The Data Values Project

Demanding a fair data future
A #DataValues Manifesto

The power to use information to solve society's problems has always been key to human progress. From the printing press to vaccine development, new data, analysis, and knowledge has empowered people to rewrite the rules and dramatically improve lives.

Yet now, as humanity confronts existential challenges of climate change, food insecurity, and pandemics, we are not using the best data available to tackle the worst problems. Declining trust, exclusion, inequality, and outdated ways of working are creating barriers between data and those who stand to benefit the most from it.

Data needs to serve everyone, and getting it right is as much a political and social endeavor as it is a technical one. We must build data systems that help and empower people, instead of harming and excluding them. This demands change in the ways we design, collect, fund, manage, and use data.

The #DataValues movement is calling for urgent action to create a fair data future. Organizations, governments, and people must act now and together to create this change.

What will it take?

1.
Support people to shape how they are represented in data.
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People must have a say in data design and collection that affects their lives. Everyone deserves to have their needs, priorities, and experiences—as they define them—captured in data.

2.
Invest in public participation for accountability.
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People must be included in decisions related to data use and re-use. This is essential to hold leaders accountable, protect people from harm, and improve lives.

3.
Democratize data skills for greater equality.
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Everyone, everywhere must gain confidence to engage with and use data. Wide-spread data confidence is a building block of a fair data future.

4.
Create cultures of transparency, data sharing, and use.
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All leaders must invest in strengthening cultures of data use and re-use. Repeated positive experiences of regulating, sharing, and using data for public good will build trust.

5.
Fund open and responsive data systems so that all people share in the benefits of data.
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Governments and donors must dedicate more funding to data systems that support action and promote participation and inclusion from start to finish.