Designing Equity Impact & Risk Assessments for AI & New Technology

2026 State of Oregon Equity Data Summit

Aaron Garber Paul

Office of Equity & Human Rights, City of Portland

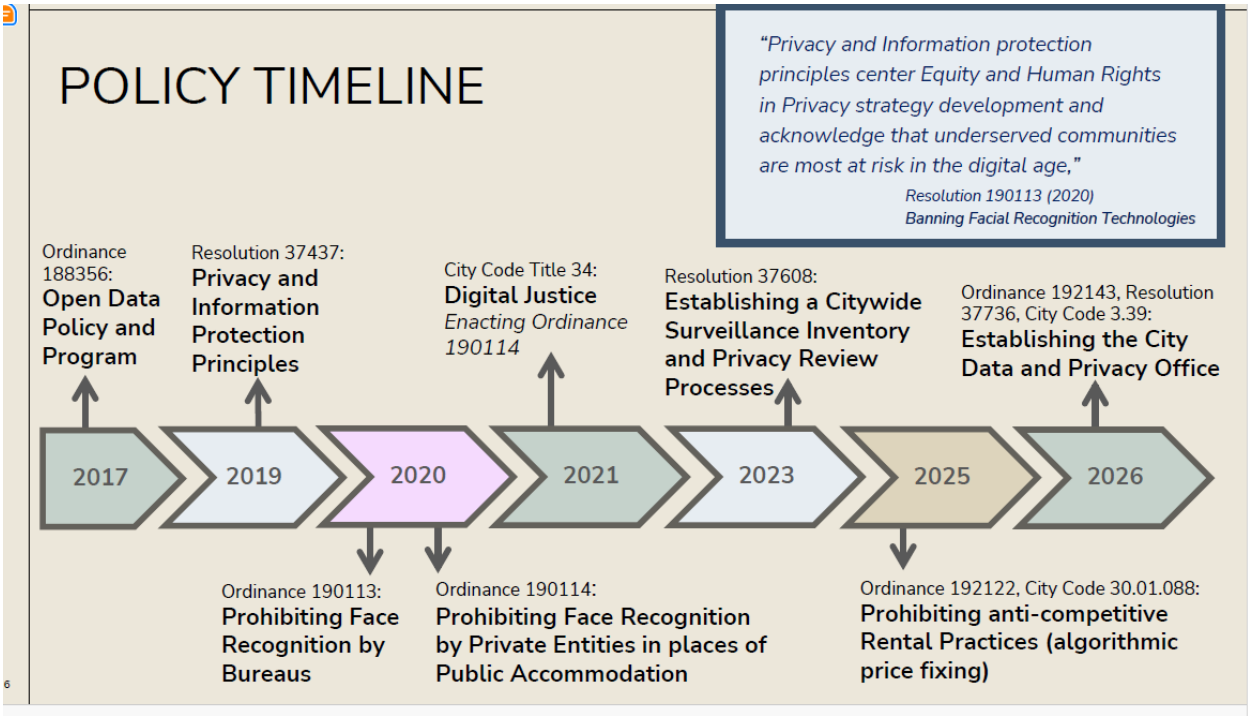
Aaron.garber-paul@portlandoregon.gov

Foundations

Defining Equity

Portland Plan :a community-driven plan. It provides three integrated strategies and a framework for advancing equity.

City of Portland Policy timeline



Search for City of Portland Policies (interactive tool)

City of Portland AI Principles

City of Portland Privacy Protection Principles

Kevin Martin said regarding the policy foundations of the 2020 bans on facial recognition technology:

"The focus became the work we need to do before we deploy new technology, especially in BIPOC communities, who don't trust the City to necessarily represent their interests," - Kevin Martin, Smart City PDX, Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, 2020 (Simonite, "Portland's Face-Recognition Ban is a New Twist on 'Smart Cities'", Wired. 2020)

Oregon Consumer Privacy Act (OCPA) took effect on July 1, 2024 (with non-profit provisions starting July 1, 2025, and universal opt-out signals required starting January 1, 2026

Assessment Frameworks

Safe & Reliable AI, AI Risk Best Practices

NIST AI Resource Center (AIRC)

NIST AI 100-1 Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework (AI RMF 1.0)

NIST SP 1270: Toward a Standard for Identifying and Managing Bias in Artificial Intelligence (2022)

NIST AI 600-1: Artificial Intelligence Risk Management Framework: Generative Artificial Intelligence Profile (2024)

https://humanincontrol.no/framework , released May 2026

& NIST Human In the Loop, Tech document annotation
https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/TechnicalNotes/NIST.TN.2287.pdf

How well do we fail?

