEW WITH DAMINI SATIJA



Damini Satija, the Head of the Algorithmic Accountability Lab and Deputy Director of Amnesty Tech, centers her work on the intersection of human rights, public policy, and data/AI. The lab is dedicated to investigating the implications of digitization and automation on marginalized groups, particularly in response to the increasing use of algorithmic systems in welfare provision. Their work spans research, advocacy, campaigning, and litigation, with a team of multidisciplinary experts.

In its initial phase, the lab concentrates on the EU and advocates for the AI Act, anticipating it to set global standards, despite recognizing its Eurocentric nature. The lab emphasizes adaptable advocacy and priority areas like biometric surveillance and migrant rights. The second phase broadens the scope globally, examining case studies with a critical and decolonial approach. The lab aligns their research with advocacy, ensuring actionable insights.

Collaboration is integral to their work, recognizing the significance of lived experiences. The lab seeks partnerships for regional expertise and emphasizes listening to affected communities. Damini's leadership faces the challenge of prioritizing amid a vast mandate and aligning interdisciplinary team perspectives. Her advice urges researchers to consider historical contexts, viewing algorithmic systems as a continuation of past technological developments and advocating for red lines based on human rights and social justice.

[Read the article](#)





MD4SG

ORGANIZERS

ORGANIZERS



CHARLES CUI



FRANCISCO
MARMOLEJO COSSÍO



GEORGE OBAIDO



MATTHEW OLCKERS



ANA-ANDREEA
STOICA



LILY XU

MD4SG INITIATIVE-WIDE LEADERS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



JESSICA FINOCCHIARO

WORKING GROUPS



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SINGH



BHUSHAN
SUWAL

FACULTY NETWORK



NIKHIL GARG



FAIDRA
MONACHOU



MD4SG LEADERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP & WEBSITE



KEHINDE
ARULEBA



SRITEJ
ATTALURI

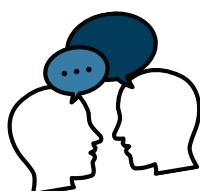


GUSTAVO
DIAS



JUDE
IMUEDE

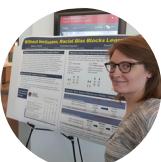
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



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D'CHRISTOFANO



SANDRO
RADOVANOVIĆ



RHEA
TIBREWALA



WORKING GROUPS

For better or worse, government policy impacts most large-scale social problems. Because of this, the decision-making processes inside our democratic institutions are crucial: good processes offer paths for effecting positive social change, whereas bad processes may encourage changes that harm parts of the population. Many recent examples show that existing institutions fail to be responsive to needed change or to protect minority rights. Because of this, there is an urgent need to investigate modifications and additions to democratic processes that could improve their performance. Additionally, there is recent concern about the stability of democratic institutions worldwide, and preserving these institutions may require democratic reform. The MD4SG Civic Participation Working Group brings together researchers who are passionate about exploring ways to deepen democracies. Crucially, our group connects mathematical views on these questions with perspectives from social science and practical experience.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION

ORGANIZERS



PAUL GÖLZ



MANON REVEL

CONVERSATIONS WITH PRACTITIONERS

ORGANIZERS



KRISTEN
SCOTT



WENDY XU

The MD4SG community aims to bridge research and practice, but many researchers have few opportunities to connect with practitioners. The aim of the Conversations with Practitioners Working Group is to learn from practitioners. We want to know their stories, understand their main challenges, and discover if tools from mechanism design apply to their domains. For our purposes, we define a practitioner as any person who works with (or on policy related to) marginalized and disadvantaged communities.



WORKING GROUPS

DEVELOPMENT

The MD4SG Development Working Group fosters collaboration and discussion among practitioners and academics to understand and tackle issues pertaining to the role and application of technology in addressing challenges in emerging nations and under-resourced settings. We study how techniques from algorithm and mechanism design, computational social science, and optimization can inform and help advance existing development policies and practices.

ORGANIZERS



CYNTHIA
HABONIMANA



ILLENNIN KONDO

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

ORGANIZERS



ANDREW
ROBERTS



MATTHEW
VON ALLMEN

The MD4SG Environment and Climate Working Group aims to address environmental challenges, particularly those that exacerbate the climate crisis, through computational and economic lenses. We are a diverse group of researchers from a variety of academic disciplines and geographic locations.



WORKING GROUPS

INEQUALITY

ORGANIZERS



MERYEM
ESSAIDI



SAMUEL
TAGGART

The MD4SG Inequality Working Group studies how optimization, incentive design, and machine learning can mitigate or magnify social and economic inequality. We are especially focused on the provision and targeting of social programs: When and how should resources be directed specifically to the most vulnerable members of the population? How should these individuals be selected?

The MD4SG Algorithms, Law, and Policy Working Group focuses on the complex relationship between algorithms and mechanisms on the one hand and law and policy on the other hand. Some of the topics the group will work on include, but are not limited to, free speech, content moderation, antitrust, the use of “black box” machine learning models, data-driven algorithms, and decision-support tools.

ALGORITHMS, LAW, AND POLICY

ORGANIZERS



THOMAS GILBERT



AYSE
GIZEM YASAR



MD4SG WORKING GROUPS SURVEY

Thank you for your commitment to and engagement in our working groups. Your contributions are crucial to advancing our mission to help improve access to opportunity. To better meet your needs, we value your anonymous feedback on how we can improve and enhance the effectiveness of the groups.

We understand your unique perspectives and expectations, and we want MD4SG to accommodate them. Your feedback is valuable in creating a dynamic and inclusive environment.

We genuinely appreciate your input and will carefully consider each suggestion. Our goal is to maximize the value and impact of our working groups. Thank you for being a part of MD4SG's Fall 2023 semester, and we look forward to your feedback.

[Survey](#)



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THIS
MISSION

JOIN US!

For any questions or thoughts, contact us at organizers@md4sg.com.
Share your suggestions for future colloquium speakers [here](#).

AND
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CREATED BY

*Michelle González
Arañor*

Sandro Radovanovic

