Pax Technologica

JUSTICE

PEACE

Pax AI Ethics

Statement of Intent

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1. Embarking on a journey of ethical innovation

Pax Technologica is a global initiative dedicated to radically improving the adoption of exponential technologies, particularly artificial intelligence, in emerging geographies of the Global South. At the heart of our mission is a commitment to fostering a harmonious relationship between humanity and technology, paving the way for a future defined by peace, equity, and cultural enrichment. Ethics is not just a token commitment for us- it is central to our vision and actions, ensuring that technological progress serves the greater good without compromising the values and diversity of the communities we work with.

Pax Technologica is currently in the process of finalising its initial Ethics Strategy and establishing an Ethics Working Group, with plans to introduce a formal Ethics Board in the future. This is a significant undertaking for a new initiative, particularly when even established Big Tech companies have often taken years to launch similar efforts. However, we believe it is essential- not only for Pax Technologica but for everyone operating in this space- to go beyond superficial gestures and truly embody ethical values in meaningful ways. The exponential age that is unfolding brings extraordinary opportunities for humanity, but also profound challenges. Addressing these in ways that uplift humanity and support planetary well-being demands that all actors engage with clear, thoughtful, and deeply-rooted ethical principles.

As an initiative focused on the Global South, Pax Technologica acknowledges its position as an outsider looking in. While our mission is to support the adoption of exponential technologies in these regions, we recognise that our origins are not from the Global South. This awareness shapes our approach, driving us to remain humble, listen closely, and actively engage with local voices, knowledge, and expertise. We aim to collaborate with insiders looking out- local leaders, innovators, and communities who possess an intimate understanding of their contexts and challenges. By prioritising their insights, we can ensure that our efforts contribute meaningfully to leapfrog advancements that foster well-being, equity, and sustainability. At its core, our approach reflects a commitment to partnership, respect, and the co-creation of solutions that resonate with local needs and aspirations.

We recognise that an ethical approach must be flexible, dynamic, and responsive to the context in which we operate. Ethics cannot be a rigid, one-size-fits-all framework; it requires constant adaptation, with a focus on customising our actions to the unique needs and challenges of each situation. To guide this process, our Ethics Working Group will bring together a broad and diverse range of voices and expertise to help us develop a pattern recognition approach, allowing us to identify potential pitfalls and ensure that our actions are thoughtful and well-informed. Rather than being overly mechanical or prescriptive, our aim is to engage in an ongoing process of reflection and iteration- one that remains mindful of local nuances while avoiding extremes, ensuring we remain both aware and adaptable in our pursuit of ethical, sustainable outcomes.

We are committed to being transparent about our activities and the process behind our work. We believe that transparency not only fosters trust, but also creates opportunities for others to learn from our experiences. Our hope is that by sharing both our successes and challenges, we can inspire others and contribute to the development of best practices in the field. Rather than claiming to have all the answers, we aim to continuously build and refine a framework that can be adopted by others, supporting organisations on similar journeys. Through this approach, we aspire to create a contagious effect- encouraging other actors working with exponential technologies in emerging geographies to adopt ethical, sustainable practices that benefit all.

2. Pax Technologica's ethical framework

Building peace through technology

The ethical framework developed by Pax Technologica's founders, Thomas Ermacora and Paul Hughes, is centred around the goal of fostering peace by means of a healthy and constructive relationship between humanity and technology. However, peace should not merely be understood as the absence of war; we view it as a more nuanced, distributed concept. Historically, peace has often been mediated by the state or through international agreements, but what if peace, at its core, could be something that each individual can embody and provoke? In this vision, peace becomes an active force- an ongoing engagement with the world, where individuals are not only at peace themselves, but also actively foster peace in their interactions.

This shift in perspective redefines peace from a passive state to a dynamic, personal responsibility. Rather than relying solely on state actors or global institutions to strive towards peace, Pax Technologica believes that individuals have the capacity to shape peace in their own environments. The relationship between humanity and technology plays a crucial role in this process, with the potential to create a more balanced and empowering interaction between people. Technology, particularly artificial intelligence and exponential technologies, need not be the enemy of peace; instead, it can accelerate human connections, enabling greater harmony and understanding.

In this context, peace becomes not a fragile moment, but an ongoing, personalised process. This vision is particularly relevant in today's interconnected world, where societal complexity and the global ecosystem present new challenges. The peace we envision is not about avoiding conflict, but about enabling human flourishing and development. This new, decentralised understanding of peace is critical for shaping a sustainable and prosperous future, particularly in emerging geographies where the potential for technology to drive transformation is immense.

