

BELGRADE DIGITAL FREEDOM PLEDGE

Digital platforms connect everyone, transcend state borders, and have an indirect or direct impact on everyone on our planet. Therefore, having in mind such great importance and responsibility, we, the undersigned stakeholders, declare our intention to seek urgent, global, and humane solutions to the essential challenges and dilemmas brought by emerging technologies, in order to propose global standards and regulations, to protect individual rights and freedoms, such as the right to privacy and freedom of speech, and promote individual and collective well-being. Inspired by the work of Jaron Lanier, Michal Kosinski, Max Tegmark, the Center for Humane Technology, and Frances Haugen, we acknowledge the following:

1. We understand the utmost power of machine learning algorithms (such as recommender systems) and web trackers to shape societies (for example, by creating polarizations), as they use digital footprints to give individual content recommendations to every online user, and therefore surpass mainstream media in their influence and scope (global impact).

2. Tech organizations and societies need to make the best possible decisions on how to customize recommender systems for mutual benefit. Therefore, we are open to discussing **online recommender algorithms as a public good**.

3. We strongly propagate **free speech**. Thus, deleting or blocking some content because of hate speech or fake news should be a shared responsibility, previously defined with other relevant stakeholders in society to preserve neutrality.

4. We shall discuss **digital identity as a human right**, as denying it may affect the lives, work, and mental health of individuals.

5. We need to consider online users as owners of their digital footprints and give them complete insight into it and the possibility to customize it (for example, whether it would be used for ad customization or not). We also acknowledge the following:

- We will look for ways to standardize our digital footprint using blockchain or similar technology.
- The online user needs to know who can use their digital footprint while being capable of revocating access to any entity (organization) or all of them.
- The online user must be able to delete their digital footprint completely and at any time.

6. We should stimulate **research into how emerging technologies affect the psychological well-being of citizens**. We recognize this important field is neglected and needs support to direct the development of technology toward individual and social well-being.

December 18, 2022, in Belgrade.

Declared by the undersigned:

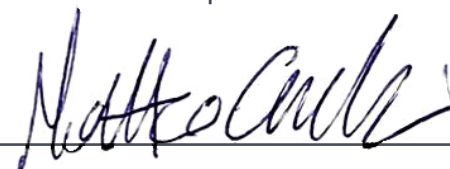
Dr. **Ljubiša Bojić** and Dr. **Jelena Guga** on the behalf of the initiator Digital Society Lab, IFDT, University of Belgrade



Dr. **Dubravko Čulibrk**, The Institute for Artificial Intelligence



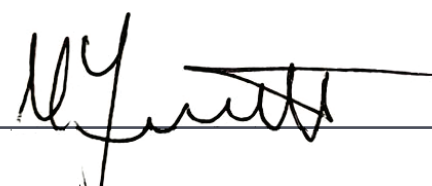
Dr. **Matteo Cinelli**, Sapienza University of Rome



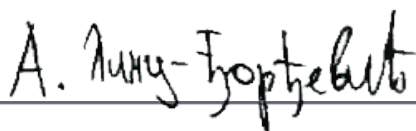
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