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## Fostering Responsible IS Research

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# Fostering Responsible IS Research

Panel

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## ABSTRACT

The proposed panel, "Fostering Responsible IS Research," responds to a collective call within the academic community to strengthen engagement of Information Systems (IS) scholars in responsible research. Delving into topics such as human trafficking and environmental sustainability, panelists Laurie Giddens, Ping Wang, Amber Grace Young, and Suchit Ahuja will offer insights into ethical considerations, barriers, and the role of academia in promoting responsible research practices in IS. Attendees will gain a nuanced understanding of responsible research principles, considerations for sensitive topics, and the support available to navigate ethical challenges in IS research. Through sequential presentations and a Q&A session, the panel aims to foster a culture of responsible research that transcends academic boundaries, making a meaningful impact on society.

## Keywords

Digital responsibility, responsible research, ethical research, relevance, impact

## PANEL OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVE:

As information systems (IS) scholars, it is incumbent upon us to critically examine the significance and impact of our research on not just IT and business managers but also on the broader society. Recent publications such as the special issue on responsible IS research in ISJ (Davison et al., 2023), the call for papers on digital responsibility in JAIS (JAIS, 2023), and MISQ's editorial on producing significant research (Burton Jones et al., 2023) collectively accentuate a cry for the academic community to strengthen engagement in responsible IS research.

As the scope of IS inquiries broadens to include sensitive and impactful topics, such as human trafficking (Giddens et al. 2023), environmental sustainability (Monson 2023), and digital platforms for marginalized communities (Ahuja et al. 2023), the need to ensure that this research is conducted responsibly - to genuinely make the world a better place (Davison et al., 2023; Stahl, 2012) - has become even more crucial.

But what constitutes responsible IS research, how do scholars engage *with* responsible research, what benefits and challenges exist in engaging with such research, and what support structures exist within the academic ecosystem to encourage and guide rising and seasoned scholars to pursue responsible IS projects? The proposed panel, "Fostering Responsible IS Research," aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of responsible IS research inherent in various stages of the research continuum—from ideation and authoring to reviewing, and beyond. By delving into these areas, the panel aims to not only clarify the concept and importance of responsible IS research but also to foster a culture that makes a significant impact on various stakeholders beyond IT users and IT managers.

Attendees of this panel will:

- Gain a deeper understanding of what constitutes responsible research practices in the IS field and identify the essential principles that should guide scholars in conducting responsible IS research,
- Learn about the considerations required when tackling sensitive research topics like human trafficking,
- Learn about the barriers to conducting responsible research, such as data privacy concerns, the sensitivity of certain topics, and navigating institutional review processes especially in international contexts,

- Gain insights into the responsibilities of reviewers and editors in fostering an environment that prioritizes responsible research submissions and publications, and
- Learn about the support systems and resources available within the academic ecosystem that encourage and facilitate the pursuit of responsible IS research projects.

#### PANEL LAYOUT

The panel discussion will adhere to a sequential presentation format. Initially, the moderator will introduce each panelist, providing a concise overview of the perspectives they bring to the discussion. Subsequently, each panelist will deliver a presentation lasting approximately 10-12 minutes, elaborating on their viewpoint regarding the topic at hand. Following the presentations, a Q&A session lasting 12-20 minutes will ensue, providing panelists the opportunity to engage in discourse amongst themselves and address inquiries from the audience.

#### PANEL PARTICIPANTS

**Laurie Giddens** is an Assistant Professor of Information Systems in the G. Brint Ryan College of Business at the University of North Texas. Prior to earning her Ph.D. in Information Systems at Baylor University, she worked for over 10 years in the nonprofit sector in various information technology, management, and consulting roles. Her research investigates how individuals and organizations utilize information systems to improve the wellbeing of users, the workforce, and society. Specifically, her research explores how technology impacts anti-human trafficking efforts, digital social inclusion, and sustainable consumption. Her research is published in outlets including Information Systems Journal, Journal of the Association for Information Systems, Computers and Security and Communications of the AIS and has been presented at numerous international information systems conferences. Additionally, her research has been funded by The National Science Foundation and the IBM Center for the Business of Government.

**Ping Wang** is on the faculty at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is also an associate editor at MIS Quarterly and associate of the Information Systems Research Program at UCLA Anderson School. In Academic Year 2023-24, he served on the faculty of the University of Queensland Business School in Australia. His research draws on institutional theory to understand the popularity of new information technologies. In recent years he has taken an ecological perspective to study digital innovations, social justice, sustainability, and climate actions in organizations, communities, and ecosystems. He received the Outstanding Associate Editor Award at MIS Quarterly in 2023, Best Paper Award at the 37th International Conference on Information Systems in 2016, and the Best Published Paper Award from the Organizational Communication and Information Systems Division of the Academy of Management in 2010. On his personal website [drpingwang.com], he summarizes his research: “I study technology, organization, and nature that shape innovations for a better world.”

**Amber Grace Young** is Associate Professor of Information Systems at the Sam M. Walton College of Business, University of Arkansas. Her research interests center on the ethical design of IS and the responsible use of technology within organizations and society. She has published in top IS journals and conferences on these topics and serves as Associate Editor of MIS Quarterly. Amber believes in the value of scientific research to help us understand how the world works and enact positive change. Yet, she knows research only has value if it is credible, trustworthy, and accepted by the public. To this end, she seeks to understand behaviors within scientific communities that impede responsible research and how facilitating conditions for responsible research can be fostered. Her prior role as ISYS PhD Director also spurred an interest in the supply chain of responsible research and the ethical treatment of PhD students.

**Suchit Ahuja** is Assistant Professor and Director of the M.Sc. program in Business Analytics and Technology Management at the John Molson School of Business, Concordia University. He obtained his Ph.D. from the Smith School of Business, Queen’s University and his M.Sc. in IT from Purdue University. His research interests are at the intersection of digital innovation, transformation, and entrepreneurship and social impact. He is an expert in responsible innovation, frugal digital innovation, social and community-based innovation, and digital platform ecosystems. Suchit has published his research in IS and related journals such as ISJ, CAIS, IT4D, Journal of Community Informatics, and Journal of Small Business Management as well as top tier conferences such as ICIS, AMCIS, AoM, Conf-IRM, R&D Management, etc. Suchit will bring to this panel, his experiences and insights from working on digital innovation, platforms, and ecosystems with marginalized communities, rural and remote populations, and micro and small enterprises, across Canada, USA, India, and South America. He will highlight the key theoretical and empirical aspects of responsible innovation within a digital technology context and the implications of applying such an approach to “research with” rather than “research on” marginalized populations.

**EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

- Table with five chairs: one for the moderator and four for the panelists
- Five microphones: one each for the moderator and four panelists
- A mobile microphone that can be circulated for questions from the audience
- A laptop with internet connection and USB port
- Projector

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