



**Association for
Computing Machinery**

News Release:

From Deepfakes to AI Companions, Researchers Gather in Montréal to Tackle AI's Biggest Societal Challenges

ACM FAccT 2026 brings together experts across technology, policy, law, and civil society to explore the future of responsible AI

MONTREAL, Canada, June 25, 2026 – As debates over AI regulation, online safety, deepfakes, algorithmic bias, and AI's growing influence on public life intensify around the world, hundreds of researchers, policymakers, technologists, and civil society leaders will gather in Montréal to explore the real-world impacts of these systems and the frameworks needed to govern them responsibly.

The ninth annual ACM Conference on [Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency \(FAccT 2026\)](#) will take place June 25–28 at Le Centre Sheraton Montréal. Through its partnership with [ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery](#), FAccT is the leading conference focused on the societal impacts of AI and algorithmic systems.

This year's program features more than 300 peer-reviewed papers alongside panels, tutorials, and CRAFT sessions which consist of workshops and community-led discussions, examining topics ranging from AI governance and online safety to climate impacts, AI companions, algorithmic accountability, and emerging risks associated with generative AI.

“As we are seeing—globally and in Canada—rapid integration of AI systems into our social, political, and professional contexts, there is a growing need for research and policy that addresses their benefits, risks, and broader societal consequences, and that includes a wide variety of voices,” said Su Lin Blodgett, General Co-Chair of FAccT 2026 and Visiting Researcher at Mila - Québec AI Institute. “FAccT provides an intentional space for policy, academia, and industry to engage in conversation and rigorous research to explore the possibilities that result in the most just technological futures.”

Research Program Explores AI's Biggest Societal Challenges

ACM FAccT peer-reviewed papers examine how AI systems are affecting people, institutions, and communities, as well as what accountability should look like as these technologies become more widespread. Selected research highlights include:

- **AI's Environmental Footprint:** New research examines how to measure and mitigate the environmental costs associated with AI systems across their lifecycle, from development and training to deployment and operation.
- **AI Companions and Human Relationships:** Researchers investigate how users navigate trust, agency, emotional attachment, and control in interactions with AI systems.
- **Brainrot, Deskillng, and Addiction Are Overlooked AI Risks:** New research explores how increasing reliance on AI tools may contribute to skill erosion, dependency, and other unintended societal consequences.
- **Generative AI, Gender Biases, and Gender-based Violence:** Researchers examine gender biases in AI-generated text and images, gendered impacts of deepfakes and synthetic media, and how chatbots respond to survivors of domestic violence, identifying opportunities and risks when vulnerable individuals turn to AI systems for information and support.
- **AI in the Workplace:** Researchers study the impacts of AI on hiring processes, algorithmic monitoring of workers, and changes to collaboration, workplace norms, and labor dynamics.
- **AI and the Justice System:** Researchers explore how AI can both distract from and enhance justice, as well as its impact on justice system stakeholders, including lawyers, judges, jurors, and incarcerated people.

Panels and Discussions Explore Emerging AI Governance Challenges

Beyond the research program, featured panel discussions, [CRAFT sessions](#), and [tutorials](#) will examine some of today's most pressing technology policy and societal issues, including:

- **AI and Climate Change** — researchers and practitioners discuss AI's environmental footprint, sustainability challenges, and opportunities for responsible innovation.
- **Canadian AI Policy in a Global Context** — experts will offer a range of perspectives on AI governance and regulation, touching on sovereignty and geopolitical considerations.
- **Artificial Intelligence Under Internet Shutdown: Evidence and Lessons from Iran** — a discussion examining the intersection of AI, censorship, conflict, and digital rights during periods of internet disruption.
- **Speculative Futures in a Majority World with No Right to Reality** — a session exploring how generative AI and synthetic content may reshape trust, identity, and public discourse.

[Keynote speakers](#) include Charlton McIlwain (New York University), Lucy Suchman (Lancaster University), Jutta Treviranus (OCAD University), and Krishna Gummadi (Max Planck Institute for Software Systems), whose work spans AI governance, technology policy, inclusion, digital rights, and the societal impacts of computing.

Media who are interested in attending (virtually or in person) may be provided with press credentials by contacting press@facctconference.org.

To learn more, including access to the full program and its papers, please visit www.facctconference.org.

About ACM

[ACM, the Association for Computing Machinery](#), is the world's largest educational and scientific computing society, uniting computing educators, researchers, and professionals to inspire dialogue, share resources, and address the field's challenges. ACM strengthens the computing profession's collective voice through strong leadership, promotion of the highest standards, and recognition of technical excellence. ACM supports the professional growth of its members by providing opportunities for life-long learning, career development, and professional networking.

Contact:

Jim Ormond
212-626-0505
ormond@hq.acm.org