

WHAT ARE DIGITAL ETHICS?

The development towards a digital society, which is ‘**always on**’, thus increasingly interacting digitally, implies a gain not only in **communicative freedom**, but also in **responsibility**. The way I behave in a digital world, which attitude I have, and the way I handle conflicts is an expression of my **personal ethos** and my ability to reflect. The phenomena of cyberbullying and hate speech, big data and the algorithmization of behaviour, opinions and identities are reminders of the fact that technical knowledge alone is not sufficient for handling media. There is also a need for **orientation** and a **strong set of values** in order to be able to navigate the online world responsibly.

This ensues **challenges** that cannot be tackled without digital ethics in the **following areas**:

1. Big data and privacy
2. Abusive communication behaviour online
3. Manipulation and information selection
4. Hazard potential through media content
5. Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things
6. Ambient/Virtual Reality

From a digital ethics perspective, this raises the question of how we should deal with these new conditions and requirements for responsibility. **How can we achieve a culture of fairness in the digital world?**



The IDE's Board of Directors

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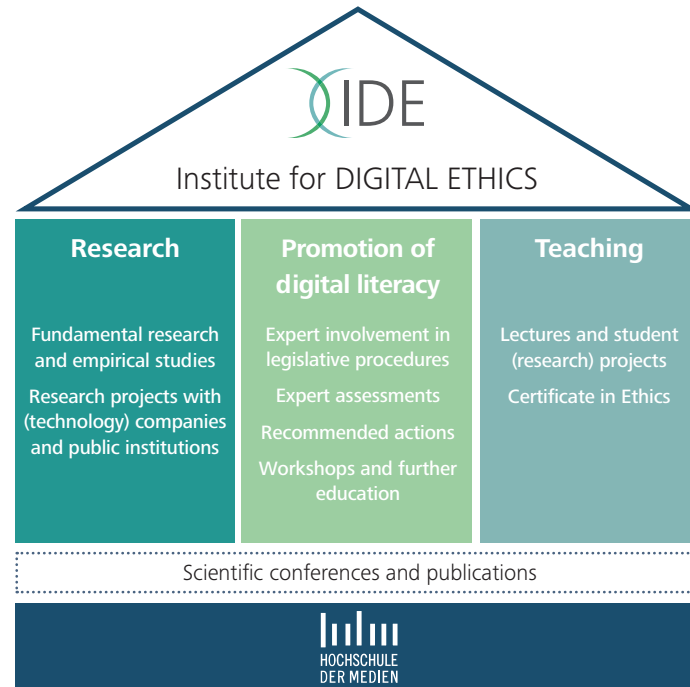
Institute for Digital Ethics

Stuttgart Media University

THE INSTITUTE FOR DIGITAL ETHICS

The Institute for Digital Ethics (IDE) is designed as a dialogue forum and research centre promoting the exchange of ideas between and within the disciplines of media studies, media practice and media politics, thus establishing a dialogue and network function.

Furthermore, one declared objective of the institute is to increase public awareness of current issues concerning media ethics in a digital environment through events, publications and further education. The IDE sees itself as a focal point for media ethical expertise and digital literacy: a centre of excellence with an advisory role.



RESEARCH

Technology, individual life and society are continuously merging and are thus having direct interactions with one another. Therefore, one of the IDE's core activities as a research institute of Stuttgart Media University is to provide analyses of ethical as well as legal implications.

Main research fields of the IDE:

- Cultivation of communication behaviour on the internet in consideration of the phenomena of cyberbullying, hate speech and digital courage
- Big data in the area of human-machine interaction (privacy by design)
- Human-centred development and design of innovative interaction technologies (ethics by design)

Current research projects of the IDE:

- Federal grant project "Co-operative Driver-Vehicle Interaction": safe, efficient and controllable interaction with autonomous vehicles
- Federal grant project "Preventive Digital Safety Communication"
- State grant project "Learning Analytics for Examinations and Academic Success"



PROMOTION OF DIGITAL LITERACY

- Scientific conferences addressing topics relating to digitised society, e.g. the media ethics symposium **IDEepolis**
- Publishing of the only **series on media ethics** in Europe ("Medienethik", with Franz Steiner Verlag)
- Lectures in institutions of all social spheres
- Handouts for educational institutions

The Institute for Digital Ethics considers itself a part of the scientific community and is linked to an array of other institutions. Its scientific board reflects this interconnectedness.



TEACHING

META – Media Ethics Award

- Students of Stuttgart Media University annually confer the META as a seal of quality on exceptional journalistic articles and features. The goal is to promote positive examples of value-conscious and ethical journalism. The course received a teaching award from the state of Baden-Württemberg.

Think Tank

- The Think Tank develops future scenarios for various societal topics which enable the examination of current trends, the most important influencing factors as well as the dynamics of these changes.

Politics & Society

- This course presents a role play of net politics. The task is to discuss five current issues of net politics of the digital society from a party political perspective in a simulated Bundestag debate.

Empirical Media Research

- Master's degree students design sociological research projects surrounding digital ethics and put them into practice.

