

# 'Sense of urgency', as top tech players seek AI ethical rules

2 September 2019



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Top players in global tech companies kicked off work Monday to draw up global ethical standards related to data and artificial intelligence, with Microsoft's president voicing a "sense of urgency".

Some two dozen high-ranking representatives of the global and Swiss economies, as well as scientists and academics, met in Geneva for the first Swiss Global Digital Summit aimed at seeking agreement on ethical guidelines to steer [technological development](#).

The participants, including the heads of Credit Suisse, UBS and Adecco, and high-level representatives from Facebook, Google, Huawei and IBM, are due to meet again at the World Economic Forum in Davos next January.

There, they will launch the Swiss Digital Initiative (SDI) and present a list of concrete projects, which could include things like the development of a "transparency label" or a "label".

After the signing ceremony in Davos, "we are really going to go into practice, into implementation of

concrete projects, and that is the proof of the pudding," former Swiss president Doris Leuthard, who will head SDI, told reporters.

Microsoft president Brad Smith insisted on the importance that "technology be guided by values, and that those values be translated into principles and that those principles be pursued by concrete steps."

"We are the first generation of people who have the power to build machines with the capability to make decisions that have in the past only been made by people," he told reporters.

He stressed the need for "transparency" and "accountability ... to ensure that the people who create technology, including at companies like the one I work for remain accountable to the public at large."

"We need to start taking steps (towards ethical standards) with a sense of urgency," he said.

Swiss president Ueli Maurer, who hosted the meeting, stressed that there currently was a lack of trust among the public to support digital development.

"We need transparency, we need trust and we need commitment. I think it was a good start today," he told reporters.

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APA citation: 'Sense of urgency', as top tech players seek AI ethical rules (2019, September 2) retrieved 18 August 2022 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2019-09-urgency-tech-players-ai-ethical.html>

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