

ZOE KAHN, PhD

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Academic Positions

UNIVERSITY OF DUISBURG-ESSEN, GERMANY (2026 - Present)

Postdoctoral Researcher, RC-Trust

Education

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY (2018 - May 2025)

PhD, School of Information

Affiliations: Global Policy Lab, Algorithmic Fairness and Opacity Group, AI Policy Hub

Co-Advisors: Jenna Burrell and Joshua E. Blumenstock

Thesis Committee: Jenna Burrell (co-chair), Joshua E. Blumenstock (co-chair), Morgan Ames, Deirdre Mulligan

Thesis Title: “Toward Global Responsible Tech: Public Participation, Expertise, and Human Values in Rural Togo”

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY (2010 – 2014)

B.A. with Honors in Sociology

Co-Advisors: Ruth Horowitz and Deirdre Royster

Honors Thesis Title: “Citizenship Rights, Race, and Collateral Consequences: How the Percent of Racial Minorities in the State Influences the Pattern of State-Level Collateral Consequences”

Selected Awards

RESEARCH

- 2024 Departmental nomination, UC Berkeley Dissertation Fellowship
- 2022-24 Scholar, Connecting the EdTech Research EcoSystem by The Jacobs Foundation
- 2022 Fellow, AI Policy Hub at UC Berkeley
- 2018 Fellow, Algorithmic, Fairness, and Opacity Group at UC Berkeley
- 2018 Fellow, Center for Long-Term Cybersecurity at UC Berkeley
- 2018 Fellow, Center for Technology, Society, and Policy at UC Berkeley
- 2014 Summa cum laude, New York University
- 2014 Phi Beta Kappa, New York University
- 2014 Alexander Shlugar award for best undergraduate honors thesis, New York University
- 2014 Dean Undergraduate Research Fund (DURF) award recipient, New York University

TEACHING

- 2022 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley School of Information (Info 203)
- 2021 Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor, UC Berkeley School of Information (Info 188)

Publications

JOURNAL ARTICLES AND CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Zoe Kahn. “Digital social protection and social cohesion: the role of human intermediaries in rural Togo.” (under review)

Amy K. Heger, Samir Passi, Shipi Dhanorkar, **Zoe Kahn**, Ruotong Wang, and Mihaela Vorvoreanu. “Towards a Responsible AI Organizational Maturity Model.” *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 9, no. 7 (2025): 1-33.

Zoe Kahn, Meyebinesso Farida Carelle Pere, Emily Aiken, Nitin Kohli, and Joshua E. Blumenstock. "Expanding Perspectives on Data Privacy: Insights from Rural Togo." *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* 9, no. 2 (2025): 1-29.

Zoe Kahn and Jenna Burrell. "A sociocultural explanation of Internet-enabled work in rural regions." *ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction (TOCHI)* 28, no. 3 (2021): 1-22.

Jenna Burrell, **Zoe Kahn**, Anne Jonas, and Daniel Griffin. "When users control the algorithms: values expressed in practices on twitter." *Proceedings of the ACM on human-computer interaction* 3, no. CSCW (2019): 1-20.

Friedman, Batya, Lisa P. Nathan, Milli Lake, Nell Carden Grey, Trond T. Nilsen, Robert F. Utter, Elizabeth J. Utter, Mark Ring, and **Zoe Kahn**. "Multi-lifespan information system design in post-conflict societies: An evolving project in Rwanda." In *CHI'10 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems*, pp. 2833-2842. 2010.

WORKSHOP PAPER

Zoe Kahn. “Provocation on Expertise in Social Impact Evaluations for Generative AI (and Beyond).” *NeurIPS workshop on Evaluating Evaluations: Examining Best Practices for Measuring Broader Impacts of Generative AI*. (2024).