Spanish interpreter botched 9-1-1 translation, sent ambulance to wrong address, $3 million suit claims

GMR Transcription: 14 AI Transcription Errors that changed the meaning of what was said.

13 current and former employees of OpenAI and Google DeepMind who, in June 2024, signed an open letter titled **“A Right to Warn about Advanced Artificial Intelligence.”** They complained that broad confidentiality agreements “block us from voicing our concerns,” and ordinary whistleblower laws, which protect those who report violations of the law, didn’t help because the risks they feared weren’t illegal yet.

- https://www.techpolicy.press/congress-can-get-ai-whistleblower-protection-right-on-its-first-try/
- https://righttowarn.ai/

Applied Processes

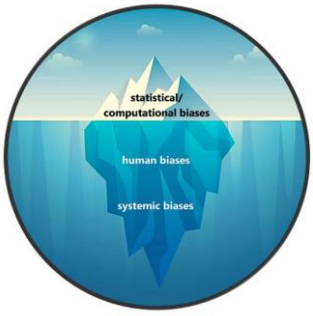
Assessments:

City of Portland Privacy Assessment hub, including links to all 23 public Privacy Assessments (2020-present)

Example Final PIA from the BPS - Recycling Contamination Detection PIA. The purpose of the technology is to analyze images of households’ recycling bin contents by garbage and recycling companies (haulers) as it is collected, to identify, and notify customers about, contamination in their recycling containers. Contamination detection will be flagged to the City’s Solid Waste and Recycling Program.

Identifying Equity Risk & Bias in AI

Identifying Risk & Bias in AI



Iceberg Image source:
https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/SpecialPublications/NIST.SP.1270.pdf, p i/77

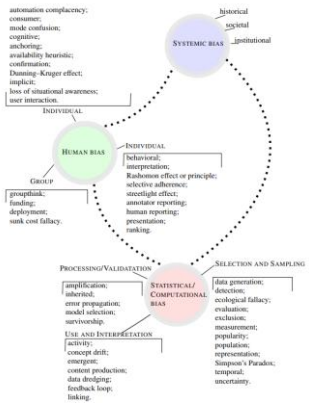
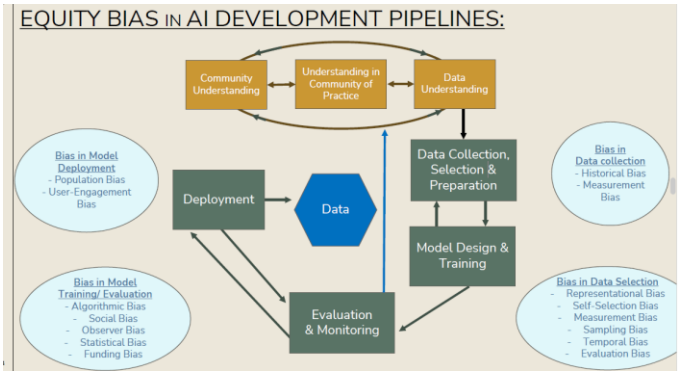


Fig 2: categories of AI Bias. Flow chart: Source: NIST.SP.1270 , p 8/77

Equity Bias in AI Development Pipelines



For a deeper dive, view the source for this concept:

Developing Equitable AI Diagnostics: A Technical Approach to Bias Mitigation, lecture by Laura Montoya, Founder of Accel Impact Organizations.

Automating Equity Bias

How AI Works? Demystifying Machine Learning & Algorithms

Large language models, explained with a minimum of math and jargon

The relation between vectors and neural networks

AI & Language Access Risks:

University of Oregon study finds government influence on AI responses

Based on study: Waight, H., Yang, E., Yuan, Y. et al. State media control influences large language models. Nature 655, 685–693 (2026). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-026-10506-7

Is AI the right solution?