3. Our five interconnected lenses

Our ethical framework is structured around five interconnected lenses, each addressing a critical aspect of our mission to foster peace through technology. These lenses form a cohesive approach, guiding our efforts to consider the broader implications of our work. They help us navigate the complexities of technological adoption, ensuring that we are mindful of impact opportunities, ethical risks, individual and societal needs, and cultural values. Through these lenses, we aim to create a balanced and thoughtful approach to technology, with the dynamic, inclusive, and distributed concept of peace as our ultimate goal.

1. P: Purpose

Pax Technologica is above all purpose-driven. In all our activities, we strive to remain aligned with our aims, building a harmonious relationship between humanity and technology and fostering protopian opportunities that benefit both people and the planet. Our focus is on empowering locally led innovation in the Global South, ensuring that solutions are driven by regional expertise and meet contextual needs. We prioritise practical, immediate challenges in sectors like healthcare, climate, education, and food systems, designing simple and effective solutions that align with local values. By integrating technology ethically, we aim to demonstrate tangible benefits that enhance well-being, strengthen communities, and promote sustainable progress.

2. E: Equity

Pax Technologica strives to foster a culture of equity, ensuring that the opportunities and risks of technology are fairly distributed across the Global South. We recognise the historical inequities rooted in colonialism and work to address these legacies by promoting self-determined growth and equitable knowledge exchange. Our approach amplifies locally driven initiatives, leveraging existing successes while avoiding duplication. By addressing infrastructural deficiencies and fostering non-extractive investments, we aim to promote fairness, support sustainable development, and ensure technology serves as a force for peace, minimising harm and enhancing relevance for diverse communities.

3. A: Agency

Pax Technologica emphasises empowering communities in the Global South to make informed, independent choices about technology adoption, respecting their unique contexts, values, and needs. While not all choices can be fully autonomous, we strive to maximise freedom of choice, ensuring technology is relevant, beneficial, and minimally disruptive. By fostering early-stage innovation, advancing policy, and improving technology literacy, we promote constructive dialogue and social action. Our approach reframes progress to prioritise human and ecological well-being, enhancing community participation, belonging, and a sense of agency at both individual and collective levels.

4. C: Community

Pax Technologica approaches its mission with humility, prioritising collaboration with local experts and respecting their deeper understanding and effective practices. We aim to empower communities to shape their own narratives and determine their participation in technology adoption, fostering a balanced many-to-many approach. By deeply involving young people and marginalised groups, we create inclusive, regenerative systems that address real needs. Inspired by successful innovations like M-PESA, we study and adapt proven strategies to guide our efforts. Through inclusive dialogue, we ensure technology aligns with local values, fostering shared purpose, belonging, and respect for cultural differences.

5. E: Embodiment

Pax Technologica is committed to living its values, integrating ethics into every aspect of its activities. To this end, we will establish a diverse Ethics Working Group to refine our framework and guide future governance. By fostering emotional and aesthetic embodiment, we aim to create a profound connection to our mission, promoting narratives of possibility over fear. Success is defined by meaningful, sustainable impact on society and the environment, with adaptive metrics that evolve alongside technological and societal advancements, ensuring ongoingalignment with our values.

4.
Our areas of focus as seen through the lenses

Pax Technologica concentrates on four thematic areas- climate, healthcare, education, and food systems- where the transformative potential of exponential technologies is particularly profound. In each of these domains, innovative solutions offer the promise of revolutionising access, efficiency, and sustainability. However, these advancements also present ethical challenges that must be addressed. By applying the five interconnected lenses, Pax Technologica aims to evaluate and navigate these complexities, ensuring that technological progress aligns with our values and fosters meaningful, sustainable impact.

Climate

Exponential technologies, including AI, hold significant potential to advance climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts across the Global South. By leveraging data from satellites, sensors, and climate models, these technologies can enhance weather forecasting, monitor deforestation, and track ecosystem changes with greater accuracy. Renewable energy innovations, such as solar and wind power integrated with smart grids and energy-efficient systems, offer a pathway to reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable development. Additionally, advancements in transportation and urban planning can optimise resource use and minimise environmental impacts, strengthening climate resilience and sustainability.

Ethical considerations:

In the context of the Global South, it is vital to ensure that climate technologies are inclusive, addressing the needs of marginalised and rural communities disproportionately affected by climate change. These solutions must be deployed in ways that do not exacerbate existing inequalities. Collaborating with local communities and incorporating traditional ecological knowledge can make these technologies more culturally sensitive and effective, ensuring they meet the diverse needs of the populations they serve.

