



5th Anniversary Symposium

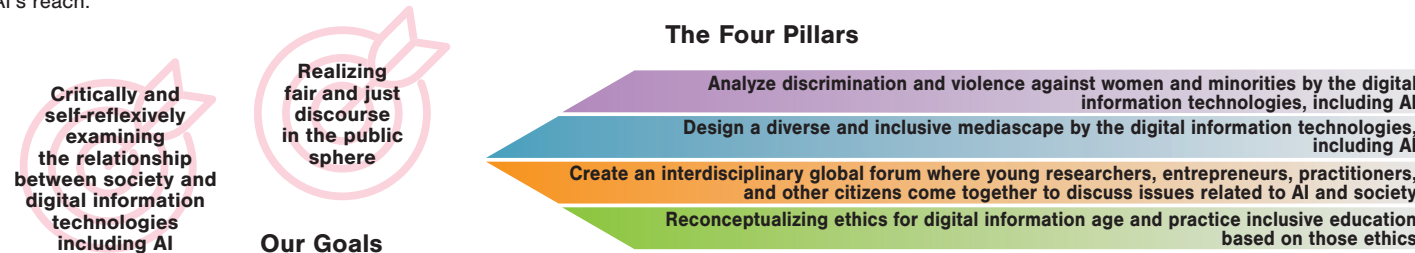
AI and DEI: The Future of Digital Humanitarianism

November 18, 2024
13:00–17:30

●About B’AI Global Forum

The B’AI Global Forum is a research initiative established within the Institute for AI and Beyond, a collaborative project between the University of Tokyo and Softbank Corp. Our mission is to advance the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and other digital technologies to foster a gender-equal society and protect minority rights. Spanning from July 30, 2020, to March 31, 2030 (planned), this year marks the midpoint of our research timeline.

The 'B' in B’AI Global Forum symbolizes our commitment to exploring the historical narratives and representations before AI, the diverse competing interests behind AI’s development, and the underlying social structure beneath AI to understand our society beyond AI. The name reflects our dedication to conducting multi-perspective analyses on the historical and social structures that drive and support modern technologies like AI, envisioning a society that extends beyond AI’s reach.



●Research Agenda

The B’AI Global Forum is dedicated to advancing the social goals of gender equality and the protection of minority rights in an era increasingly shaped by AI’s pervasive influence across all areas of society. Economic disparities and discrimination based on gender, race, and ethnicity remain persistent and, in many cases, are deepening. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, as digital, technology-based communication has become a dominant mode of interaction in politics, economics, and culture, reports indicate that such discrimination has intensified globally. This project seeks to address these pressing social challenges by critically examining the modern institutions and values that have often prioritized market principles and unilateral technological progress. In doing so, we also analyze the ways in which contemporary social institutions and organizational structures are formed. Through collaboration with researchers, practitioners, journalists, and citizens from various fields, we will identify present-day challenges and develop and propose solutions that ensure advanced technologies like AI serve to benefit all people equitably.

●Expanding Our Research Fields

The B’AI Global Forum involves researchers and experts from diverse backgrounds. You see our research fields and areas of focus in a word cloud.



●Current Members

【Steering Team】Yuko Itatsu(Project Leader), Kaori Hayashi, Yujin Yaguchi, Takane Ito, Ai Hisano
【Co-investigators】Arisa Ema, Osamu Sakura, Shin Mizukoshi, Michiko Kawahara, Noboru Koshizuka, Miles Pennington, Akiko Onishi, Tohko Tanaka, Yuiko Fujita, Hiromi Yokoyama, Naohiro Takanashi, Rie Shigetomi YAMAGUCHI
【Project Assistant Professors】Sunjin Oh, Minjoo Lee
【Project Researchers】Honoka Kato
【Visiting Researchers】Keiko Kojima, Renge Jibu, Keiko Yamamoto, Touko Shirakawa, Misook Lee(prev. Co-investigator), Rong Zhang, Akira Tanaka(prev. RA), Galina Shyndriayeva, Xinqi HE
【Research Collaborators】Keiko Hamada, Mari Miura, Yukiko Mishina, Yuko Ikkatai, Alyssa Castillo Yap(prev. Graduate Student Member)
【Research Assistants (RA)】Nozomi Ohtsuki, Priya Mu
【Graduate Student Members】Ginger Huang
【Administrative Staff】Midori Isoda

●Past Members

【Co-investigators】Tilman Hartwig
【Project Assistant Professors】Kyoko Takeuchi
【Project Researchers】Tomomi Sayuda, Kayoung Kim, Joeeun Noh, Atsuko Sano
【Visiting Researchers】Karen Shimakawa, César Castellvi, Richard Carter-White, Arnaud Claes
【Research Assistants (RA)】Lim Dongwoo, Hiroki Kato, Masao Oi
【Graduate Student Members】Hanako Lowry, Eva Le Ray, Will Guzman, Matthew Sueda
【Administrative Staff】Nao Futagami

●Projects & Activities



BAIRAL Project

BAIRAL is a study group led by young research assistants (RA) of the B’AI Global Forum. The group hosts guest speakers from diverse fields to explore the complex interactions between digital information technology and society.

