**Summary
Report**
**March-September
2019**

NOT-EQUAL

REWIRING OUR DIGITAL SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

INTRODUCTION

This report summarises project activities from March to August 2019.The report presents the main findings from Not Equal's first call for proposals and commissioning process. It also reflects on engagements with network members to find out what issues matter to them when thinking about social justice in the digital economy.

BACKGROUND

Not Equal, the EPSRC Network+ on Social Justice through the Digital Economy is three-year project led by Newcastle University, in collaboration with Royal Holloway University of London, the University of Sussex and Swansea University. It aims to bring together and *resource* collaborations between academia, industry, government and civil society to *explore* and *respond* to issues of social justice in technology design and the potential for technologies to make socio-economic life in the UK fairer.

As a Network+, our project includes calls for proposals for micro (£5K) and pilot collaborative projects (£20-40K) led by academics and early career researchers in collaboration with non-academic partners as well as offering a range of events, and activities (symposia, workshops, hackathons, design sprints).

The Network+ focuses on three challenge areas.

- **Algorithmic Social Justice** which explores the challenges posed by exclusive access to data and the opacity of algorithmic classification in automated decision-making that affect us all.

- **Digital Security for All** investigates new ways to model digital security that increase people's sense of agency, while meeting their security needs in online services.

- **Fairer Futures for Businesses and Workforces** considers how new 'gig economy' platforms can be designed to realise equal opportunities for economic development.

Please see the previous Not Equal report summarising the first six months of the project (September 2018-February 2019) below.

COMMISSIONING PROCESS

OUR COMMISSIONING APPROACH

We involved network members to guide the development of our commissioning process and to ensure that the topics in the call were tailored to their needs and interests.

We adopted a mixed-methods approach to engage our members through online and offline methods to publicise the Not Equal call for proposals and promote collaboration between applicants. Online methods included the Catalyst website and virtual scoring by the expert panel. The Not Equal website, Twitter and Facebook accounts advertised the call documents.

Offline methods included informal meetings with network members to gather views and a community panel which scored proposals. The advantages of the methods we chose were:

- **Catalyst website:** The Catalyst website (https://catalyst.Not Equal.tech) contained summaries of the expressions of interest, and applicants were able to search for potential collaborators via their chosen topic area.

- **Press and general communications:** Communications enabled us to publicise the launch of our call for proposals.

- **Community Panel:** The panel enabled members of the local community who may normally be marginalised the opportunity to share their views on the proposals in a face-to face session.

- **Expert Panel:** The expert panel enabled 77 academics with specialisms in social sciences as well as computing and engineering to virtually score the proposals.

- **Informal meetings:** Meeting with network members provided an opportunity to access information about the network and gather feedback and views to tailor the agenda of the network.

What was the purpose of the call for proposals?
During the first 6 months of the project, the Network+ collected information from academics, civil society, community groups and industry on what issues were important to them in relation to social justice and digital innovation. This was then tailored to form the call for proposals.

The first funding call was expected to fund up to 12 pilot research projects, which could be between £20-£40k (80% FEC) and last for up to 8 months. There was also funding for up to 8 micro research projects of up to £5k (80% FEC) which could be up to 3 months in length.

Selection Criteria
Applicants were advised that the following criteria would be used by the review panel when assessing the proposals:

Essential
- Responds innovatively to issues within one or more challenge areas identified by Network+ partners;
- Demonstrates value for money;

- Demonstrates significance and rigour;
- Potential to have a positive social impact;
- Involvement of industry, civil society and/or community groups network+ partner;
- Feasibility within the given timeframe;
- Potential to lead to strong dissemination materials.

Pilot projects were also assessed against the following additional essential criteria:
- Previous track record of successful projects;
- Demonstration of a 'cross-disciplinary' collaborative approach within an ethics of reciprocity.

Desirable criteria for micro and pilot projects:
- Led by or involving early career researchers.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS-THEMATIC AREAS

The call for proposals defined a set of key thematic topics within three challenge areas - Algorithmic Social Justice, Digital Security for All, Fairer Futures for Businesses and Workforces as well as Cross Cutting themes which could be used to guide the development of research proposals.

Within each challenge area, applicants were asked to consider research proposals which responded to issues at the micro (the technologies themselves), meso (the combination of multiple technologies and application contexts) and macro (market, policy and regulatory) levels.

