Chinasa T. Okolo, Ph.D.

www.chinasatokolo.com

Research Interests	AI governance, human-centered AI, geopolitics, African development, technology policy

Education

Cornell University, Ithaca, NY	2018 – 2023
Doctor of Philosophy, Computer Science	
Master of Science, Computer Science	
Pomona College, Claremont, CA	2014 – 2018
Bachelor of Arts, Computer Science	

Selected Fellowships, Honors, and Awards

Forbes 30 Under 30 - AI	Dec 2024
TIME100 Most Influential People in AI	Sep 2024
MIPAD Global Top Futurist & Innovator	May 2024
Trailblazers in Engineering	Jul 2023
Rising Stars in Management Science & Engineering	May 2023
ICICLE Educational Fellow, National Science Foundation	May 2023
Bouchet Graduate Honor Society Scholar, Cornell University	Jan 2023
Distinguished Leadership in Service Award, Cornell Bowers CIS	Nov 2022
Provost Diversity Fellowship, Cornell Graduate School	Oct 2022
LEAP Alliance Dissertation Fellowship, Google	Sep 2022
Community Outreach Award, Cornell Graduate School	May 2022
100 Brilliant Women in AI Ethics™	Dec 2021
blackcomputeHER Fellow, blackcomputeHER.org	Mar 2020
John Postel Scholar, North American Network Operators Group	Aug 2019
UNCF Oracle Academy Fellow, Oracle Corporation	Jul 2019
Graduate Dean's Scholar, Cornell University	May 2019
GEM Fellowship, The National GEM Consortium	Apr 2019

Selected Publications

My full list of publications is available on Google Scholar.

Publications

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Governance of AI-based Algorithms." To appear in the *Springer Handbook of Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence. Edited by Wei Xu. Springer Nature*, 2025.

Chinasa T. Okolo and *Mubarak Raji. "The Majority World in Global AI Governance." To appear in the Handbook on the Global Governance of AI. Edited by Markus Furendal and Magnus Lundgren. Edward Elgar Publishing, 2025.*

Teanna Barrett, **Chinasa T. Okolo**, *B. Biira, Eman Sherif, Amy X. Zhang, and Leilani Battle. "African Data Ethics: A Discursive Framework for Black Decolonial Data Science." In the ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability and Transparency (FAccT), 2025.*

Claire Dennis, Sam Manning, Stephen Clare, Boxi Wu, Jake Okechukwu Effoduh, **Chinasa T. Okolo**, *Lennart Heim, and Katya Klinova. "Options and Motivations for International AI Benefit Sharing." Centre for the Governance of AI (GovAI), 2025.*

Hongjin Lin, Naveena Karusala, **Chinasa T. Okolo**, *Catherine D'Ignazio, and Krzysztof Gajos. " 'Come to us first': Centering Community Organizations in Artificial Intelligence for Social Good Partnerships." In the Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (PACM), 2024.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Hongjin Lin. "Explainable AI in Practice: Practitioner Perspectives on AI for Social Good and User Engagement in the Global South." In the ACM Conference on Equity and Access in Algorithms, Mechanisms, and Optimization (EAAMO), 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Operationalizing Comprehensive Data Governance in Africa." In the African Journal of Sustainable Development (AJSD) Special Issue: "Redefining African Futures: The State, Resilience, and Pathways to Progress." 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "African Democracy in the Era of Generative Disinformation: Challenges and Countermeasures against AI-Generated Propaganda." In the Building a Just AI Ecosystem in Africa Conference. Research ICT Africa, 2024.

Kadijatou Diallo, Jonathan Smith, **Chinasa T. Okolo**, Dorcas Nyamwaya, Jonas Kgomo, and Richard Ngamita. "African Case Studies in AI Policy Development." In the Data for Policy Conference. Cambridge University Press, 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Beyond AI Hype: A Hands-on Workshop Series for Enhancing AI Literacy in Middle and High School Students." In the Conference for Research on Equity and Sustained Participation in Engineering, Computing, and Technology (RESPECT), 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo and Hongjin Lin. " 'You can't build what you don't understand': Practitioner Perspectives on Explainable AI in the Global South." In the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo*, Dhruv Agarwal*, Aditya Vashistha, Nicola Dell. " 'If it is easy to understand then it will have value': Examining Perceptions of Explainable AI with Community Health Workers in Rural India." In the Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction (PACM), 2024.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Addressing Global Inequity in AI Development." Handbook of Critical Studies of Artificial Intelligence. Edward Elgar Publishers, 2023.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "The Promise and Perils of Generative AI: Case Studies in an African Context." In the African Conference for Human Computer Interaction (AfriCHI), 2023.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Towards a Praxis for Intercultural Ethics in Explainable AI." In the Many Worlds of AI Conference, 2023.