OTHER WRITING

Zoe Kahn. “Digital social protection: safeguarding privacy, expanding digital inclusion, and strengthening social cohesion.” Center for Effective Global Action & UC Berkeley AI Policy Hub. White Paper. (2025, forthcoming)

Zoe Kahn. “Digital social protection: safeguarding privacy, expanding digital inclusion, and strengthening social cohesion.” Center for Effective Global Action & UC Berkeley AI Policy Hub. Policy Memo. (2025)

Vera Lummis, Nirali Desai, Christine Lukhele, and **Zoe Kahn**. “Improving the Transparency and Explainability of AI in the Targeting of Aid.” Center for Effective Global Action. White Paper. (2025)

Invited Talks / Panels

- **White House, Office of Science & Technology Policy**, Invited Panel
July 2024: “Participatory Algorithm Design”
- **Microsoft, Deployment Safety Board**, Invited Talk
July 2024: “Expanding Data Privacy: Insights from Rural Togo and Implications for Generative AI”
- **Center for Effective Global Action**, Invited Talk
May 2024: “Expanding Data Privacy: Insights from Rural Togo”
- **GEO Indigenous Water Summit**, Invited Talk
October 2023: “Methods for Public Participation in Algorithm Design”
- **Connected by Data**, Invited Panel
October 2023: “Public Participation in Data and AI Governance”
- **Stanford, Working with Data: Delights and Doubts (Prof. Jennifer Widom)**, Guest Lecture
April 2023: “Exploring Assumptions and Unanticipated Dynamics in the Design of Novissi”

- **Stanford, Working with Data: Delights and Doubts (Prof. Jennifer Widom)**, Guest Lecture
November 2022: “Exploring Assumptions and Unanticipated Dynamics in the Design of Novissi”
- **Stanford, Working with Data: Delights and Doubts (Prof. Jennifer Widom)**, Guest Lecture
April 2022: “Exploring Assumptions and Unanticipated Dynamics in the Design of Novissi”
- **UC Berkeley, Big Data & Development (Prof. Joshua E. Blumenstock)**, Guest Lecture
April 2021: “AI Ethics in Big Data for Development”
- **Othering and Belonging Conference**, Invited Panel
March 2019: “AI and Big Data”

Selected Workshops / Conferences

ORGANIZER

These are workshops organized at conferences and stand-alone conferences

- **Computer Human Interaction (CHI) Conference**, Workshop
April 2025: “Emerging Practices in Participatory AI Design in Public Sector Innovation”
Co-organizers: Lauren Chambers, Sheena Erete, Motahhare Eslami, Shion Guha, Lilly Irani, Corey Jackson, Min Kyung Lee, Erina Moon, Deirdre Mulligan, Devansh Saxena, John Zimmerman
- **The Refusal Conference**, Virtual Conference (~200 attendees)
October 14-16, 2020: “Technology Refusal” hosted by the Algorithmic Fairness and Opacity Group
Co-organizers: Jenna Burrell and Deirdre Mulligan

PARTICIPANT

These are competitive workshops and short courses

- **Arizona State University, School for the Future of Innovation in Society**, Winter School
January 3-10, 2025: “Emerging Technologies: Accelerating Impactful Scholarship”
- **Neural Information Processing Systems (NeurIPS) Conference**, Workshop
December 15, 2024: “Evaluating Evaluations: Examining Best Practices for Measuring Broader Impacts of Generative AI”
- **Computer Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW) Conference**, Workshop
November 9, 2024: “Practicing Inclusivity in AI” organized by the Partnership on AI
- **Oxford University, Nuffield College**, Workshop
September 29-October 2, 2024: “Digital Technologies and Sustainable Development”

Work Experience

FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT

- **Rekhi & Wolk, P.S.**, Legal Assistant
2016 – 2018: Conduct legal research for civil rights employment law firm
- **Honest Buildings**, Product Manager
2015: Leverage machine learning to connect real estate owners and developers to qualified contractors
- **Honest Buildings**, Customer Success Specialist
2014: Onboard least tech-savvy building contractors to online marketing platform

CONSULTING / INTERNSHIPS

- **GiveDirectly**, Consultant (Explainable AI in Malawi)
October 2024 – December 2024: Advise on qualitative study in urban Malawi on AI explainability to inform upcoming cash transfer program

