



WOMEN AT THE TABLE

# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT



## WOMEN AT THE TABLE

Women at the Table is a growing, global Civil Society Organization based in Geneva, and is the first organization to focus on systems change by helping feminists gain influence in sectors that have key structural impact: technology, democracy and governance, the economy, and sustainability.

[www.womenatthetable.net](http://www.womenatthetable.net)



### **Women at the Table is dedicated to breaking down barriers to systems change, enabling women and girls to participate fully and actively in shaping the world's social, political, and economic spheres.**

As a systems-change organization, Women at the Table (W@TT) operates within a world of largely unseen systems. Our journey began in 2015 with the primary goal of **promoting the presence of extraordinary women on the mainstream global stage**. In pursuit of this, we encountered systemic barriers and new perspectives on potential solutions.

This led to the conception and co-founding of the **International Gender Champions** (IGC), a leadership network comprising both female and male leaders committed to breaking down gender barriers. The IGC continues its impactful work through a full-scale Secretariat with Hubs in Geneva, New York, Vienna, Nairobi, The Hague, and Paris. Its membership includes heads of International Organizations, Ambassadors, and leaders of Civil Society Organizations. Women At The Table served as the IGC Secretariat until 2019, and our CEO/Founder remains on the Global Board. [Find more information about IGC's work here.](#)

During IGC's second year, we established Impact Groups to engage in targeted sectoral work. One of these groups was the Trade Impact Group. Despite being a significant driver of the international economy, **trade** operates within a framework of many intricate, yet often unspoken rules. To our astonishment, trade was perceived as "gender neutral". Not only was there no 'gender' in trade, but the word 'woman' was entirely absent from official texts. In response, W@TT took the lead in spearheading a 2016 initiative that became the 2017 **Buenos Aires Declaration on Trade and Women's Economic Empowerment**, unveiled at the World Trade Organization (WTO)'s Ministerial Conference 11.

This groundbreaking Declaration, recognized for **transforming the official discourse**, prompted serious explorations across the global trade landscape, reaching institutions from the WTO and the World Bank to the OECD, regional Economic Commissions, and national governments.

We then observed that **standards**, the barely visible systems developed for the physical world around us after World War Two, were also perceived to be 'gender neutral'—regarded as purely technical exercises in expertise devoid of gender considerations. In response, we worked with a coalition to draft and drive the '**Gender Responsive Standards Initiative**', which was signed in 2018 by all international standards bodies, ranging from the International Standards Organization (ISO) to the International Telecommu-

nication Union (ITU), as well as regional Economic Commissions and national Standards Making Bodies, totaling eighty to date. The objective of this initiative is to ensure that **standards are created, structured, and implemented in a gender-responsive manner**.

This endeavour sparked our initial reflections in 2017 on **Gender and Artificial Intelligence**, challenging the prevailing, though disavowed, notion that 'technology is neutral' and that technology has no gendered impacts. More critically, it led us to recognize that gender itself can be embedded unconsciously in the technology we create. This has now become the primary area where we focus our efforts, dedicating most of our time to exploring and addressing these issues.

W@TT has played a crucial role in naming and shaping the concept of **Feminist Artificial Intelligence**. Our organization is at the forefront of advancing innovation and thought leadership to correct real-life biases and barriers that prevent the full and equal participation of women and girls in all their diversity. **We connect the work between social science, feminist and interdisciplinary researchers, with data scientists and machine learning experts who share a vision of an inclusive and thriving future.** By bringing together thinkers and scientists from all disciplines, we help them bring their unique perspectives to policymakers, ultimately driving solutions towards a more equitable world.



[VISIT THE <A+> ALLIANCE](#)

[WATCH THE <A+> VIDEO](#)

Founded in 2019, the **<A+> Alliance for Inclusive Algorithms** is a global coalition of technologists, activists, and academics working to ensure that machine learning does not perpetuate existing biases into our new digital future.

The Alliance has garnered recognition for its impactful work, including being honored as a **Fast Company 2020 World Changing Idea in AI & Data** and receiving a nomination for **International & Regional Cooperation at the WSIS** (World Summit on the Information Society). In 2021, the <A+> Alliance was selected for the **Paris Peace Forum 2021**, highlighting the initiative as a prime example of new global governance initiatives.

In 2022, the Alliance shared its **visions of an equitable and Feminist AI** on the international stage. Official side events were organized at venues such as **MozFest, the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), RightsCon, the International Association of Feminist Economists, and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Day Zero.**

Our goal is to normalize **“Feminist AI”**, pro-social Artificial Intelligence designed with inclusion at its core, creating new opportunities and innovative ways to address inequities, in order to align social programs with 21st-century research and values. Rather than solely focusing on “accuracy” and “efficiency”, the Alliance is committed to making AI and emerging technologies gender-transformative and more effective.





