EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES, ONGOING CHALLENGES

Emerging technologies promise to disrupt the way we create and interact with information. Yet, communication design has always been a dynamic, rapidly evolving field—has nothing changed or is nothing the same? Amidst the hype and rapid change, we invite researchers and practitioners to consider emerging technologies alongside ongoing challenges.

In recent years, technical communication scholars and practitioners are increasingly engaging with augmented and virtual reality, augmentation technologies, and now generative AI. These technologies, for better or worse, are increasingly integrated into our toolsets, including but not limited to content management systems, graphic design software, learning management systems, and research software. These emerging tools and technologies promise to make us more efficient and connected, but at what cost? Will automation devalue the human in human-computer interaction? What are the environmental, economic, legal, and social implications of widespread adoption?

Amidst all the hype and change, how do we sustain our profession and our commitments to ongoing challenges? How do we continue to center questions of social justice, access, power, environmental justice, economic precarity, sustainability (of profession, practices, commitments), and disordered information environments (disinformation, misinformation, trust in experts and institutions). How does this work intersect with emerging questions of data provenance, data dignity, intellectual property, and information security?

While emerging technologies present various challenges, we must not lose sight of the new opportunities they afford us. We invite participants to consider how these technologies present opportunities in all areas of their work, including research, teaching, and industry practice.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

As you write your proposals, we invite you to consider the following questions. We include additional questions in the full CFP on the conference website. The question list is not exhaustive and we invite submissions that do not adhere to the conference theme, or that extend beyond these questions. We also welcome submissions that are rooted in neighboring disciplines, such as software development and computer science, healthcare, social work, crisis communication, digital humanities, rhetoric of science & technology, and beyond.

- How are emerging technologies opening up new sites of or approaches to communication design and research?
- How do we (and how should we) engage with emerging technologies in our teaching, research, community, and industry practices?
- What frameworks can help us better understand and work with emerging technologies?
- What opportunities do emerging technologies open up for communication design? For teachers and researchers? For technical communicators, content strategists, and other practitioners?
- What is new or different about emerging technologies? What additional considerations should we give to studying and using emerging technologies?
- What strategies should we employ when studying constantly changing and evolving technologies?
- What is the role of emerging technologies in fostering coalitions/collaborations among community, industry, and academia?
- What literacies are needed to engage technologies responsibly and effectively?

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