- **Microsoft**, OfficeAI, Product Manager Intern (Copilot)
Summer 2024: Integrate Generative AI into Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote)
- **Microsoft**, Office AI, Product Manager Intern (Red Teaming GenAI),
Summer 2024: Develop tooling to support more robust red teaming (adversarial testing) of genAI
- **Microsoft**, Microsoft Office, Design Research Intern (Inclusive Research)
Summer 2022: Conduct qualitative research to shape organizational strategy for inclusive research
- **Microsoft Research**, AETHER Central Team, Research Intern (Responsible AI)
Summer 2021: Conduct qualitative research and develop Responsible AI Maturity Model
- **University of Washington**, Value Sensitive Design Lab, Research Assistant (Participatory Design)
Summer 2013: Analyze participatory design workshop of homeless young people use of tech in public

Method Innovation

- **Sociotechnical Visuals, Culturally Responsive Approaches to Explainable AI**
Culturally responsive visuals printed on laminated cardstock to provide people living in rural Togo with an understanding of the data collected in mobile phone metadata, and an intuition for how that data could be used in machine learning models to predict characteristics like poverty. Developed in Togo, the visuals have been adapted and used by GiveDirectly in urban Malawi. For more: see Kahn et al. 2025.
- **Data Privacy Scenarios**
Building on scenario-based design, data privacy scenarios were developed in rural Togo to enable people to weigh-in on data privacy concerns raised by domain experts. For more: see Kahn et al. 2025.
- **Social Impact Scenarios: Bridging Technologists, Policymakers, and Local Communities**
Building on scenario-based design, social impact scenarios leverage empirical data in concise narrative vignettes to offer technologists and policymakers concrete examples of how new technologies or tech policies may affect individuals and communities. These scenarios help guide decision-making toward more informed, context-sensitive interventions.

Grants

EXTERNAL

- Connecting the EdTech Research EcoSystem, 2022 (\$15,000) (Co-PI Kahn)
- Social Science Research Council, 2020 (\$7,000) (Kahn with PI Blumenstock)

INTERNAL

- Center for Effective Global Action (CEGA), 2024 (\$20,000) (PI Kahn)
- Center for Technology, Society, and Policy; Algorithmic Fairness and Opacity Group; Center for Long Term Cybersecurity at UC Berkeley, 2018 (\$5,000) (PI Kahn)
- Dean Undergraduate Research Fund (DURF) at New York University, 2014 (\$5,000) (PI Kahn)

Teaching

INSTRUCTOR

These are courses co-taught at the UC Berkeley School of Information

- INFO288: Big Data & Development, Co-instructor with Prof. Joshua E. Blumenstock and Emily Aiken, 2024

TEACHING ASSISTANT

These are courses led by faculty at UC Berkeley School of Information

- INFO 203: Social Issues of Information, TA for Prof. Morgan Ames, 2022

- ★ Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, UC Berkeley School of Information
- INFO 188: Behind the Data: Humans and Values, Lead TA for Prof. Deirdre Mulligan, 2021
- INFO 203: Social Issues of Information, TA for Prof. Morgan Ames, 2021
- INFO 188: Behind the Data: Humans and Values, TA for Prof. Deirdre Mulligan, 2020
 - ★ Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award, UC Berkeley School of Information

Service

EXTERNAL

- **Area Chair (AC)**, COMPASS Conference, 2025
- **Reviewer**, CSCW Conference, 2025
- **Reviewer**, FACCT Conference, 2024, 2025
- **Student Volunteer**, FACCT Conference, 2020

INTERNAL

- **PhD Representative**, UC Berkeley School of Information Faculty, 2024
- **PhD Representative**, UC Berkeley School of Information Dean Search, 2024
- **Application Reviewer**, UC Berkeley School of Information PhD Application Feedback for Students from Non-Dominant Backgrounds, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024
- **PhD Student Member**, UC Berkeley Student Technology Council, 2021
- **PhD Student Organizer**, UC Berkeley Algorithmic Fairness and Opacity Group, 2020, 2021, 2022