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The Feminist AI Research Network, f<A+i>r, is an initiative of the <A+> Alliance, Majority World facing and focused on applied research. The Network is dedicated to discussing, creating and applying Feminist AI and related technologies that are more effective, inclusive, and transformational for citizens, rather than just “efficient.”

Continuing our work with global convenings, we extended the reach of our Global Directory and established f<a+i>r Hubs:

- **Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC):** Tecnológico de Monterrey led by Paola Ricaurte Quijano,
- **Middle East and North Africa (MENA):** Jordan Open Source Association led by Issa Mahasneh and Raya Sharbain
- **SouthEast Asia:** Chulalongkorn University led by Soraj Hongladarom.

## INCUBATING FEMINIST AI

Our initiative “**Incubating Feminist AI: from Paper to Prototype to Pilot**” obtained a three-year grant from IDRC, solidifying the journey. This is a call to develop new algorithmic and social science models with policies that encourage collaboration among different disciplines. The objective is to address key public policy issues in the Global South, going beyond critically important just gender-based violence solutions. Our goal is to create comprehensive and inclusive approaches to tackle broader societal challenges.

### Prototypes:

f<A+i>r’s first papers were chosen to go to prototype in an intense six-month writing phase:

- **Aymur AI - Measuring Gender-Based Violence in Latin America:** Aymur AI takes the first step in gathering data on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) by utilizing official criminal court records. The goal is to enable machine learning systems to identify patterns that may lead to femicide. Led by Ivana Feldfeber/Data Género (Argentina).
- **E.D.I.A.** This prototype consists of a tool that aims to overcome technical barriers for bias assessment, by democratizing Natural Language Processing (NLP), making it more accessible for experts and citizens to explore Latin American language models while also debiasing the results. Led by Beatriz Busaniche, Laura Alonso Alemany, and Luciana Benotti/Via Libre (Argentina).

- **Towards a Feminist Framework for AI Development - From Principles to Practice:** a practical approach to developing AI from a feminist perspective, with a focus on creating AI systems that do not perpetuate logics of oppression. Led by Jamila Venturini,/Derechos Digitales, (Mexico).

### Papers:

A second cohort of Incubating AI f<a+i>r papers were selected for six months of research:

- AI (em)powered Mobility, DeLaSalle University, Philippines
- Digital Gender Based Violence, University of Chile
- Design of Data Science Projects for Inclusive Public Policies, Tecnologías, Datos y Sociedad-UNR and GobLabUAI, Mexico
- Indigenous Translators, Tec Monterrey, Mexico
- (Dis)ability driving simulator, Mahidol University, Thailand
- Gender Perspectives in AI Crowd Work, PIT Policy Lab, Mexico.



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[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

**G-app is specifically designed to measure representation, active participation, and influence of women, including youths and others, in events and decision-making spaces.** Its development is made possible by the generous and strong pro bono support from Thoughtworks, a NASDAQ traded company, and their Social Impact team in India, led by Satish Viswanathan. Additionally, Debevoise & Plimpton's London and New York offices generously provide legal support for the project.

The app captures crucial data such as the proportion of **time, topics, capacity, and delegated authority of any group speaking in conference settings.** This data can be then used to establish concrete metrics, essential for highlighting the representation of women and youth in leadership positions that correspond to their proportion in the population. By emphasizing these figures, we aim to catalyze efforts to achieve greater gender and youth inclusivity in influential roles.

**Pilots** have been conducted at the Interparliamentary Union Assemblies (IPU) and the UN Commission for Science and Technology for Development.

In efforts to promote the initiative, it was presented in three separate talks at MozFest 2022 and at the High Level Political Forum at the UN. A new website was also create to facilitate access to piloting opportunities.





# AI & EQUALITY

VISIT THE WEBSITE



**<AI & EQUALITY>  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
TOOLBOX WORKSHOP**

**CALL TO ACTION**  
For code that is inclusive, transformational and Human Rights-Based! We discuss and dig into how a human rights-based approach fits with AI and its creation!