ALGORITHMIC SOCIAL JUSTICE

Algorithmic Social Justice examines fairness in the design and application of algorithmic automated and semi-automated decision-making processes, used in digital services and in public service transformation and to inform, for example, care or health interventions programs and city planning.

Applicants were asked to consider projects that might explore: at the micro level, how notions of social justice can be operationalized in the design and evaluation of algorithms. At the meso level, how designs embedding social justice principles can be transferred across different contexts and at the macro level, how links between public policy specification, algorithmic design and digital service impact in specific policy contexts (e.g. welfare, migrant resettlement, healthcare) can lead to recommendations for policy making and new regulatory frameworks to assess algorithmic fairness.

Within this challenge area, applicants were asked to consider one of the following topics:

- **Operationalizing fairness, transparency and accountability** in algorithmic profiling and application of data-driven algorithmic decision-making systems. Proposals in this topic might explore how data-driven algorithmic systems, and criteria and processes used to design them can be made less opaque, fairer and accountable.
- **Frameworks and tools to enable participation** in the design and application of decision-making algorithmic systems applied in digital services, which take into account the socio-economic contexts of algorithmic justice in relation to social class and mobility.

Successful applicants were asked to produce proposals that relate the area of study to a particular community and context. Example projects included:

- Explorations that may lead to new ways of monitoring or auditing application areas for AI (e.g. open auditing toolkit and ethical indexes).
- Novel approaches and tools to support public understanding and explorations of algorithmic decision-making systems, their design, application and consequences to inform, for example, how innovation can be made to be more socially-responsible.

DIGITAL SECURITY FOR ALL

Digital Security for All investigates new and better approaches to digital security that both meet the security needs of people and society as well as protect data and technology. This challenge area asks in what ways online services can be designed to better support people's sense of agency and trust, whilst both ensuring and assuring security in sharing personal data online.

Applicants were asked to consider proposals that might explore: at the micro level, how security mechanisms create spaces for agency-building and leverage community action. At the meso level, how digital security might be modelled for diverse technical landscapes and at the macro level, how policy and regulatory frameworks might account for the social and economic diversity of all (and associated security needs), and be responsive to, the increasing pace of technical innovation in this space.

Within this challenge area, applicants were asked to consider one of the following topics:

- **Transparency and responsiveness** of the security features of digital services (including robotic automated process and services that rely on algorithmic decision making).
- **Building and maintaining capabilities** for individuals and communities to manage and protect personal data that are produced, circulated, protected and curated by digital services (including robotic automated process and services that rely on algorithmic decision making).

Successful applicants were asked to produce proposals that relate the area of study to a particular community and that address societal, individual and technological security. Successful proposals will also show how their research has the potential to bring themes of fairness and social justice into conversation with the study of security. Example projects included:

- Studies that lead to specifications of new and emerging digital security problems that challenge social justice.
- Community-led exploration of digital security problems and responses.
- Novel approaches to cross-community dialogue and co-operation to design and manage digital security.

FAIRER FUTURES FOR BUSINESSES AND WORKFORCE

Fairer Futures for Businesses and Workforces considers how new 'sharing economy' platforms can be designed to realise more ethical business models and equal opportunities for economic development. This challenge area asks what tools and systems can be designed to support peer-to-peer market places, how to cater for those who have few or no assets; and how to improve workplaces and workplace representation in the digital era.

Applicants were asked to consider proposals that might explore: at the micro level, the logics of the different economies underpinning current platforms; at the meso level, how social justice principles can be operationalised in 'sharing economy' business models; at the macro level, how socio-technical innovations can inform policy recommendations for fairer business models and workforce representation.

Within this challenge area, applicants were asked to consider one of the following topics:

- **Investigating digital labour, AI, and emergent technologies as they reconfigure workplaces and workforces**, identifying drivers and systems for greater fairness in the face of algorithmic efficiency that overrides discretion; gamification of work, globalisation of systems and design for maximum profit.
- **Supporting markets, businesses and industry moving into more ethical practices** by developing, for example, new tools to help industry recognise and assess their design practice and offer alternatives that embed social justice principles and ethical practices in market design and business models.

Example projects included:

- Designing for an alternative to mass-scale and heavily commercialized workplaces would allow workers more say on style of work and how it is managed.
- What kind of tools make platform cooperatives more successful? How might we help member-led organisations replicate, keeping small enough to employ commons-style governance, but scaling up in terms of concept and competences?

