

Technology and Society cluster

Spring 2023

Technology and Society (TechSoc) is an interdisciplinary cluster for researchers studying the role of technologies in business and society. We are witnessing the concurrent development of a number of technologies – mobile internet, artificial intelligence, blockchain, big data, social media, cloud technologies, quantum computing, green energy, gene editing, robotics, augmented reality, and novel forms of human-computer interaction – that are potentially foundational and radically transformative in the same way that canals, steam engines, the telegraph, petrochemicals and computers have been so in the past. The TechSoc cluster exists to understand the implications of those technologies for societies and organizations.

TechSoc is located at the Copenhagen Business School's Department of Management, Society and Communication (MSC) and consists of twenty-five scholars from a variety of disciplines with a shared interest in relations between technologies and societies. We approach technology as a possible driver of economic progress, societal advancement and organizational development, but also take seriously that technologies can have complex, messy, ambiguous and not always attractive implications and we are curious about their implications for ethics, governance and politics. And we seek to advance existing research agendas by embracing novel, promising, surprising and unsettling phenomena and interpretations, and emphasizing the importance of context, power and practices in shaping how technologies come to matter.

Leveraging its diversity, TechSoc provides an enriching and inclusive forum for understanding the cultural, economic, and political conditions of technological developments and their implications for management, society and communication. To pave the way for these empirical and conceptual explorations, TechSoc hosts monthly meetings with presentation and discussions, as well as other activities meant to support new and ongoing research activities. Theoretically, TechSoc includes communication, management, sociology, anthropology, computer science, cultural studies, and political science. Methodologically, the research carried out within the cluster ranges from qualitative studies such as ethnography and discourse analysis to quantitative approaches such as NLP and network analysis.

Research

In recent years, MSC has come to host a range of research projects, both in the shape of applied, basic and frontier research, and has hired new faculty interested in questions around media, technology, data, algorithms and their interplay with new and established organizations, economies and society. Research topics discussed in the cluster include data ethics and politics, algorithmic developments in finance, governance of digital platforms, digital risk in the public sector, Artificial Intelligence, and social activism on Twitter. In addition to these “born-digital” topics, the cluster also welcomes researchers who may not work directly on technology, but who grapple with how technological change ‘shows up’ in their field of research, e.g. global production networks, management practice, health, tourism, security work, and entrepreneurship.

The cluster also benefits from several larger research projects funded by the Independent Research Fund Denmark, the Innovation Fund and Velux.

The TechSoc cluster has strong ties to leading research environments, centres, and clusters nationally (e.g. Center for Tracking and Society at University of Copenhagen, EthosLab at IT University, Cybersecurity at DTU, Techanthropology at Aalborg University and the Center for the Study of Technological, Emerging, and Ethical Methods at Århus University) and internationally group members collaborate with research environments including the FinWorks Futures Centre at King’s College London, Platform Economies Research Network at The New School in New York, the TIES group at MIT Sloan and Bayes Business School’s ETHOS group. At CBS, the TechSoc cluster is connected to and engage with researchers from the WETO group at the Department of Organization and several groups across the Department of Digitization.

Teaching

TechSoc’s focus on the role of technologies at the intersection of communication, management and society feeds into a range of programmes and educational initiatives at CBS. Members of the cluster are deeply involved in programs such as BSc in Business Administration & Digital Management, BSc in Business Administration and Information Systems, BSc in Business Administration & Market and Cultural Analysis, MSc in Business Administration and Information Systems, and BSc and MSc in Business Administration & Organizational Communication. Also, members teach in other programs such as Cand.merc.(GMA), as of the spring semester 2024; develop and teach PhD

courses, and contribute to CBS' ambition to enable life-long learning by teaching tech-centred courses in CBS' executive programmes (MMD; MBD), at the CBS Executive Foundation and at Coursera.

The focus on technology in society and business aligns with several of CBS' strategy's 'Nordic Nine' (NN) capabilities for students to learn while at the business school. Our research interests naturally shape our teaching efforts, such that we emphasise cultivating deep business knowledge placed in a broad context and seek to raise questions around how we use technology to produce prosperity and protect the prosperity of the next generation. An interest in algorithms and data also naturally brings issues of data analysis and ambiguity to the fore in our classrooms.

Outreach

Members of TechSoc are actively engaged in public and policy and contribute to CBS' ambition to be a force in the transformation of society through research, teaching and public engagement.

Publication strategy: aspirational and inspirational journal list

TechSoc seeks to publish and otherwise advance international, high-quality research. We do so by targeting both established journals with high impact and emergent journals at the frontier of research. Our list of journals – both aspirational and inspirational in its intention – reflects our dual ambition to both cater to researchers focusing directly on questions about technology and society and to researchers studying topics in organization, management and communication where questions about technology appear more indirectly.

In addition to journals, researchers within the cluster publish books and edited volumes with university presses and other recognized publishing houses including MIT Press, Cambridge University Press and Edward Elgar.