European Institute for Global Well-being

Manifest 2022

Our **main goal** is to humbly serve the role of helping to build *knowledge-based societies*. A *Knowledge-based Well-being Society* promotes education, information, and dissemination of knowledge through its members to drive innovation, entrepreneurship and dynamism of the community's well-being. Well-being is the expansion of individuals and communities to their fullest potential. It depends upon the meeting of basic human health conducive to sustainable full flourishing in a community that feels right and good. This is however only possible if we fully understand and endorse the concept of open science. At the e-Glow institute we believe that the concept of open science must be expanded to its full potential: that scientific knowledge must be exchanged between academia, industry and governmental institutions with the responsibility of designing and constructing well-being societies of the future. As a mission-driven institute, the following **core values** permeate everything that we do:

Synergy: The combined value of working together is greater than the sum of the separate individual parts. We value the merits of intuition and collaboration for knowledge exchange. We believe that sharing knowledge is an important driver of wellbeing. The exchange of knowledge must be beyond the academic gatekeeping. Scientific results must be put to practical use for society.

Diversity & Inclusion: Diverse environments offer the unique richness where ideas flourish to expand the full potentials of human understanding, growth, learning and becoming, which ultimately are determinants of wellbeing. Beyond researchers, we must be held responsible for who we are and want to be as a socio-cultural epistemic community. We must do so fully aware of our cognitive bias towards underrepresented members in society and academia (gender, non-white, first-generation in academia, etc.). We must actively educate ourselves to contribute and construct a community without borders of any kind.

Research Integrity: we endorse the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of the Associations of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) and the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity of the All European Academies (the ALLEA Code). It endorses principles of honesty, transparency, independence and responsibility. All researchers and partners are expected to be familiar with these principles and to act in accordance with them.

Intellectual humility: Saint Augustine famously called humility the foundation of all other virtues. Intellectual humility is a mindset that guides our intellectual conduct. We recognise and own our intellectual limitations in the service of pursuing knowledge, truth, and understanding.

Human-nature coupling: An action that does not dignify the natural world is not worth pursuing. We cherish a view of the world that respects organic processes and the coupling between human and the natural world. Aware of the ways in which we exert unjust dominance

over nature, especially when it comes to technology, we advocate for an attitude that values earth and embraces all life.

Interdisciplinarity: we make no hierarchical distinctions between sources of knowledge. We believe that all areas, methods, and techniques contributing to the elucidation of a question or a problem have an important role to play. The more these areas dialogue, the closer we are to a full picture or model of phenomena in the natural world.

We live today in the digitalisation era. While technology has always been a major component of the history of human evolution, the more tech-driven the sociocultural environments though the bigger the challenges. From stones and sticks to spaceships, technology aims at solving human issues promising prosperity, safety, health and sustainability. Research however shows that rapid digitalisation and technology leads to (1) *greater inequality*, not only in terms of its access *per se* but also algorithm bias (Gui and Büchi, 2021; Yu et al., 2018); (2) *rising authoritarianism* with the exploiting of AI markets in ways that further erode the privacy and autonomy of their users (Walker, Kalathil and Ludwig, 2020); and *rampant misinformation* with the manipulation of public perspective via online disinformation propagating destructive biases and fears as the psychological bases of prejudice and political conservatism (Anderson, Rainie and Vogels, 2021; Ray and George, 2019). Infinite lines of code make unjustified distinctions between people based on groups they belong to or are perceived to belong to (e.g. social status, gender, race, etc.). This is a problem increasingly becoming evident in diverse fields of society: education (Baker and Hawn, 2021); autonomous systems (Danks and London, 2017, Howard and Borenstein, 2018); health care (Panch, Mattie and Atun, 2019); fair economic distribution and decisions (Cowgill and Tucker, 2020; 2019), in the courtroom (Rozhkova, 2022; Cowgill and Tucker, 2019), to name a few.