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

In addition to the three topic areas outlined above, applicants were asked to consider the following cross-cutting topics.

- Re-thinking ethics, social justice and human rights in the digital era by exploring, for example, the relationships between social justice and digital rights and accounting for the different values and understandings of ethics within different communities of practice.
- Enabling Universities to support social justice by exploring critically the current opportunities and limitations of academic institutions in supporting social justice. Proposals addressing this topic might investigate the institutional changes required to enable universities to support social justice.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Applicants were initially asked to submit applications via a short Expression of Interest (EOI). Applicants who did not have an academic or non-academic partner were still invited to submit an EOI, as the Catalyst website could help to find collaborators within the Network+ to develop the idea further into a project proposal.

The EOI form requested the applicants select which challenge area was most relevant, the project tagline, a summary of the aims and objectives of the project, the social impact of the proposal, whether they were happy for their EOIs to be shared publically and what type of collaborators were required.

There were in total 109 EOIs submitted and only 3 of these were judged to be out of scope. The breakdown of topic areas for the EOIs were 27 Algorithmic Social Justice proposals, 19 Digital Security proposals, 31 Fairer Future proposals and 32 Cross-Cutting proposals.

The Co-Investigators were particularly enthused by the collaborative nature of the applications; 93 applicants were happy for their EOIs to be shared publically on the Catalyst website.

FEEDBACK

After reviewing the EOIs, the Co-Investigators noted the following issues which were provided to the applicants as feedback.

- **Benefit to non-academic partners**

  A number of investigators sought to use their non-academic partners (actual or sought) as a test-bed for an idea, or as study participants. The Network+ would rather see them as active co-designers of the research. The panel would welcome proposals where the non-academic partners (particularly third sector organisations) clearly benefit from the proposal, but where the longer-term reach might deliver benefits more widely.

- **Reach**

  Some projects took a case study approach. Others made assumptions that the community under investigation was intrinsically interesting but failed to consider how the proposed research might benefit society more generally. This was particularly true of the submissions under the Fairer Futures for Businesses and Workforce theme, where the proposals sometimes showed the benefit in one context, but failed to see the wider relevance to businesses and communities outside of the partner organisation. It was recommended that as applicants write the project narrative, they made sure it clearly bound to the Not Equal programmes, principles and themes. In some EOIs, particularly in some of those responding to the Digital Security for All Theme, the links to Not Equal themes were implicit rather than explicit. EOIs were encouraged to fully embrace the positioning and focus on this Network+.

- **Innovation**

  In some EOIs the project goals resulted in a new website or app. Applicants were asked to take care with such projects to show where the innovation lay. The Not Equal call is a research call and our reviewers want to understand how the EOI is innovative and why it is an idea worthy of research funding and not simply a digital service that might benefit a community.

- **Resource Management**

  Questions arose around the achievability of project goals within the given timeframe. Some projects raised questions about longer-term sustainability (particularly in terms of maintenance, moderation and administration). Applicants were to think carefully about their time-line for funded work and about their long-term agenda.

- **Academic Language**

  As the proposals should remain inclusive to non-academic partners, applicants were asked to ensure that a plain English synopsis was included for the question on 'deliverables and social impact' in the full application form.

CATALYST WEBSITE

After the EOIs were received, applicants were encouraged to collaborate through the Catalyst website (https://catalyst.Not Equal.tech). Applicants could search for collaborators via key words or topics for potential project partners.

Initial analytics showed that there were 853 unique sessions (someone visiting the site), and 775 visits to project pages. Most people (about 53%) visited a specific project from a link that was shared with them, which suggests that people used existing networks and contacts to set up collaboration, and the Catalyst website facilitated this.

A questionnaire has been drawn up to send to applicants in order to get their feedback on the Catalyst website – how they used it, if at all, and how useful they found it. The results of the questionnaire will be used to improve the website for the next funding call.

APPLICATIONS

The call received 73 final proposals. The breakdown of topic areas for proposals was 17 Algorithmic Social Justice proposals, 15 Digital Security proposals, 17 Fairer Futures proposals and 24 Cross-Cutting proposals.

The application requested that the applicants answer a range of questions, such as how their proposals align with the themes and objectives of Not Equal, a case for support, the novelty of their proposal, how the non-academic partners will engage with the project, the deliverables and social impact, work plan and budget breakdown.

