

MICHAELA B. BENK

DR. SC. | POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

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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
Research 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
Joint project on evaluating hypothesis- and recommendation-driven decision-support systems. Supervised by Prof. Tim Miller.
- Nov 2019 - Mar 2025 **Doctoral Researcher** · Mobiliar Lab for Analytics, ETH Zurich Zurich, Switzerland
Contributed to 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., SCHLICKE, 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, S.J., 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., NÄGELIN, 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) <i>Supertext - Zurich Language AI meetup</i>
Jul 2025	AI for Human Rights: Smarter, Faster, Fairer Monitoring (Invited Expert) <i>AI for Good 2025 Global Summit</i>
Nov 2024	Transparency Challenges in Human Rights Monitoring (Invited Speaker) <i>GHRP Annual Conference - Expert Roundtable on Digital Human Rights Tracking Tools and Databases</i>
Apr 2024	Guest Lecture on Human-Centered Explainable AI in course 'KI und Ethik' <i>University of Basel</i>
Nov 2023	Welcoming Sentient AI (Panelist) <i>Zurich Independent Art Exhibition</i>
May 2023	Explainability and Trust: The Importance of the Human Factor (Panelist) <i>European Data Protection Supervisor IPEN event on Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI)</i>
Sep 2022	Data Science zum Anfassen (Invited Speaker) <i>Scientifica: Zurich Science Days</i>
Apr 2019	Monitoring Hate Speech Online (Invited Speaker) <i>Annual meeting of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights</i>

OTHER INFORMATION

Technical Skills	Languages PYTHON, R. <i>Basic:</i> CSS, HTML, SQL Libraries SCIKIT-LEARN, GENSIM. <i>Basic:</i> 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)

November 25, 2025