The recognition of the situatedness of technological environments in this manner allows us to directly address and design strategies to overcome its embedded societal issues such as discrimination, sustainability, misinformation. This is possible if we highlight central aspects of sociocultural settings, like nature, body, and identity, in the omnipresence of *technoscientific* discourses and practices. Scientific knowledge and technological worlds are active constructions of entangled material, social, and historical agents. Urgent topics of research include environmental harm, digital media, cyborg bodies, biotechnology, disability, etc. It is required to develop new theories on how politics of identity markers root the processes of technical change and power relations nurtured by a sociocultural setting (Costello and Floegel, 2021; Åsberg and Lykke, 2010). Weber (2006) suggests a way forward through three steps:

(1) ***denaturalisation***, adopting a stance of the continuity between nature and culture, in which technoscientific work does not aim to create but to continue the work of nature. Nature, organisms, and bodies evolve together with technology;

(2) ***dematerialisation***: understanding that concepts employed in daily life, e.g. women, black people, etc. are not a natural category but used as a form of a sociocultural practice with meanings. That these meanings are flexible to change.

(3) ***renaturalisation***: initiating the process of empowerment of those who do not fit the margins of the production of knowledge and culture.

The realisations that technical change is a continuation of the work of nature, that identity markers root the processes of technical change, and that knowledge is situated, i.e. socio-cultural meanings are embedded in technoscientific practices, offer directions to the construction of societies and communities that fell right and a good for everyone: i.e. *knowledge-based well-being societies*. A *Knowledge-based Well-being Society* is however only possible if **research results and data are put to practical use** by the industry, government and societal organisations with the responsibility of designing the communities. It has been scientifically shown that the industry-academia knowledge exchange adds value for all parties (Delannoy, 2022; Marijan and Gotlieb, 2021; Lanz, Pieters and Ghabcheloo, 2019). The European Commission thereby has issued a directive encouraging the transition to "making results work for society" (European Commission, 2021). In the same document, it is shown that Europe is a scientific powerhouse with 79 % of the European citizens are interested in new scientific discoveries; the EU counts 1.97 million researchers and produces one-third of the world's scientific publications. However, only 35% of academics report cooperation with non-academic actors. The question then is: can we effectively valorise knowledge? One important step forward is to build the bridges between academia and those with the responsibility to construct communities, i.e. technological environments and smart living. More precisely, build the links between those who have a role to play in knowledge generation, such as academia, industry, governmental institutions to make results work for society, especially, in the creation of well-being societies of the future.

Research priorities in 2022-2023 are the creation and/or repair of the connection between humans and nature. It is crucial to repair and reconnect our societies with nature, respecting organic processes and the coupling between humans and the natural world. Aware of the unjust dominance over nature, especially when it comes to technology, sustainable development should be committed to an attitude that values earth and embraces all life. With this in mind, we have defined three main research areas:

(1) ***Multisensory and social experience:*** it is urgent to create and/or repair the connections with our humanity and nature. This area focuses on understanding how the world is experienced in their global and local socioculturally situatedness. It does so by focusing on the lived body as what brings existence into being and mediates the experience of the world expressed in language and art, history, politics, and nature. Philosophical analysis and psychology and phenomenology experiments are crucial to

elucidate upon how to create/repair connections. Topics include perceptual experience, immersive bonding, social embodiment, big questions such as love, sacrifice and virtue.

(2) ***Smart environments and mental health:*** a prominent question is how to work with technology and build smart environments *for* mental health? Studies on urban mental health reveal positive associations between urbanism and general mental health conditions. The practices that emerge within increasingly digitised societal niches and their effects on mental health is less understood. Digitalisation increasingly determines and shapes the ways in which we collectively organise and live, especially in urban settings. Evidence shows that urbanisation factors are linked to common mental conditions (van der Wall et al. 2021). The link between mental health and urbanisation is accentuated in digitised aspects of societal organisation.

(3) ***Bio-inspired AI and sustainable technology:*** we exert unjust dominance over nature, especially when it comes to technology. In technology and artificial intelligence, it is urgent to advocate for an attitude that values earth and embraces all life. We must motivate and develop sustainable technology. Sustainable technology is a technology that uses the least software power and hardware resources to generate an outcome. A research goal of the future must be to develop the software and hardware that prototypes sustainable alternatives to real-world use of technology.

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