ETHICAL STACK

This tool is good for gathering your team to articulate your ethical values as individuals and as a group in relation to your product development

Use this tool at the beginning of product development

Consider the list of ethical values from VIRTEU's fieldwork on communities of new connected technology developers in relation to your product.

As individuals, consider: which values do you strive to uphold in your product? Even if everything in the product "works", it is still important to ask what it is working towards. What are the ethical values that you hold dear, that ground your product? Put another way: would you quit your job or feel as though you've failed your mission if any of these ethical values were compromised?

Please identify the values important for you from the list below. Write them in order of priority on this sheet.

Your name: _____

Data Protection
Control over access to and use of private data. Making sure that users are not adversely affected by the data that is collected, processed or analysed about them- both as individuals and as groups. Giving them the control to erase or alter their data, should they wish to do so.

Dignity
The feeling of control over one's own destiny that entails relationships of respect. Having a say in tracking, surveillance and control through IoT products. Ensuring that no individual or group should be adversely affected or dehumanised as a result of using or not using a product. Reflecting on the implications of connectivity in spaces and contexts users might consider as private.

Well-being
Paying attention to the physical and mental welfare of the users and developers, designers and testers of the product.

Non-discrimination
Making sure no person or group are adversely affected by the use or non-use of the product. Including data processed about them.

Autonomy
The capacity of the user to act, make decisions and express herself without being influenced or forced by a technology.

Transparency
Striving towards achieving clarity throughout the technology development process about the source of materials, hardware and data that goes into the product, including communication of the source of funding for the product.

Participation
Encouraging the users to take active part in the design and development of technology development, whenever possible. Engaging in a dialogue with users throughout the lifetime of a product and ensuring that their voices are heard.

Privacy
A state of being unobserved or disturbed by others. The ability to control access to the self and to data about the self. Giving the users the ability to decide on their own privacy settings. Protecting and ensuring the sanctity of user's private life and personal information.

Accountability
Assuming responsibility and explaining why a decision has been taken the way it has been, if or when potential risks are identified or when adverse consequences of a decision take place.

Interoperability
Supporting connectability of the technology to other IoT technologies, even when they are produced by different companies, and they work on different software architectures. Upholding data portability as a value for both technology developers and users so that they can move their data to other connected products, should they wish to do so.

Safety and Security
Paying attention to all the vulnerabilities the product might cause to users and taking all necessary steps to prevent them from happening. Ensuring that whenever new vulnerabilities are discovered, timely steps are taken to mitigate all risks. Risks, including risks to physical well-being of the users, but also their mental well-being.

Openness and Shareability
Supporting open hardware, software, source code and data. Also supporting platforms that bring together coders, developers and creators to exchange and share ideas and codes. Accepting the idea that the greater the number of people who work on a codebase, the better and stronger it will be.

Sustainability
Considering and accounting for the environmental impacts of sourcing materials and minerals, global production chains and end-of-life technologies. Emphasizing the materiality of technologies that are often considered as non-material (e.g., software, algorithms, cloud).

Inclusion and Equality
Acknowledging diversity as part of the technology development process and striving towards including variety of opinions, backgrounds and capabilities when building a product. Aiming to increase diversity of the teams that build products to minimise bias and potential discrimination.

Responsibility
Assuming duty to take care, being in charge of the decisions taken in a technology development process.

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Place your lists, from the individual reflection, next to each other and identify the differences between the ethical values you chose and / or the priorities.

Discuss: Share with a teammate, and discuss your priorities. What's different? What's the same? Can you negotiate, bargain as needed to make a common list?

People can talk about the same words and mean completely different things.
Ask each other: what do you mean by that - can you bring it down to earth? Make a story?
Ask each other: where would we embed this value in our actual product? How can we really uphold it? Does it compromise another value?

If this step is taking you longer than 20 minutes, get some water.

If this step is taking you longer than 1 hour, consider looking into more detailed value articulation exercises such as http://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/wevalue/

Now that you've considered each other's priorities, write a common final list, in priority.

Write short descriptions of what each value means to your team.

When done, commit to it. You'll be revisiting this a lot throughout your work.

Your prioritised list of values and descriptions:

Your names: _____

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