

Proposal for a Topical Collection Science and Engineering Ethics

Towards a Hybrid Ethics of Technology: Bridging Ethics of Technology and Intercultural-Comparative Ethics

Topical Collection | Science and Engineering Ethics

Guest Editors: Gunter Bombaerts, Kristy Claassen, Tom Hannes

1. Guest Editors

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All of us are ethicists whose research crosses boundaries of mainstream ethics of technology and mainstream intercultural, global, and comparative ethics.

We are members of the ESDiT (Ethics of Socially Disruptive Technologies consortium) intercultural ethics line (<https://www.esdit.nl/research-line/intercultural-philosophy/>). The topical collection will aim to create synergies with the work done in this consortium to reach out to our broader networks in both ethics sub-fields.

2. Key Questions, Embedding in broader community dynamics, Contribution to Literature

See overall description in Section “4. Proposed Topical Collection Announcement” below for key questions, embedding in broader community dynamics and contribution to the literature.

Extra info:

Core aim is to create a dynamic to make people from different sub-fields in ethics to collaborate, starting from the strengths in both.

Core conceptual idea is a shift

- *From* “ethics of technology” uncritically introduces non-Western approaches (Buddhism, ...) and, as a Trojan horse, also takes in all challenges of intercultural-comparative ethics
- *To*: define the challenges as common and invite to look for answers together.

Existing dynamic in the two fields: The intercultural group in ESDiT is reaching out to others working in the consortium, so there is a natural dynamic there.

The topical collection will be **linked with the ESDiT-4TU conference** <https://www.esdit.nl/conference-2026/>. We hope to create synergies: to attract extra contributions, to increase the quality of the contributions via the discussions at the conference.

Target audience: We aim to have a mix of ESDiT people and others in two ways:

- some articles where ESDiT people are involved, but reach out to others for the intercultural-comparative ethics angle
- non-ESDiT contributions

Approximate Number of Articles: We anticipate interest in this topic to be great. For that reason, we anticipate 10-12 articles in the collection.

3. Proposed Process

We propose a three phase process.

- Abstract submission: June 1st, 2026
- Conference discussions: November 4-6, 2026
- Manuscript submission: January 2027

As such, we think we have two “waves” of input.

- The abstract submission deadline is the same as the ESDiT-4TU conference. People can send their abstract to both the Hybrid Ethics Topical Collection and the Hybrid Ethics conference track. People can (of course) send their abstracts to the topical collection without going to the conference.
- Strong contributions in the Hybrid Ethics track at the conference that did not yet submit their abstract, will be encouraged to do so.

4. Proposed Topical Collection Announcement

Please find here a first draft. Will be discussed with the ESDiT intercultural line on April 2nd. Final description will be sent then.

Announcement Topical Collection Call

Towards a Hybrid Ethics of Technology. Bridging Ethics of Technology and Intercultural-Comparative Ethics

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Gunter Bombaerts, Kristy Claasen, Tom Hannes

(in collaboration with ESDiT - Ethics of Socially Disruptive Technologies)

This collection invites scholars from two ethics subfields - ethics of technology on the one hand, and intercultural, global and comparative ethics on the other hand - to contribute to a shared project: not merely supplementing existing approaches, but fostering a mutual transformation to better address the ethical demands of socially disruptive technologies in an interconnected and technologically mediated world.

We invite contributions to start from the *strengths* of both ethics subfields to explore and develop ethics of technology as hybrid and entailing dialogical, decolonial, and anti-essentialist approaches. “Hybrids” are entities that cut across conventional divides - such as nature and culture, human and non-human, and boundaries between cultures, disciplines, methods, concepts ... - revealing that these divisions are themselves constructed. This, however, acknowledging the tremendous *challenges* involved in crossing borders.

Applied to ethics of technology, this means treating different fields of ethics (ethics of technology and intercultural/comparative ethics, technological practices and moral frameworks, ethics and other disciplines or methods ...) not as separate domains, but as co-constituted through networks of practices, actors, and meanings.

Examples of potential contributions (but certainly not limited to this list):

- How do insights on participatory procedures in ethics of technology (participatory design, co-creation ...) help understand intercultural dialogue to enable proposed solutions to technologies such as inclusive AI governance or energy justice;
- How can theories on plural moral epistemologies contribute to responsible innovation?
- How can studies on global power asymmetries and global technological evaluation support each other?
- What can intercultural-comparative ethics scholars advise to incorporate their subfield better in ethics of technology journals?
- How can transdisciplinary research in STEM provide insights in comparative philosophy?
- How can intercultural reflexive governance models respond to rapid technological change while remaining normatively grounded?
- How can practices or methods in one academic field support practices in the other field?
- How can insights in the ethics of socially disruption technologies and intercultural-comparative ethics in general strengthen each other?
- ...

Submission

We encourage authors or author teams to submit an abstract before June 1st 2026 to the Hybrid Ethics track at the 4TU-Ethics ESDiT conference <https://www.esdit.nl/conference-2026/> on 4-6 November. Contributions will be clustered on the topic of Hybrid Ethics for in-depth discussions and feedback to contributions to the topical collection.

Deadline submission manuscripts topical collection: January 31th, 2027.