The Co-Investigators were particularly enthused by the geographical spread of the applications. As expected, there were 23 non-academic partners from London/South East and 15 from the North East. However, non-academic partners were also included from Scotland, Wales and the North West. We also had applicants with partners from outside the UK such as China, Colombia, Mexico and the Netherlands.

There were a number of queries during the application stage on the financial infrastructure of universities. Many universities were only able to pay non-academic partners as subcontractors under their financial systems. The AHRC have developed an alternative model for payments for non-academic partners and we have been asked by partners to raise this with the EPSRC so that alternative models can be considered when any changes to funding regulations are made.

COMMUNITY PANEL

The Network's Community Panel (CP) was held over two consecutive days on the 7 and 8 May 2019 in an event space at Tyneside Cinema in Newcastle. The panel was tasked with establishing a set of judging criteria based on their own experiences and perceptions of issues related to social justice in the digital economy on the first day, and awarding scores and writing mini-reviews of funding applications based on the 'social impact statement' on the second day.

By the end of the first day, through a process of group activities, the panel came up with three criteria:

Research into the social justice and innovation should:
  (1) consider and respond to the needs of a community
  (2) help to reduce barriers to participation and involvement in technology + services
  (3) support community cohesion.

During the second day the panel provided a score for each criterion (out of 10) and a review statement for a total of 73 proposals, based on reading the project title, tagline, and social impact statement. The CP were successful in providing a score and review for each proposal, apart from a small minority whose impact statements were not written for a non-academic audience.

Several ways of improving on the recruitment, planning, content and running of the panel have been identified and will be implemented going forward. These include: widening the diversity of the panel, pre-filtering the proposals so that the panel receive a smaller number of proposals to assess, ensuring that all the proposals' social impact statements are written in a clear and understandable way, and giving the panel the opportunity to provide more input into the panel process.

EXPERT PANEL

The expert panel took place through a virtual scoring process. Academics were recruited from the Not Equal mailing list to ask if they would be willing to act as a reviewer of proposals for a maximum of 3 proposals.

They were advised that they would be able to provide feedback on the proposals by completing a short review form which covered the quality of the proposal, track record of applicants, resources/management and the impact of the proposal.

The proposals were then allocated depending on the specialism areas of the 77 expert panel members. Once the scores were received, they were totalled and ranked along with the community panel scores before they were sent to the Co-Investigators for the final panel meeting.

CO-INVESTIGATOR PANEL

The Co-Investigator panel met in May 2019 to review and make final decisions on funding using the initial proposals as well as the expert and community panel score sheets.

The panel ensured that there was a geographical and topical spread of funded projects. There were many high-quality proposals and all funded projects needed to make societal impact clear as well as academic innovation.

All applicants were provided with individual feedback and generalized feedback. There were some consistent themes across the feedback for unsuccessful proposals:

- The societal benefit of some proposals and their partnerships was not always clear. The application had requested that the 'deliverables and social impact' section was suitable for a lay audience. However, many of the applicants used very academically dense language, which meant the community panel had difficulty understanding the social impact of the proposal.
- The proposals that did make the societal impact clear did not necessarily include academic innovation or originality.
- Some proposals that were highly technical would have benefited from having a greater cross-disciplinary collaborative approach, and in particular could benefit from having some collaboration from social scientists.

- It was noted that some proposals sketched their approach at a high level but more detail on the research design and pathway to impact would have helped clarify the proposal.
- A number of proposals could potentially have included more participatory design, user-centred or co-designed approaches and methodologies that have been employed for civic projects.
- In some proposals the partners were interesting and relevant but their involvement and commitment was not always well quantified which affected the feasibility of the proposal.

FUNDED PROJECTS

PILOT PROJECTS

The seven pilot projects, summarised below, will last between six and eight months, with funding between £39.8k and £30.2k (all amounts at 80% FEC).

- **Principal Investigator: Helen Pallett, University of East Anglia, £39.8k** 'How can we democratically govern algorithms for more socially-responsible public services?'

  'Just Public Algorithms' aims to design an observatory for algorithms and society in order to improve the democratic oversight and socially responsible development of algorithms in public services. This will be achieved by first reviewing existing work on algorithms in public services, current responsible research and innovation (RRI) frameworks around algorithms and AI, and emerging literature on public observatories.