Healthcare

AI and other exponential technologies have the potential to revolutionise healthcare across the Global South. Enhanced diagnostic tools, powered by advanced imaging and predictive analytics, can enable earlier disease detection and more personalised treatment plans. Automation of administrative tasks may reduce costs, streamline operations, and allow healthcare professionals to dedicate more time to patient care. Telemedicine, supported by AI, has the capacity to improve access to healthcare in remote and underserved regions, while robotics could enhance precision in surgeries, reduce recovery times, and improve outcomes. Additionally, AI-driven drug discovery offers the promise of accelerating the development of treatments tailored to local health challenges.

Ethical considerations:

To ensure equitable outcomes, the integration of AI in healthcare must address disparities in access, particularly in rural and underserved areas. Technologies should be deployed in ways that respect and complement local health practices and cultural values, enhancing rather than disrupting traditional systems of care. Protecting data privacy, addressing infrastructure gaps, and preventing the reinforcement of existing biases and inequalities are critical to fostering trust and ensuring that healthcare technologies deliver meaningful and inclusive benefits.

Education

AI and other exponential technologies hold great promise for improving education in the Global South, making it more accessible and equitable. Personalised learning platforms can adapt to the varying educational needs of students, helping to reduce disparities and better support those who need it most. These technologies can also streamline administrative tasks for educators and schools, freeing up time and resources to enhance teaching quality in underserved areas. By optimising curriculum delivery and providing supplementary learning materials, AI can assist educators in tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs of students.

Ethical considerations:

The integration of educational technologies in the Global South must prioritise increasing access to quality education and addressing systemic disparities. It is essential to ensure that these technologies do not deepen existing inequalities or marginalise students in remote or rural areas. Incorporating local languages, cultural and religious contexts, and traditional educational practices into these platforms can enhance their relevance and effectiveness. Engaging educators, parents, and communities in the design and implementation process is critical to ensuring that technological solutions are culturally appropriate and supportive of traditional learning methods. Addressing infrastructure challenges, such as reliable internet access and electricity, is also key to realising the full potential of these advancements for all students.

Food systems

AI and other exponential technologies have the potential to transform food systems in the Global South by fostering regenerative practices and promoting equity. These technologies can optimise agricultural methods, improve crop yields, and reduce waste, contributing to a more efficient and sustainable food supply. Precision agriculture, powered by AI, can analyse soil conditions, weather patterns, and crop health, helping to maintain ecological balance and improve soil fertility. Innovations in food processing and distribution can streamline operations, minimise food loss, and enhance access to nutritious food. Combining technological advancements with local agricultural expertise can support culturally relevant and sustainable food systems.

Ethical considerations:

In the Global South, it is crucial that the adoption of AI and other technologies respects and amplifies traditional farming practices, especially those of smallholder farmers who are central to agriculture in the region. These technologies must honour indigenous knowledge and complement existing farming methods rather than displacing them. Making technological advancements accessible to all, including marginalised and rural communities, is essential for fostering a fair and inclusive food system. Ongoing engagement with local farmers and communities ensures that technological solutions align with cultural values and practical needs, contributing to a more equitable and dignified agricultural future.

5.
Turning principles into practice

The implementation of our ethical framework will unfold in two main phases. In the first phase, taking place in 2025, we will lay the foundation for our ethical approach by establishing the Ethics Working Group. This group will serve as the reflective body anchoring our framework's principles and values.

Activities during this phase will include fostering discussions on our ethical framework and refining the five ethical lenses. The working group will also develop specific ethical considerations for each of our focus areas and explore how our ethical principles can be integrated into real-world initiatives, starting with the Fellowship Program.

Additionally, the group will create a 'landscape of influence'- an overview of relevant organisations, networks, and thought leaders in the field- to identify potential partners and sources of inspiration. A key goal will be exploring how the ethical framework can be used to develop an actionable assessment system for measuring impact and ensuring effectiveness.

In the second phase, starting in 2026, the focus will shift from theoretical development to practical application. We will begin implementing the ethical framework in our projects and initiatives, ensuring they are consistently aligned with our principles.

Key activities will include creating and applying an assessment system to measure the impact of our initiatives and guiding the organisation through ethical challenges as they arise. The Ethics Working Group will continue to play a central role in ensuring our actions reflect our values, and the group's work will be made more transparent through regular publications.

As the phase progresses, we will begin the process of formalising oversight by complementing the Ethics Working Group with a more formal ethics board or committee. This will provide additional guidance and ensure continued independence and rigour in our approach. At the same time, we will introduce an external audit or feedback body to evaluate our practices, providing independent insights to help ensure ongoing adherence to our ethical standards. The Ethics Working Group will remain central, evolving alongside these external mechanisms, while continuing its work in shaping our frameworks, systems, and projects.