WITH  **WOMEN AT THE TABLE**

WHEN  
7 MARCH / 19:15-20:45 UTC

REGISTER FOR MOZFEST  
[www.mozilla.org/en/tickets/](http://www.mozilla.org/en/tickets/)

**OUR GOAL**

- To bring an international university generation to understand the scientist’s unique potential of social impact in the real world – bridging science and human rights policy to foster systemic resilience and more equal, just, robust democracies.
- The Toolbox Workshop is aimed at Data Scientists but with its multidisciplinary approach and critical analytic methodology it can be used, and is much appreciated, by policy makers to employ vocabulary, critical analysis and conversation with technologists they work with on these issues.
- We want to catalyze multidisciplinary conversations on the concrete human rights aspects of technology development and deployment between different disciplines.
- To build a dedicated global multidisciplinary community of human rights-based oriented computer scientists who together with social scientists, legal scholars and policy makers become champions of the human rights-based technology approach.

Universities have a critical role in teaching, sharing, and expanding discourse on human rights concepts into this burgeoning and increasingly fundamental field of study and practice. Integrating human rights values into computing technology can help educate the next generation of scientists and engineers to work for the public good, creating technology aware of and in line with human values rather than unwittingly creating risk and harm.



**JOIN A2K4D FOR  
AI & EQUALITY  
< A HUMAN RIGHTS TOOLBOX >  
ONLINE WORKSHOP**

WITH SPEAKERS

 **NAGLA RIZK**  
Professor of Economics and  
Founding Director, Access  
to Knowledge for Development  
Center (A2K4D), School of Business,  
The American University in Cairo

 **MARWA SOUDI**  
PhD student in Responsible AI &  
Digital Transformation, School of  
Digital Technologies, Taibah  
University, Eilat, Co-founder and  
STEM Building Manager, IdealGym

THURSDAY 11 JULY  
11AM TO 2PM (GMT+3)

TO REGISTER  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/  
j/84336202438](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84336202438)

WOMEN AT THE TABLE | AI & EQUALITY | The American University in Cairo  
School of Business  
Access to Knowledge for  
Development Center

## OUR STORY

### 2017

- Women at the Table Roundtable for the **UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Women's Rights Division on Gender & AI.**

### 2019 + 2020

- **EPFL workshops** conceived in collaboration with OHCHR with EPFL Digital Humanities Lab + EPFL Equalities Office titled **AI & Gender: University Edition.** Catalyzing discussions on a human rights-based approach to AI with students and researchers.

### 2021

- EPFL Data Science Masters Student / Women At The Table Tech Fellow devotes successfully defended 6.0 thesis to **expanding the technical portions of the concept**, further blending a basic human rights workshop with technical tools to directly and immediately **see how human rights principles could, with critical analysis, be applied to code.**

### 2022

**Workshops** delivered to

- **unil/dhlab University of Lausanne** Critical Data Studies/Masters: Applied Research Component: Social impact of development practices on dating: Re-engineering the Tinder algorithm.
- **Women in Data Science retreat-EPFL .**
- **Women in Data Science retreat-St. Gallen.**
- **Greek Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) - Winter School on Fairness in AI.**
- **Cambridge University** Learning for Purpose **Gates Council Scholars** Masters & Phd cohort: Applied Research Component on Corporate Approaches to Human Rights Management in the Technology Sector.
- **Three-part series Eindhoven University of Technology (Tu/e):** Applied Research Components on 1. Ethical and legal assessment of data sets 2. Interpretable Models & Explainable AI 3. Values, Inductive Risk, and ML Opacity.
- **Sorbonne Center for Artificial Intelligence (SCAI)** chaired by Director of Center with 16 Phds across medicine, law, philosophy and computer science disciplines
- **Women in Data Science Zürich Conference** where Poster wins 1st Prize.

### Panels

- **MOZFEST** (Mozilla Foundation event: gathering activists in diverse global movements for a more humane digital world), Applied Research Component on The role of the private sector in Human Rights with Dr Isabelle Ebert/ St. Gallen
- **HLPF: Learning Session, organized by UNITAR on SDG5** with UN Women, Women's Major Group; Women At The Table delivered Human Rights-based bias in AI.
- **AMRO 2022** Where Art meets Radical Openness Linz, Austria

### Mentorship

- Toolbox staff supervised **Capstone Project for Smith College/ Data Science Clinic** with 5 final year undergraduate Data Science majors using <AI Equality> Toolbox methodology to examine **'Does the COMPAS Needle Always Point Towards Equity? Finding Fairness in the COMPAS Risk Assessment Algorithm: A Case Study.**

### Community

- Our Website [AIEqualityToolbox.com](https://AIEqualityToolbox.com) created as a first step in a larger action plan to foster a global community of practice on technology and human rights.