Ellia F, Hendren J, Grasso M, Kozma C, Mindt G, P Lang J, M Haun A, Albantakis L, Boly M, Tononi G. **Consciousness and the fallacy of misplaced objectivity**. Neuroscience of Conscious. 2021 Oct 15;2021(2):niab032. doi: 10.1093/nc/niab032. PMID: 34667639; PMCID: PMC8519344. National Library of Medicine

Selection Bias

WWII Bombers and Selection Bias in Data Science (Medium, 2020)

https://datavizblog.com/2023/07/02/historical-dataviz-survivorship-bias-and-getting-the-data-wrong/

Historical Bias

Source:

US Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Directive 15. This directive states, "the categories in these standards are understood to be socio-political constructs and are not an attempt to define race and ethnicity biologically or genetically."

Source: https://www.mcny.org/story/census-and-who-we-are

https://onlineexhibits.library.yale.edu/s/Census/page/introduction

Representation Bias

Gender Shades: Intersectional Accuracy Disparities in Commercial Gender Classification Joy Buolamwini, Timnit Gebru. Proceedings of the 1st Conference on Fairness, Accountability and Transparency, Buolamwini, J. & Gebru, T. *Proc. Mach. Learn. Res.* 81, 77–91 (2018).

The unseen Black faces of AI algorithms (Birhane, Abeba, Nature 27 October 2026)

Abeba Birhane

Prompt: Ugliness

The Elusive Concept of Ugliness (Umberto Eco)

Wikipedia – On Ugliness (summary of On Ugliness, Eco 2007)

Data Risk

Image source: Cracked Labs April/May 2017, using Oracle press release, help center website, audience playbook, taxonomy updates for January 2017. For details about the sources see the report "Corporate Surveillance in Everyday Life."

Bias & disproportionate experiences of surveillance

"These People Are Frightened to Death; Congressional Investigations and the Lavender Scare" (Adkins, Prologue Magazine, Summer 2016 Vol 48, no 2)

HR 1064 -- 118th Congress (2023-24)

118th Congress breaks record for lesbian, gay and bisexual representation

Martin Luther King Jr. Declassified: 9 Primary Source Documents (2019)

https://maps.deflock.org/

Oversurveillance

2020 Stateville prison reopens decrepit ‘F-House’ to hold inmates with COVID-19

The Panopticon Theory (Martin, VIVIDCOMM Advanced Technology in Action, April 2018)

The Panopticon: The Controversy Over an 18th Century Prison Concept That’s Still in Use Today (Dr H George, CorrectionalOfficerEDU.org, Jan 2022)

Community & Individual risks from Reduced Community Connection points

OpenAI Says Hundreds of Thousands of ChatGPT Users May Show Signs of Manic or Psychotic Crisis Every Week

Arendt (Origins of Totalitarianism): She described loneliness as " While isolation concerns only the political realm of life, loneliness concerns human life as a whole. Totalitarian government, like all tyrannies, certainly could not exist without destroying the public realm of life, that is, without destroying, by isolating men, their political capacities. But totalitarian domination as a form of government is. new in that it is not content with this isolation and destroys private life as well. **It bases itself on loneliness, on the experience of not belonging to the world at all, which is among the most radical and desperate experiences of man.."** (p 475)

Arendt (life of the Mind): "Solitude is the human condition in which I keep myself company. Loneliness comes about when I am alone without being able to split up into the two-in-one, without being able to keep myself company.“

Arendt (Origins of Totalitarianism): “"What prepares men for totalitarian domination in the non-totalitarian world is the fact that loneliness, once a borderline experience usually suffered in certain marginal social conditions like old age, has become an everyday experience of the ever growing masses of our century."

Generative AI and exacerbated suicide risk among vulnerable populations (Lancet Regional Health – Americas, July 2026)

Artificial Intelligence-Based Suicide (Marks, Yale Journal of Law & Technology, vol 21, Special Issue 98. 2019)

Suicide: A study in Sociology (Durkheim, 1897). Wikipedia synopsis here.