Chinasa T. Okolo, Kehinde Aruleba, and George Obaido. "Challenges to Effective AI Adoption and Implementation in Africa." Responsible AI in Africa - Challenges and Opportunities, pp 35-64. Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2023.

Chinasa T. Okolo, Nicola Dell, and Aditya Vashistha. "Making AI Explainable in the Global South: A Systematic Review." In the Conference on Computing and Sustainable Societies (COMPASS), 2022.

Chinasa T. Okolo. "Optimizing Human-centered AI for Healthcare in the Global South." Patterns, 100421. Cell Press, 2022.

Chinasa T. Okolo, Srujana Kamath, Nicola Dell, and Aditya Vashistha. " 'It cannot do all of my work': Community Health Worker Perceptions of AI-Enabled Mobile Health Applications in Rural India." In the Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI), 2021.

Commentaries and Op-Eds	**Chinasa T. Okolo.** *"AI Safety is a Misnomer Without Global Majority Inclusion."* Compiler, 2025.

Commentaries and Op-Eds

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"AI Safety is a Misnomer Without Global Majority Inclusion." Compiler, 2025.*

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"Re-envisioning AI Safety Through Global Majority Perspectives." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2025.*

Katherine Grillaert, Matt Kennedy, and **Chinasa T. Okolo.** *"Risks of State-Led AI Governance in a Federal Policy Vacuum." Tech Policy Press, 2025.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Marie Tano. *"Closing the gap: A call for more inclusive language technologies." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2024.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Marie Tano. *"Moving Toward Truly Responsible AI Development in the Global AI Market." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2024.*

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"Examining the capabilities and risks of advanced AI systems." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2024.*

Charles Asiegbu and **Chinasa T. Okolo**. *"How AI is Impacting Policy Processes and Outcomes in Africa." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2024.*

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"Reforming Data Regulation to Advance AI Governance in Africa." Foresight Africa. The Brookings Institution, 2024.*

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"AI in the Global South: Opportunities and challenges towards more inclusive governance." TechTank. The Brookings Institution, 2023.*

Workshop Publications

Abigail Oppong, Hellina Nigatu, and **Chinasa T. Okolo**. *"Examining the Cultural Encoding of Gender Bias in LLMs for Low-Resourced African Languages." Workshop on Gender Bias for Natural Language Processing (ACL), 2025.*

Yung-Hsuan Wu, Nitya Kuthiala, Joanna Wiaterek, Jonas Kgomo, and **Chinasa T. Okolo**. *"Through the Praxis Lens: Approaching the AI Lifecycle with Ethnographic Methods." Participatory AI Research & Practice Symposium, 2025.*

Alan Chan*, **Chinasa T. Okolo***, Zachary Terner*, and Angelina Wang*. *"The Limits of Global Inclusion in AI Development." Reframing Diversity in AI: Representation, Inclusion, and Power Workshop (AAAI), 2021.*

Chinasa T. Okolo. *"'AI in the 'Real World': Examining the Impact of AI Deployment in Low-Resource Contexts." Navigating the Broader Impacts of AI Research Workshop (NeurIPS), 2020.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Michelle González Amador*. *"ACIPS: A Framework for Evaluating Patient Perception in the Introduction of AI-enabled Healthcare." Data4Good: Designing for Diversity and Development Workshop (AVI), 2020.*

Ezinne Nwankwo, **Chinasa T. Okolo**, and Cynthia Habonimana. *"Topic Modeling Approaches for Understanding COVID-19 Misinformation Spread in Sub-Saharan Africa." In the AI for Social Good Workshop (Harvard University CRCS), 2020.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Bharath Hariharan. *"CNN/RNN Approaches for Irregular Pediatric Respiratory Motion Detection." In the Women in Machine Learning Workshop (ICML), 2020.*

Chinasa T. Okolo and Bharath Hariharan. *"Automated detection of irregular pediatric breathing movements." In the Women in Computer Vision Workshop (CVPR), 2020.*

Selected Presentations

My full list of talks is available on my academic website.