Over 2022 Women at the Table began consulting for international organizations and governments as an additional way to **make impact and catalyze change in the gender agenda.**



**BRITISH STANDARDS INSTITUTION (BSI):**  
**Enabling the development of inclusive standards – Understanding the role of data and data analysis –BSI Dataflex 236.**

W@TT's CEO was engaged to be the technical author for a Fast Track DataFlex Standard for BSI and the UK Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Office for Product Safety & Standards.

We wrote the draft and chaired an extraordinary Advisory Group consisting of the Ada Lovelace Institute, Association of Convenience Stores, Centre for Data Ethics & Innovation, Consumer and Public Interest Network, Data 2X, United Nations Foundation, Engineering Design Centre, University of Cambridge, Kingston University, Market Research Society, Open Data Institute, Internet Institute, Oxford University, Prospect Union, and the Women's Engineering Society.

[READ THE INTRODUCTION](#)



### WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO):

Over 2022, we moderated the **Senior Female Leaders Network** for the WTO with an extraordinary line up of guest speakers: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet, International Criminal Court Judge Sicorro Flores Liera, WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo Iweala, International Trade Center (ITC) Executive Director Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General, UNCTAD.



### DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GIZ):

Supplying subject matter expertise and consultancy to partners of the GIZ digital ecosystem on the gender digital divide & trend technologies, as well as supplying training, including a Fast-Track Tour of Bias, AI & Human Rights for all digi-cluster staff.



### INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE (IDRC):

Alongside Gender@Work and the Ladysmith Collective, W@TT formed a NGO Gender and Inclusion Support Team to the IDRC/SIDA Artificial Intelligence for Development (AI4D) project across their 9 African AI labs and policy hubs.



### USAID :

Judging and Keynoting for USAID's **Gender-Equitable AI Challenge.**



### WOMEN7, W7 :

Women at the Table was an Advisor to the W7 policy dialogue under the German G7 presidency.



Our collaboration continues with the **UN Women Generation Equality Action Coalition on Technology & Innovation for Gender Equality**, leading as Women At The Table / <A+> Alliance, alongside partners such as Global Fund for Women, Digital Grassroots, UNICEF, International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Microsoft, the Rockefeller Foundation, and governments of Finland, Chile, and Rwanda.

With a small TIGE leadership team, we're working closely with IDEO on developing the **Gender x Innovation Guide**—a free digital resource to understand gender in innovation and drive transformative impact for all.

We are also honored and delighted that our CEO will serve as Co-Chair of the **Expert Group** for the UN Commission on the Status of Women CSW67. This year's theme will be Technology & Innovation—a first in its history.

The Action Coalitions are global, innovative, multi-stakeholder partnerships that are mobilizing governments, civil society, international organizations, and the private sector to:

**CATALYZE** collective action

**SPARK** global and local conversations among generations,

**DRIVE** increased public & private investment,

**DELIVER** concrete, game-changing results for girls and women.

Based on human rights principles, and through a data-driven process of consultation with international feminist groups, grassroots activist organizations, governments and other partners, the selected themes of the Generation Equality Action Coalitions are:

1. Gender-Based Violence
2. Economic justice and rights
3. Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)
4. Feminist action for climate justice
5. Technology and innovation for Gender Equality
6. Feminist movements and leadership

Over the year, Women at the Table used its official UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) consultative status (granted in 2018) to participate in convenings and make official interventions on topics ranging from women and decision-making processes to emerging technologies.

Here is one intervention that was selected to present orally to the **UN Secretary General's initiative on Our Common Agenda. (February 2022)**

Velocity and scale of digitalisation are transforming every part of society in every part of the globe. It is uncertain whether emerging and data-driven Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies will move us to the positive, or the negative, side of socio-economic equality, gender and climate justice, stability and peace.

Systemic gender, racial and intersectional bias sit at the core of current AI & Algorithmic Decision-Making (ADM) processes wiring historic bias, inequity and discrimination into our newly digitised economic, governance, and social systems. Algorithms based on incomplete or biased data and the models built from them incorporate assumptions of gender, race and class. This process will evolve into ever more difficult to dismantle inequalities - if we do not act now.

We call on Governments, Private Sector, & Civil Society to adopt human rights-based guidelines to establish accountability and transparency for AI and ADM in public and private sectors so that technology does not embed already biased systems into our future. Combatting and correcting this wired bias and discrimination is urgent in order that pro-social capabilities of AI & ADM can be activated. **Technology must be harnessed to deliver equality outcomes, designed with inclusion at the core to create new opportunities & innovative correction of inequities.**





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