- **Principal Investigator: Artemis Skarlatidou, UCL, £39.4k** ' Civic InnovatioN in CommunITY: safety, policing and trust with young people'

  Cin-City will provide insight into the weaknesses and strengths of current approaches to knife crime prevention and gain a deeper insight into young people's perceptions and situational experiences. In the medium-term, Cin-City will provide significant input to contribute to the existing debate around knife crime and trust-in-policing.

- **Principal Investigator: James Nicholson, Northumbria University, £39.8k** 'Creating and Understanding CyberGuardians in Communities'

  This project aims to support older users in becoming cyber security guardians (CyberGuardians) for their local community and enable these CyberGuardians to organically train other older users to be more cyber-security aware. The project will develop and design age-specific cyber security training sessions based on perceived cybersecurity threats identified by participants and literature.

- **Principal Investigator: Leanne Townsend, James Hutton Institute, £38.5k** 'Small Smart Farms'

  'Smart Small Farms' is an interdisciplinary research project which will work with small farms in Scotland to create pathways to accessing the benefits of the digital economy through the development of small-scale farming technologies.

- **Principal Investigator: Sara Heitlinger, City, University of London, £39.9k** 'Co-designing a sustainable food justice system with blockchain futures'

  The project involves a series of workshops with grassroots urban agricultural communities in London to co-design sustainable food justice futures through blockchain using a speculative participatory design approach that has been developed, tested and synthesised.

- **Principal Investigator: Wifak Gueddana, King's College London, £35.9k** 'Who cares? Platform Work and Low-Income home service work in the digital economy'

  This project aims to provide first empirical insights using an innovative methodological toolbox of alternative forum data and interviews to explore parts of a vulnerable labour force which has so far been hidden in the media hype on the gig economy.

- **Principal Investigator: Ben Kirman, University of York, £30.2k** 'Switch-Gig'

  The objective of Switch-Gig is to generate formative data, use cases, speculative design concepts and prototypes, to demonstrate meaningful ways in which gig-working can be supported by grass-roots technology projects.

MICRO PROJECTS

The three funded micro projects, summarised below, will last for three months, with funding between £5k and £4.6k (all amounts at 80% FEC).

- **Principal Investigator: Hugh Shanahan, RHUL, £4.8k** 'Different explanations: determining the requirements for explainability for different stake holders in Social Policy'
  This project aims to come up with a set of recommendations for policies that will help to combat bias in algorithms and the lack of understanding around how algorithmic processes work.

- **Principal Investigator: Yingqin Zheng, RHUL, £4.6k** 'Between digital platforms and the deep sea: social justice implications of digital platforms on marginality in coastal south India'
  This project studies gig-workers from Chennai who use food-delivery platforms to understand the fairness implications of digital platforms using a social justice research lens.

- **Principal Investigator: Harry Weeks, Edinburgh College of Art, £5k** 'Opening Doors: Art and Inequality in the Platform Economy'
  This project examines the current and political impacts of digital platforms on the entrenched inequalities of the cultural sector.

EVALUATION

The Not Equal project team are currently carrying out an evaluation of the first call for proposals. This includes feedback questionnaires for funding/project applicants as well as discussions with the project steering group. The feedback gained from the initial call for proposals will be incorporated into our second call, this is currently planned to launch in December 2019.

PARTNERS ENGAGEMENTS

OVERVIEW

During March to August 2019, the Not Equal team has taken part in four engagements with academics and other stakeholders from partner organisations. This included a talk and discussion led by Prof Ann Light and Duncan McCann from the New Economic Foundation (NEF) at Brighton University on platform cooperatives, a Security Theory Hack led by Prof Lizzie Coles Kemp at Royal Holloway, a Special Interest Group on Co-operativism, HCI at CHI 2019, attendance at the 9th International Conference on Communities and Technologies and co-hosting of Cyberfest with a talk from Prof Pam Briggs.

DUNCAN MCCANN (NEF) BRIGHTON UNIVERSITY TALK

In March 2019, Duncan McCann gave a talk at Brighton University on platform cooperatives and the work of the New Economic Foundation. The meeting was led by Prof Ann Light and involved academics and professionals interested in the Future of Work in Sussex and beyond.

This event led to a collaboration between the New Economic Foundation and Sussex University Business School on a business plan for a Brighton based taxi cooperative.