Participants

In the Global South, it is crucial that the adoption of AI and other technologies respects and amplifies traditional farming practices, especially those of smallholder farmers who are central to agriculture in the region. These technologies must honour indigenous knowledge and complement existing farming methods rather than displacing them. Making technological advancements accessible to all, including marginalised and rural communities, is essential for fostering a fair and inclusive food system. Ongoing engagement with local farmers and communities ensures that technological solutions align with cultural values and practical needs, contributing to a more equitable and dignified agricultural future

Chair:

Role: Provide overall leadership and direction for the Ethics Working Group.
Responsibilities: Facilitate meetings, guide the group's agenda, ensure alignment with Pax Technologica's philosophy, and oversee the integration of feedback into actionable recommendations.

Secretary:

Role: Manage the administrative functions that ensure the smooth operation of the group.
Responsibilities: Document discussions, manage communications, and track progress on action items to ensure the group remains focused and organised.

Experts in the four key areas, technology, and regional contexts:

Role: Provide specialised knowledge in healthcare, climate, education, food systems, AI, and regional contexts.
Responsibilities: Offer insights into practical considerations within each area, evaluate projects and initiatives through the lens of these domains, and ensure relevance to both local and global contexts.

Ethicists:

Role: Ensure the ethical and philosophical dimensions of the work are rigorously considered.
Responsibilities: Bring academic or practical expertise in ethics and philosophy to the group's deliberations, integrate these dimensions into our frameworks, and challenge assumptions to strengthen our ethical approach.

Indigenous and spiritual representatives:

Role: Ensure the meaningful integration of indigenous knowledge systems, spiritual values, and cultural traditions.
Responsibilities: Contribute deep understanding of indigenous worldviews and spiritual practices, highlight the interconnectedness of technology, nature, and community, and ensure our work respects and aligns with cultural heritage and traditional wisdom. These representatives will serve as cultural bridges, navigating ethical issues in ways that resonate with the spiritual and cultural values of local communities.

Founders:

Role: Provide strategic oversight and ensure the continuity of vision.
Responsibilities: Offer foundational insights and direction, support the group's work, and ensure alignment with Pax Technologica's broader goals.

Selection criteria

Members of the Ethics Working Group will be invited and selected based on the following criteria, ensuring that the group brings a diverse, informed, and ethical approach to the work of Pax Technologica:

Alignment with Pax Technologica philosophy:

Candidates must demonstrate a deep understanding and commitment to Pax Technologica's philosophy, particularly its emphasis on integrating technology adoption with ethical considerations and promoting peace. This alignment will ensure that the group's work is consistently grounded in the core values of Pax Technologica, helping to shape the ethical dimensions of all projects and initiatives.

Relevant experience:

We are seeking individuals with academic or non-academic experience that directly informs the group's focus areas, such as healthcare, climate, education, food systems, AI, and regional contexts. This experience will be crucial for informed decision-making and reflection, allowing the group to evaluate initiatives and projects through practical, real-world lenses.

Diverse perspectives:

It is essential that the group brings together a variety of viewpoints and areas of expertise, ensuring a well-rounded, nuanced, and critical approach to ethical considerations. Members should be able to challenge assumptions and offer unique insights that push the group to consider the ethical implications from multiple angles, including those that may not be immediately apparent.

Commitment to ethics:

Members should show a genuine commitment to contributing to the ethical development of Pax Technologica. This includes upholding ethical standards, fostering a reflective and conscientious approach to decision-making, and prioritising the organisation's mission over any personal or professional gain.

African representation:

For Phase 1 of the Ethics Working Group, 50% of the group's members will be selected from Africa, reflecting the importance of incorporating local perspectives and expertise into our ethical approach. All members must have relevant experience working with AI and other technologies in the context of the Global South, ensuring that we address the unique challenges and opportunities of the region.

Global and local expertise:

The group should comprise members with both global and local expertise to addres the distinct challenges and opportunities faced by communities in the Global South, as well as those in other regions. This combination will help the group evaluate the broader impacts of technology while ensuring that the solutions we develop are locally relevant and culturally sensitive.

Commitment to transparency:

Finally, all members will be expected to demonstrate a strong commitment to transparency. As we embark on this ethical journey, we recognise that challenges and setbacks are inevitable. By being open about our successes and challenges, we aim to foster an environment of trust and accountability, ensuring that the Ethics Working Group's work remains aligned with our ethical goals and continues to evolve in a responsible manner.

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Ethics Document

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