AI Explainability in the Global Majority: Development and Policy Perspectives
- *Explainable AI for Computer Vision Workshop at CVPR, Remote*   *Jun 2025*

Artificial Intelligence & International Security
- *BPIA Colin Powell Leadership Institute, Remote*   *Jun 2025*

Broadening Perspectives on African Governance in the Era of AI
- *Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA*   *Apr 2025*
- *Harvard University, Cambridge, MA*   *Jan 2025*
- *Autonomous Innovation Summit, Remote*   *Jan 2025*
- *University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa*   *Nov 2024*
- *ACM ICAIF AI in Africa Workshop, Remote*   *Nov 2024*
- *Wharton Lauder Institute Africa Regional Seminar, Philadelphia, PA*   *Oct 2024*
- *Michigan AI Seminar, Ann Arbor, MI*   *Oct 2024*

Globalizing Perspectives on AI Governance: Africa's Role in International AI Cooperation
- *Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.*   *Mar 2024*
- *University of Florida, Gainesville, FL*   *Feb 2024*
- *University of Texas, Austin, TX*   *Feb 2024*
- *Harvard/MIT Advancements in Global AI Policy, Virtual*   *Dec 2023*
- *EquiAI Future of AI Governance Webinar, Virtual*   *Nov 2023*

Towards a Digital Frontier: The Next Stage of Africa's AI Startup Ecosystem
- *DZGENAI'23, Beni Abbes, Algeria*   *Dec 2023*
- *AI for Africa/African Startup Conference, Algiers, Algeria*   *Dec 2023*

AI Explainability in the Global South: Towards an Inclusive Praxis for Emerging Technology Users
- *University of Maryland AI Seminar, College Park, MD*   *Mar 2024*
- *Georgetown Hoyalytics Seminar, Washington, D.C.*   *Oct 2023*
- *Pomona College CS Colloquium, Claremont, CA*   *Sep 2023*
- *Yale Digital Humanities Lab Seminar Series, Virtual*   *Aug 2023*

Examining Perceptions of Explainable AI with Community Health Workers in Rural India
- *Stanford MS&E Rising Stars Workshop, Stanford, CA*   *May 2023*
- *MIDAS Future Leaders Summit, Ann Arbor, MI*   *Apr 2023*
- *Yale Bouchet Conference, New Haven, CT*   *Mar 2023*

Making AI Explainable for Novice Technology Users in Low-Resource Settings
- *Microsoft Africa Research Institute Seminar, Virtual*   *Mar 2023*
- *University of Washington Change Seminar, Virtual*   *Oct 2022*
- *Trustworthy AI Workshop at DeepIndaba, Virtual*   *Aug 2022*
- *Google Research India AI for Social Good Group, Bangalore, India*   *Jul 2022*
- *Microsoft Technology & Empowerment Seminar, Bangalore, India*   *Jul 2022*

Professional Activities and Service	***Partnership on AI***	*Aug 2025 – Present*
	SAIGE Council Member	
	Assisting PAI in the development of a new five-year strategic plan.	
	Global Index on Responsible AI	*Jul 2025 – Present*
	Scientific Advisory Committee Member	
	Consulting on the draft measurement framework for the Index.	
	Harvard Extension School	*Aug 2024 – Present*
	Advisory Board Member	
	Informing the direction of the Global Development Practice Master's program.	
	Computing Research Association	*Sep 2024 – Apr 2025*
	Governance Working Group	
	Reviewed and modified organizational governance processes.	
	ACM SIGCAS	*Aug 2024 – Present*
	Editor-in-Chief, Computers and Society	
	Reviewing and editing articles for newsletter production.	
	Equiano Institute	*Aug 2023 – Present*
	Ethics Advisor	
	Advising research on safe and trustworthy AI in Africa.	
	Federal Ministry of Communications, Innovation & Digital Economy	*Dec 2023 – Aug 2024*
	Expert Consultant	
	Developing Nigeria's National AI Strategy and evaluating AI research grants.	
	IEEE Standards Association	*Mar 2023 – Present*
	Working Group Member, Algorithmic Bias	
	Developing guidelines to address issues of bias in algorithm development.	
	African Union	*Jun 2022 – Present*
	Drafting Member, AU Continental Strategy on AI	
	Developing a report to guide AI strategy & policy within the African continent.	
	ACM	*Jun 2022 – Present*
	Member, US Technology Policy Committee	
	Consulting on computing-related policy issues.	
	Mechanism Design for Social Good	*2020 – 2021*
	Co-Organizer, Working Group for Development	
	Led projects using technology to address challenges in the Global South.	

