



Science, technology and innovation governance for the 2030 agenda

Governing Ability Expectations: A Prerequisite (or Accompanied) Goal to the Democratization of Technology

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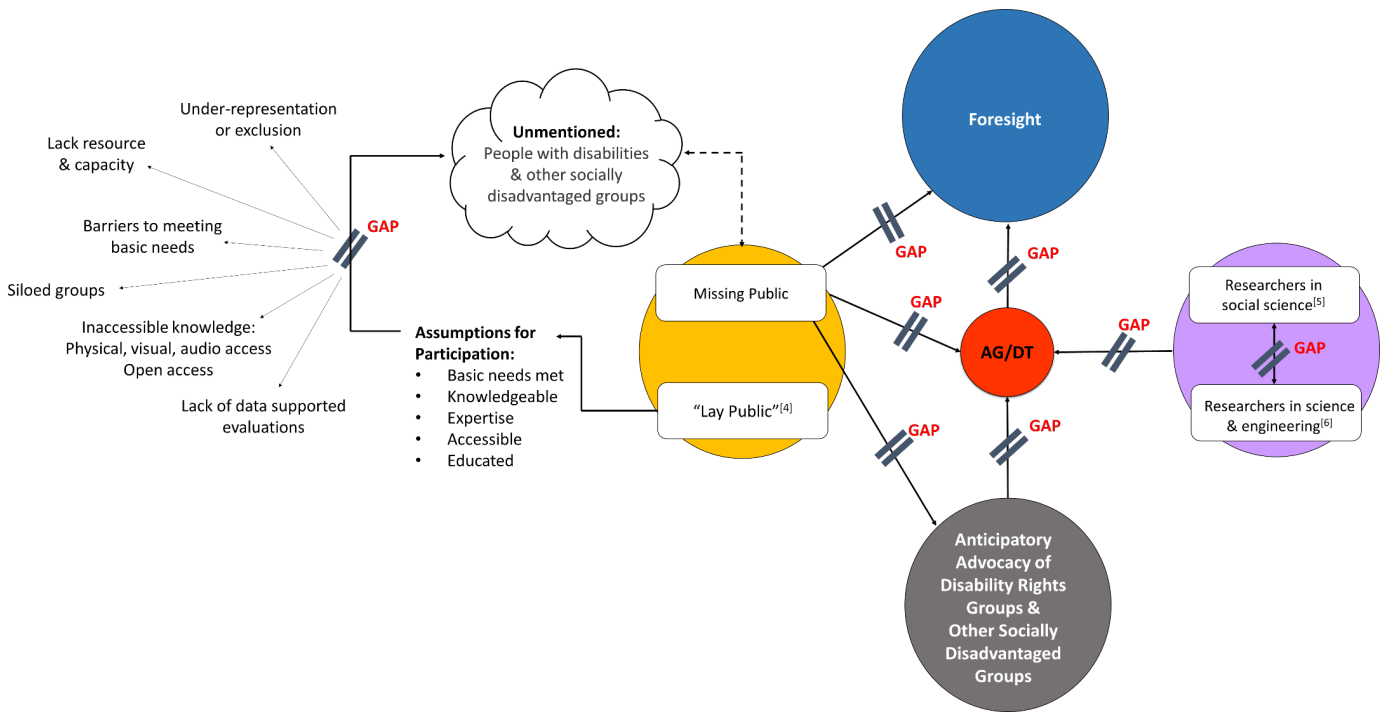
Background

- Scientific research and technological developments (SRTD) are advancing at an ever faster rate.
- Intended and unintended consequences of emerging SRTD have substantial implications for people with disabilities, among other socially disadvantaged groups.
- Technologies are regarded as having political content to “the extent that it involves, facilitates, or limits the exercise of power over human beings” [1].
- Technology has the power to change ability expectations [2].
- Ability expectations have the power to influence technology development and application agendas.
- Powerful social groups and individuals have the power to influence technology R&D agendas to fit their ability expectations.



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Figure 1





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Democratization of Technology (DT), Anticipatory Governance (AG) and Anticipatory Advocacy (AA)

- Technology governance is regarded as an important goal ^[3].
- AG is a foresight framework aimed at understanding potential social, ethical, and political impacts of emerging SRTD through “reflexive” practice ^[4].
- Implementing AG practice means that discussions of the implications of SRTD products will begin even before product development.
- DT is another discourse that wants to increase the influence of the public in shaping technological futures.
- Who becomes involved in DT and AG becomes an important component to the technology’s outcome.
- Need for anticipatory advocacy: advocating with a foresight vision for one’s involvement in AG and DT.
- Engagement AG and DT requires certain abilities (Figure 1).
- People with disabilities and other socially disadvantaged groups face several barriers (Figure 1) and as a result, often experience under-representation in, or exclusion from, AG and DT discourses.
- DT needs democratization of whose ability expectations can shape technology R&D.
- DT needs democratization of what ability expectations are a prerequisite for being part of AG and DT.



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Conclusion

- AG and DT are supposed to broaden the utility of foresight and responsible technology development.
- AG and DT assumes certain abilities as a prerequisite for being part of the discourse.
 - However, many cannot meet these abilities (Figure 1).
- As is, AG and DT are privileged discourses, limited to those who have access to knowledge and who can afford to participate → increasing the influence gap → myopic view of AG and DT for what the technological future should and could be.
- We posit the need for AA by people with disabilities and other socially disadvantaged groups:
 - Advocating for engagement in AG and DT, addressing barriers which exclude access from participation.
- We posit the prerequisite (or accompanied) goal of democratization and governance of ability expectations to manage and engage in responsible technology development.
- Engagement of the “lay public” or integration of different research disciplines does not necessarily mean there will be an uptake of interest by those who can afford to participate ^[5,6]
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References

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