

MICHAELA B. BENK

DR. SC. | POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

📍 Zurich, Switzerland | 📧 michaela.benk@uzh.ch
linkedin.com/in/mbbenk | Google Scholar | ResearchGate | ORCID

SUMMARY

Interdisciplinary researcher with a background in Computational Linguistics and 8+ years of experience in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). Expertise and publication record in trust, transparency and explainability, with strong applied research and programming skills (Python, R). Experienced speaker and contributor at international AI forums.

EDUCATION

- 2020 - 2025 **Dr. sc. ETH Zurich** Zurich, Switzerland
Thesis: *Human-Centered Strategies for Designing and Evaluating Transparency in AI-assisted Decision Making*, supervised by Prof. Florian von Wangenheim
Selected Coursework: Experimental Social Sciences; Hacking for Social Sciences; Applied Statistics in Psychology
- 2016 - 2019 **M.A. Multilingual Textanalysis** · University of Zurich Zurich, Switzerland
Thesis: *Data Augmentation for Automated Hate Speech Detection in Low-Resource Settings*, supervised by Dr. Simon Clematide
Selected Coursework: Automatic Text Processing, Natural Language Processing, Cross-Linguistic Transfer of Lexical Semantic Representations
- 2008 - 2011 **B.A. International Communication** · Dominican University Chicago, Illinois, USA
Award: *Dean's List (grade point average of >3.8/4.0) 2008-2011*
Selected Coursework: Intercultural Communication, Organizational Communication, Comparative Politics, International Relations

EXPERIENCE

- Jan 2026 - **Postdoctoral Researcher** · Interactive Visual Data Analysis Group, Department of Informatics, University of Zurich Zurich, Switzerland
SNF-funded project on human preference elicitation for ranking-based multi-criteria decision support.
- Feb - Apr 2023 **Visiting Researcher** · School of Computing and Information Systems, University of Melbourne Melbourne, Australia
Lead project on evaluating hypothesis- and recommendation-driven decision-support systems. Supervised by Prof. Tim Miller.
- Nov 2019 - Mar 2025 **Doctoral Researcher** · Mobilier Lab for Analytics, ETH Zurich Zurich, Switzerland
Lead and managed multiple research initiatives, including doctoral projects on transparent and explainable AI, a large-scale chatbot UX design project for road assistance, and machine-learning-based stress intervention. Teaching assistance for seminar "Machine Learning, Applications and Society: Interpretability, Transparency, and Trust."

Research Assistance: Slavic Institute, University of Zurich, Switzerland (2016) |
McNeill Lab, Center for Gesture and Speech, University of Chicago, IL, USA
(2011-2012)

NON-ACADEMIC WORK EXPERIENCE

Project Associate Department of Educational Development, University of Zurich, Switzerland (2018-2019)
Coordinator, Zurich Center for Linguistics, Zurich, Switzerland (2016-2018)
Customer Relations Specialist, Dacuda AG, Zurich, Switzerland (2015-2016)
Consular Assistant, Embassy of Switzerland to the United States, Washington D.C., USA (2013-2014)
Consular Assistant, Consulate General of Switzerland to the United States, Chicago, IL, USA (2012-2013)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- 2025 Hypothesis- and Recommendation-Driven Strategies for Responsive Decision Support
BENK, M., FRÖHLICH, A., WANGENHEIM, F., MILLER, T.
Under review
- 2025 Bridging the Knowledge Gap: Understanding User Expectations for Trustworthy LLM Standards
BENK, M., WETTSTEIN, L., SCHLICKER, N., WANGENHEIM, F., SCHAROWSKI, N.
AAAI Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI 2025)
- 2024 Twenty-Four Years of Empirical Research on Trust in AI: A Bibliometric Review of Trends, Overlooked Issues, and Future Directions ([link](#))
BENK, M., KERSTAN, S., WANGENHEIM, F., FERRARIO, A.
AI & Society
- 2023 Certification Labels for Trustworthy AI: Insights From an Empirical Mixed-Method Study ([link](#))
SCHAROWSKI, N., **BENK, M.**, KÜHNE, SJ., WETTSTEIN, L., BRÜHLMANN, F
Proceedings of the 2023 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FaccT)
- 2023 Investigating Employees' Concerns and Wishes Regarding Digital Stress Management Interventions With Value Sensitive Design: Mixed Methods Study ([link](#))
KERR, J., NAEGLIN, M., **BENK, M.**, WANGENHEIM, F., MEINS, E., VIGANÒ, E., FERRARIO, A.
Journal of Medical Internet Research
- 2022 "Is It My Turn?" Assessing Teamwork and Taskwork in Collaborative Immersive Analytics ([link](#))
BENK, M., WEIBEL, R., FEUERRIEGEL, S., FERRARIO, A.
Proceedings of the 25th ACM Conference On Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (CSCW)
- 2021 The Value of Measuring Trust in AI - A Socio-Technical System Perspective ([link](#))
BENK, M., TOLMEIJER, S., WANGENHEIM, F., FERRARIO, A.
CHI 2022 Workshop on Trust and Reliance in AI-Human Teams (TRAIT)
- 2021 Creative Uses of AI Systems and their Explanations: A Case Study from Insurance ([link](#))
BENK, M., WEIBEL, R., FERRARIO, A.
CHI 2022 Workshop on Human-Centered Explainable AI (HCXAI)

INVITED TALKS

- Sep 2025* To Trust or Not To Trust: Lessons Learned from the Black Box Problem (Invited Speaker)
Supertext - Zurich Language AI meetup
- Jul 2025* AI for Human Rights: Smarter, Faster, Fairer Monitoring (Invited Expert)
AI for Good 2025 Global Summit
- Nov 2024* Transparency Challenges in Human Rights Monitoring (Invited Speaker)
GHRP Annual Conference - Expert Roundtable on Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases
- Apr 2024* Guest Lecture on Human-Centered Explainable AI in course 'KI und Ethik'
University of Basel
- Nov 2023* Welcoming Sentient AI (Panelist)
Zurich Independent Art Exhibition
- May 2023* Explainability and Trust: The Importance of the Human Factor (Panelist)
European Data Protection Supervisor IPEN event on Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI)
- Sep 2022* Data Science zum Anfassen (Invited Speaker)
Scientifica: Zurich Science Days
- Apr 2019* Monitoring Hate Speech Online (Invited Speaker)
Annual meeting of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OTHER INFORMATION

- Technical Skills*
- Languages** PYTHON, R. *Basic:* CSS, HTML, SQL
- Libraries** SCIKIT-LEARN, GENSIM. *Basic:* KERAS, PyTorch, TENSORFLOW, TRANSFORMERS (HUGGING FACE)
- Linguistic Annotation** PRAAT, ELAN
- Data Visualization** MATPLOTLIB, SEABORN, PLOTLY, BIBLIOMETRIX (R), VOSVIEWER, GEPHI
- Graphic Design** Adobe Suite (Illustrator, InDesign, Photoshop)
- Languages*
- German (native) · English (near-native) · French (fluent)
· Czech (fluent - verbal) · Italian (advanced) · Spanish (basic)

January 12, 2026