Grant Committees	***Reviewer***
	• *Nigeria AI Research Scheme (NAIRS)*
	• *National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)*
	• *Deep Learning Indaba*
	• *Lacuna Fund Racial Equity & Health*

Program Committees	***Paper Reviewer***
	• *NeurIPS Conference*
	• *ACM CSCW Conference*
	• *ACM FAccT Conference*
	• *ACM EAAMO Conference*

- *ACM CHI Conference*
- *ACM COMPASS Conference*
- *ACM/IEEE RESPECT Conference*
- *Data for Policy Conference*
- *Cell Press*

Workshop Paper/Poster Reviewer
- *Autonomous Agents for Social Good Workshop at AAMAS*
- *Workshop on Machine Learning for the Developing World at NeurIPS*
- *Workshop on Mechanism Design for Social Good (MD4SG)*
- *Practical Machine Learning for Developing Countries Workshop at ICLR*
- *ACM Richard Tapia Celebration of Diversity in Computing Conference*

Conference Chair, Session Chair, Volunteer
RESPECT Conference (Volunteer), ML4H Symposium (Outreach Co-Chair), ACM EAAMO (Registration Co-Chair), ACM COMPASS (Student Volunteer), ICTD Conference (Student Volunteer), ACM FAccT (Session Chair), Women in Machine Learning Workshop (WiML) at NeurIPS (Volunteer)

Work Experience

Fellow Aug 2023 – Present
The Brookings Institution Washington, D.C.
Conducting research and policy analysis on AI-related issues in the Global Majority.

Expert Contributing Writer Feb 2024 – May 2025
Mila - Quebec AI Institute Remote
Drafting the International AI Safety Report under the leadership of Professor Yoshua Bengio and guidance of the UK Department for Science, Innovation and Technology.

Graduate Student Success Consultant May 2022 – Jul 2023
Cornell Diversity Programs in Engineering Ithaca, NY
Developed educational and extracurricular programming for underrepresented STEM graduate and postdoctoral students.

Strategic Growth Research Intern Jun 2022 – Dec 2022
Harambeans Remote
Tracked funding updates, investor activity, and venture growth of African startups. Analyzed business models and partnerships to guide organizational restructuring.

HID Health Incubation Intern May 2021 – Aug 2021
Apple Remote
Developed new Responsible AI/ML methodologies for health sensing applications.

Ryan Scholars Graduate Coordinator Aug 2019 – May 2022
Cornell Diversity Programs in Engineering Ithaca, NY
Hosted academic coaching sessions focused on developing goals and action plans centered on academic, personal, and professional success of scholars in the program.

Strategic Advisor May 2020 – May 2021
Doing Good Work in Africa (DOWA) Remote
Formed corporate partnerships with African-based companies, public entities, and NGOs. Connected university students to internship and volunteer opportunities.

TA Development Consultant   *May 2019 – May 2020*
Cornell University College of Engineering   *Ithaca, NY*
Developed and co-facilitated workshops to prepare new graduate and undergraduate TAs for their roles in working with students by learning innovative teaching methods.

Program Assistant   *Jul 2019*
Cornell Diversity Programs in Engineering   *Ithaca, NY*
Assisted program directors and residential assistants for the CURIE Academy summer program. Mentored high school girls interested in pursuing engineering.

Technology Education Intern   *Sep 2016 – Dec 2016*
Pomona Hope Community Center   *Pomona, CA*
Revamped the technology curriculum for K-5 students by introducing computer science concepts in visual programming languages such as Tynker, Blockly, and Lightbot.

