News Item

Silicon Valley Writes a Playbook to Help Avert Ethical Disasters | WIRED

By Arielle Pardes

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A new guidebook shows tech companies companies that it's possible to predict future changes to humans' relationship with technology, and that they can tweak their products so they'll do less damage when those eventual days arrive.

The guide, called the Ethical OS, comes out of a partnership between the [Institute of the Future](), a Palo Alto-based think tank, and the [Tech and Society Solutions Lab](), a year-old initiative from the impact investment firm Omidyar Network. Both groups focus on the intersection of tech and society. Collectively, they imagine the Ethical OS as a bridge between the researchers who study tech's growing impact on society and the companies that wield control.

[…]

The guide has, so far, been piloted by nearly 20 companies, start-ups, and schools, which have used it either to stoke conversation about ethics more broadly or to guide specific product decisions. Techstars, which runs over 40 start-up accelerator programs across the country, has begun using the Ethical OS framework to decide which start-ups to invest in based on their ability to think about future issues. Those kinds of conversations, Kumra says, haven't been the norm in tech. "When I was fundraising for my start-up, I talked to over a hundred VCs and many, many founders," she says. "The conversation around ethics never came up once."

Source: [Ethical OS Helps Tech Startups Avert Moral Disasters | WIRED]()