SECURITY THEORY HACK AT ROYAL HOLLOWAY

In March 2019, Prof Lizzie Coles-Kemp led a security theory hack with PhD students from Royal Holloway with design and sociology theories. The aim of the workshop was to use creative securities' LEGO modelling approach to model a lived experience of a sociotechnical security problem.

During the workshop, participants were encouraged to explore how different theoretical start points might change the security responses in a particular sociotechnical scenario.

The session produced three sociotechnical models in LEGO that described technical security problems that challenge notions of fairness and equality. The workshop formed the basis of a means for bringing together interdisciplinary conversations about fairness and equality in the context of digital control for future events.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP ON CO-OPERATIVISM AND HCI (CHI)

As part of the CHI conference in May 2019, Prof Ann Light took part in a Special Interest Group on Co-operativism and HCI. The event included small group work electing themes and issues, and networking to build a community in this area.

The goal of this meeting was to set an agenda for future work in HCI and the potential for 'enabling platforms' which is becoming more apparent and, at the same time, more contested.

This led to a new network of people, particularly ECRs, interested in solidarity and alternative economic models and a potential for future events.

VIENNA

Pam Briggs attended the 9th International Conference on Communities and Technologies in Vienna in June 2019 with the theme: 'Transforming Communities'. Professor Briggs was involved both in a presentation on the capacity of digital technologies to transform volunteering and also in disseminating information about the Not Equal Network Plus. There was considerable interest in the network amongst attendees and the possibility of reaching out to more European researchers.

CYBERFEST

In September 2019, Not Equal and the North East Initiative on Business Ethics co-hosted a workshop on the ethical implications of digital technologies. This workshop formed part of North East #Cyberfest – a programme of events designed to raise awareness of the North East as a place to address cyber resilience and to educate and inform of the threats and opportunities from cyber. The audience was primarily drawn from local digital SMEs and Professor Briggs gave a talk about the work of the Not Equal network and described the recently commissioned projects.

UKCRC/EPSRC WORKSHOP ON UK COMPUTING RESEARCH

In September 2019, Prof Pam Briggs took part in a panel discussion during the UKCRC/EPSRC workshop on UK Computing Research. The conference was aimed at maximizing the effectiveness of UK computing research and the panel discussion was around community-building and advocating effectively as a community.

SUMMER SCHOOL

A Not Equal Summer School was run in the last week of August, 2019 at Swansea University. It was hosted by Not Equal Co-Investigators Alan Dix (Swansea University) and Lizzie Coles-Kemp (Royal Holloway University of London). 30 PhD students and Early Career Researchers took part in an interdisciplinary programme that combined talks from across the disciplines with collaborative small group work to develop new forms of knowledge about social justice and fairness in the digital economy.

The programme focused on the Not Equal themes of Digital Security for All and Algorithmic Social Justice. Students came from a wide variety of backgrounds including Computer Science, Law, Political Science, Education and Geography. The talks included topics such as values and design, digital currencies, data mining, rural connectivity, theories of social justice and security, and gender and IoT.

Each afternoon, participants were encouraged to take part in collaborative small group work in order to develop the themes from the morning sessions and apply them to scenarios. Participants were introduced to creative engagement methods such as storytelling, physical modelling and video to bring together the different themes. During the four day programme, students used the creative engagement sessions to reflect on what they had learned during the talks and discuss how this might be applied to a particular problem of algorithmic social justice. The Summer School concluded with each student group presenting what they had learned and reflecting on their insights and new understandings.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

OVERVIEW

Not Equal Community Champion Solen Jenny Lees has initiated and strengthened partnerships with several community groups. She has begun to create a materials pack to roll out in different activities and to carry out interventions with two groups.

The aim of these relationships is to inform Not Equal's work, explore the potential for new proposals and provide candidates for the Community Panel and potentially a panel Steering Committee.

THE NEWBRIDGE PROJECT ACTIVITY – 5TH APRIL

This activity took place during an exhibition at the Newbridge Project gallery in Gateshead called 'Workforce' which focused on contemporary labour issues. According to the exhibition curators: "Workforce reacts to the changing landscape of labour, current trends away from equality and diversity in the workplace, as well as the impacts of employment on our identity and personal self-worth."

The activity was on a drop-in basis, and involved completing JUST-UNJUST cards where participants were asked to think of an everyday technology and then pick a principle/value from a pack of value cards before creating a phrase describing how the use of this technology enables or prevents the fulfilment of the principles and values identified.