Microbiology Laboratory Intern   *Feb 2015 – May 2015*
Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center   *Pomona, CA*
Worked in Point of Care to meet hospital needs such as employee data management, servicing healthcare electronic devices for nurses, and quality control of shipments.

Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant   *Jan 2019 – Jul 2023*
Cornell University   *Ithaca, NY*
Departments: Computer Science & Information Science
Conducted user studies to understand perceptions and implications of AI in low-resource contexts. Developed explainable AI prototypes to understand important aspects of model decision-making for novice technology users. Secured $200k in funding for research, writing, and travel.

Africa's Digital Future Fellow   *Feb 2023 – Mar 2023*
E4E   *Remote*
Conducted research on tech policy and AI regulation in Africa in preparation for submission to the UN Global Digital Compact.

Research Intern   *May 2018 – Aug 2018*
Microsoft Research   *Cambridge, UK*
Group: Biological Computation, Mentors: Andrew Phillips, Paul Grant
Developed techniques for understanding information processing in biological systems. Created computational models and domain-specific tools for bacterial quorum sensing.

Research Assistant   *Sep 2017 – May 2018*
Pomona College   *Claremont, CA*
Department: Computer Science, Mentor: Alexandra Papoutsaki
Analyzed gaze prediction and computer vision techniques in eye-tracking library/web applications. Classified training datasets and isolated factors that cause inaccuracy.

NSF REU Student Researcher   *May 2017 – Aug 2017*
Carnegie Mellon University   *Pittsburgh, PA*
Department: Computational Biology, Mentors: Robert Murphy, Joshua Kangas
Used software engineering methodologies to improve the UI/UX of CellOrganizer, a tool used to learn generative models of cell organization and synthesize cell images.

Research Assistant   *Sep 2015 – Dec 2016*
Pomona College   *Claremont, CA*
Department: Neuroscience, Mentor: Elizabeth Glater
Wrote and edited MATLAB code to efficiently track the movement of Caenorhabditis elegans. Ran behavioral assays, made LB agar plates, and inoculated bacteria.

HHMI EXROP Fellow   *Jun 2016 – Aug 2016*
Columbia University   *New York, NY*
Departments: Neuroscience, Physiology, Mentor: Michael N. Shadlen
Crafted experiments to test visual perception and decision-making in human and non-human primates by tracking eye movements and response time to visual stimuli.

NSF REU Student Researcher   *May 2015 – Aug 2015*
The University of Georgia   *Athens, GA*
Departments: Computer Science, Infectious Diseases, Mentor: Shannon Quinn
Used computational methods to advance analysis of organellar network evolution to detect changes in morphology of epithelial lung cells.

Teaching Experience

Graduate Teaching Assistant   *Aug 2018 - Aug 2019*
Cornell University   *Ithaca, NY*
Taught discussion sections and occasional lectures. Hosted office hours and coordinated project grading with other class TAs and undergraduate consultants.
- *CS 1112, Introduction to Computing with MATLAB*   *Fall 2018*
- *CS 2110, Object-Oriented Programming and Data Structures*   *Summer 2019*

Collaborative Learning Facilitator   *Jun 2019 – Aug 2019*
Cornell University   *Ithaca, NY*
Facilitated recitations and tutored students in the Fundamental Programming Concepts (CS 1109) course.

Coursework

Graduate Level (Computer Science)*: Advanced Systems; Computer Vision; Advanced Artificial Intelligence; The Structure of Information Networks; Data Science for Social Change*

Graduate Level (Information Science)*: Health & Computation; Information, Society, & Technology; Technology for Underserved Communities, Design Research*

Graduate Level (Business & Management)*: Business & Management Fundamentals for STEM Graduate Students; Entrepreneurship for Scientists and Engineers; AI Strategy & Applications; Technology Strategy; Entrepreneurial Strategy for Technology Ventures*

Licenses and Certifications

- *CITI IRB Training*
- *CITI Good Clinical Practice*
- *CITI Biomedical Research Investigators and Key Personnel*
- *CITI Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for Engineering*
- *CITI Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for Physical Sciences*

Professional Organizations

United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA), Black Professionals in International Affairs, The Internet Society, ACM Special Interest Group on Computer–Human Interaction, Association for Computing Machinery, Black in AI