

Extended deadline!

Call for contributions

for the book

Human capabilities, technology and design

To be published in the new Springer

Philosophy of Engineering and Technology book series

Description of the book

The capability approach of Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen places human capabilities at the centre stage of discussions about justice, equality, development and the quality of life. It rejects too much emphasis on mere preference satisfaction or resource provision. For example, giving everyone a laptop or some other piece of technology is no good in and by itself. Some people will be able to make good use of it and increase their level of functioning, but others who are illiterate or do not have access to reliable power supply cannot possibly convert their access to the technology into anything useful in their lives. Yet in public discussions about the global digital divide much attention is paid to the distribution of those mere means (like the number of mobile phones per household).

The capability approach has already significantly influenced different fields of application, like economics and development studies. Yet little work has been done to explore the relations with technology and design. We still need to trace the implications of the capability approach all the way through for this domain. Moreover, a capability approach that does not address technology is incomplete and inadequate in an age in which technology is such a crucial factor in expanding human capabilities.

How does technology influence human capabilities? What difference would a capability approach make to the policies and practices of applying ICT in development processes in the South? How can we criticize and improve the design of technology from the perspective of the capability approach? This book is the first comprehensive attempt to address such questions.

The Philosophy of Engineering and Technology book series

The Philosophy of Engineering and Technology (<http://www.springer.com/series/8657>) book series is a new publication series. Its aim is to provide this domain with a central overarching as well as an integrative platform. The series intends to realize this aim in several ways. One of them is by welcoming contributions of both philosophers and practitioners. Another is by inviting contributions that are innovative to the field: studies that combine and integrate ethical, anthropological and social research

on technology with methodological research on the technological development and engineering, as envisaged in, for instance, the paradigm of value-sensitive designing.

Contributions we are looking for

The topic of this book is interdisciplinary in nature. Naturally this means that chapters will differ in their disciplinary emphasis. However, even when a chapter heavily draws on the social sciences or engineering practice, we would like it to be clear either how it contributes to / invites philosophical reflection, or how philosophical considerations have informed / influenced the research. When in doubt about your idea for a contribution, please do not hesitate to contact the editors to get some early feedback.

Target audience

Engineers in different domains, as well as policy makers and business people concerned with technology and innovation, are increasingly interested in the broader societal meaning and implications of their work. Justice, quality of life and poverty reduction have become important considerations. These groups of people have a need for best practices and new insights that can inspire and guide them and this is what this book has to offer. In addition, the book is of course also very relevant for academics involved in critical reflection on technology, more in particular people from the fields of philosophy and ethics of technology and science and technology studies (STS). The capability approach has its origins in questions about global justice and development, hence a part of the chapters in the book will address the global South and the book will also be interesting for people from the fields of development ethics and development studies. Because of the wide target audience, authors are urged to make their contributions highly accessible to readers from outside their own discipline.

Editors of the volume

1. Jeroen van den Hoven, M.J.vandenHoven@tudelft.nl
2. Ilse Oosterlaken, E.T.Oosterlaken@tudelft.nl
3. (third editor to be announced)

Practical information

Final contributions to the book should be between 5000 and 8000 words. The editors invite you to first send in (deadline: July 1st 2010):

- an extensive abstract (1500-2000 words)
- a short biography (max. 300 words) of the author(s)
- a list with the five most relevant publications for the proposed contribution

Please send your proposals to Ilse Oosterlaken (E.T.Oosterlaken@tudelft.nl).

Further planning:

- July 15th 2010 - Editors will inform authors if their proposal has been selected for the book
- Oct. 15th 2010 - Deadline for the draft full chapter
- Nov. 15th 2010 - Authors will receive feedback from the editors of the book
- Feb. 15th 2011 - Deadline for the final version of the chapter

At the next conference of the *Human Development and Capability Association* (HDCA), from September 21st-23rd 2010 in Amman¹, an informal meeting will be organized for the authors of all accepted contributions. This will be an opportunity to talk to the editors and fellow authors in person and get oral feedback on your draft contribution. Of course, authors are free to send in their proposed chapter as a paper to be presented at the HDCA conference as well.

¹ See www.capabilityapproach.com