◎Past Events (as of Oct. 2024)

- Number of Events: 31
- Speakers: 14 graduate students, 11 from university or research institution (primarily early-career researchers), 7 from company (including 4 from media sector), 3 others

*Multiple speakers per session and overlapping affiliations may occur.

Trauma Reporting Study Group

It is crucial to listen to those who struggle to voice their experiences, amplify their stories within society, and draw attention to the challenges they face. Such efforts are indispensable for fostering a truly inclusive and equitable space for public discourse, a responsibility that journalism, in particular, is called to uphold. However, engaging with the experiences of vulnerable individuals—such as victims of incidents, accidents, or (sexual) violence and abuse, disaster survivors and their families, or those affected by war and conflict—demands specialized knowledge and training, especially given the profound physical and emotional harm they may have endured.

What, then, do we truly mean by ‘empathy,’ ‘sympathy,’ and ‘consideration’? What essential insights must interviewers possess to engage ethically and effectively? In this study group, we aim to address these questions and seek innovative approaches through dedicated ‘reading sessions’ and ‘symposiums,’ creating a forum for shared learning and growth.

Collaborative Research & Events

- Talk series on inequity, stereotypes and stigma in leisure
- Research meetings, exhibition tours, and event presentations with Miraikan (National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation)
- Exchange sessions and discussions with SoftBank Corp.
- Collaborative Research with Yokoyama Lab: International comparison of public AI perception. The research examining four countries (Japan, US, Germany, and South Korea) published in the journal *AI and Society*
- “The Future of Higher Education in the AI Age”: Event held at the University of Tokyo New York Office (Dec. 2023)
- Collaborative Research on LLM Pre-hype Cycle with Yanaka Lab
- Joint Research Workshop with CNRS “Cultural Imaginaries of AI”
- “Cross-Cultural Approaches to desirable AI”: Seminar series in collaboration with the Universities of Bonn, Cambridge, and the University of Europe for Applied Sciences (Oct. 2024 - Jan. 2025)
- Other symposiums and events



●Our First Book “Understanding AI in Society: How Technology Exerts Power”

In a society where AI technology is rapidly permeating every aspect of life, we need to understand its social impact comprehensively and from multiple perspectives rather than focusing solely on immediate convenience. While discussions about AI technology in the humanities and social sciences have primarily been led by scholars in law, philosophy, and ethics, there is now a need for cross-disciplinary examination of the arrival of the AI era across other fields, including media studies, linguistics, history, sociology, and gender studies. This book comprises contributions from researchers across these diverse fields, discussing AI and related technologies not only from technical perspectives but also from political, social, and cultural viewpoints. By analyzing how the development and implementation of AI technology are closely intertwined with power structures such as social institutions and economic systems, the book illuminates both the possibilities of AI and the problems it harbors. Through this approach, we aim to create an opportunity for dialogue about AI that transcends the traditional boundaries between humanities and sciences, as well as the walls between different academic disciplines, enabling many people to participate in discussions about AI.

B’AI Book Club

The B’AI Book Club is a study group dedicated to examining international publications on information technology, including AI and algorithms, from outside Japan. Its purpose is to engage with the latest overseas research and to explore critical issues, such as the power dynamics underlying AI development and the influence of masculinity in science and technology. To date, the group has held 32 sessions.



Women in Tech Lunch

One contributing factor to the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields is the sense of alienation or marginalization based on gender or gender identity. Under these conditions, many women are not able to find a supportive community where they can share their unpleasant experiences and struggles with others. In response, the B’AI Global Forum organizes the ‘Women in Tech Lunch’—an informal meeting space designed to bring together women in STEM to connect, share insights, and foster mutual support. The event encourages participants to network across departments and research labs, creating a space for shared experiences and solidarity. To date, 11 events have been held.

Media and Diversity Forum (MeDi) MeDi

“Media and Diversity Forum (MeDi)” brings together researchers and journalists to engage in meaningful dialogue that bridges activism and scholarship. Our mission is to foster greater diversity within Japanese media, both through the composition of its workforce and the inclusivity of its content. Acknowledging longstanding criticisms of Japanese media’s lack of sensitivity toward women and minorities, MeDi critically examines the production processes behind media outputs and explores pathways toward a more gender-conscious and culturally inclusive media landscape in Japan. We also collaborate with international colleagues to address shared priorities and challenges in an increasingly globalized media environment.

Projects by Graduate Students

- “AI Algorithm and Gender Inequality”: Presented at the Japanese Society for Science and Technology Studies (JSSTS) (Dec. 2023, Nov. 2024)
- “Exploratory analysis of perceptions of artificial intelligence among high school students living in Japan”: Presented at the Tokyo-Oulu Joint Symposium on Human-AI Interaction (TOHAI) (Oct. 2023)
- “PERCEPTIONS: Reconstructing AI Narratives”: Exhibition was held by Graduate Student Members (Sep. 2023) and the findings were presented at JSSTS (Nov. 2024)

●Website & SNS

Website



Facebook



X(Twitter)



YouTube