Solen had designed some additional provocation cards with a focus on the Fairer Futures challenge area and participants completed eight cards on subjects like digital work platforms, zero-hour contracts, workplace surveillance, recruitment algorithms and social media.

TECH MUMS ACTIVITY – 1ST JULY

This was a trial engagement with a group of mothers attending the TechMums (https://techmums.co/) course. The participants were just beginning to use digital tech or developing their use of tech and learning about how they can use it (more) in their daily lives and careers. The activity aimed to engage attendees around the Network+ broad topics of algorithmic social justice and digital security.

Although attendance was low, those present were very engaged. The first activity, 'JUST-UNJUST', was centred on reflecting on smart devices and technologies in our everyday life and the consequences and impact of technology and how they can promote fairness or unfairness. The second activity was adapted from Proboscis' Unbias materials 'Awareness Cards' where participants had to pick an example card with a particular algorithmic scenario, and map its impact through a series of prompts and questions.

At the end of the session, the participants expressed an interest in receiving information about possible participation in the next Community Panel.

INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH NON-ACADEMIC PARTNERS

Community groups previously uninvolved with Not Equal have been contacted with a view to holding workshops with them. They represent groups that are not already included among Not Equal's partners such as asylum seekers/refugees, carers (e.g. of people with dementia, other disabilities or people at the end of life), victims of intimate-partner violence and ethnic minority groups.

Meetings have been held with representatives from the following organisations, during which Not Equal's purpose was presented and possibilities for engagement were discussed:

- Angelou Centre (whose client group is BAME and refugee women and girls and survivors of domestic abuse)
- West End Refugee Service
- Success4All (whose client group is children, young people and families in the West End of Newcastle)
- Newcastle Elders Council
- Investing in People and Culture (IPC)
- Action Foundation

It is hoped that initial workshops will be held with frontline staff from these organisations, with the potential for follow up with workshops on one of the challenge areas with clients. A workshop with Success4All has the potential for providing the next theme to be explored by young people. This will be facilitated by Not Equal's Youth Engagement coordinator.

WHAT NEXT?

COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Agreement has been made to fine-tune the commissioning process by launching a 'Call for Collaboration' to cultivate co-design of high impact projects by academics and non-academics. Face-to-face sandpit events will feed into the collaborative process to allow exploration of the challenge areas and proposal development. Unlike the 1st commissioning process, shortlisting of projects will be Expert Panel-led followed by input from the Community Panel.

The proposed timeline for the next commissioning process is outlined below:

Date (approximate)	Application Stage
Between 16/12/19 & 13/01/20	**Call for Collaborations** goes live with: a. invitation to participate in sand-pit workshops style to develop ideas and help finding a partner (match-making) b. Submit an Expression of Intent to Collaborate on catalyst c. Timeline for the collaborative proposals submission

16 January – 10 February *Or 5-15 February 2020*	3 x Topic Specific sand-pit events: - Algorithmic Social Justice - Digital Security - Fairer Futures
30 March 2020 *Or 13 April 2020*	Deadline for full applications
5 April – 16 April 2020 *Or 20 April – 30 April 2020*	Expert Panel Shortlisting
1 May — 20 May 2020	Community Panel Shortlisting (top third of scores)
1 of June – 15 June	Co-Investigator Panel
15-20 June 2020	Applicants notified on the outcome of their applications
1 September 2020	Expected start date for projects
Mid-September 2020	Award Event (including dissemination for 1st call projects)
December 2020	Final report (micro projects)/Project status report (pilot projects)
May 2021	Final report (pilot projects)

OPEN EVENT PROGRAMME

The issues that have emerged from Not Equal engagement activities will be tailored into a range of events, and activities (symposia, workshops, hackathons and design sprints) that will run in conjunction with the second call for proposals.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The youth engagement element of the project has several future engagements in the pipeline, each allowing young people the space to learn and discuss their views on algorithmic social justice, online security and privacy, and the future of work, and what this means to them in their own lives.

COMMUNITY AND PARTNERS' ENGAGEMENTS

Our Community Champion will continue to engage and facilitate dialogues between Not Equal partners and communities of interest around the project challenge areas during the second call for proposals.

SUMMER SCHOOL

A second Not Equal Summer School is planned for July 2020. This will be led by Dr Clara Crivellaro and will take place in Newcastle.