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GOOD

Values: Moral and Non-moral

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Why is this lecture important for you?



These are a part of your'professional life:



### Value-sensitive design and global digital health

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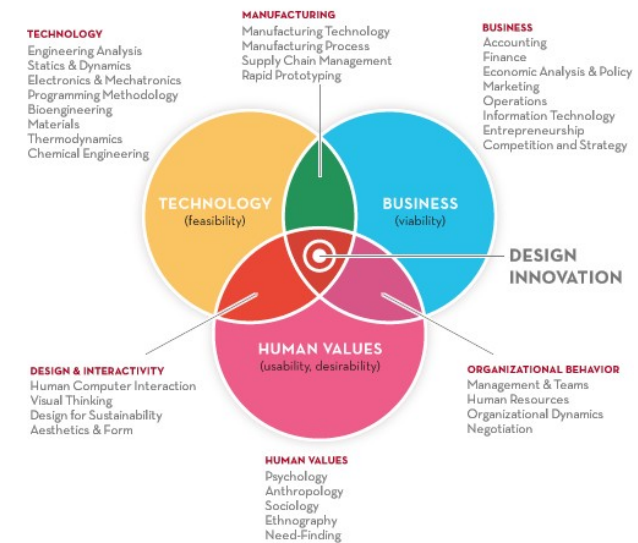
What is Horizon 2020

Responsible research & innovation

Article | Newsroom

Responsible research and innovation is an approach that anticipates and assesses potential implications and societal expectations with regard to research and innovation, with the aim to foster the design of inclusive and sustainable research and innovation.

Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) implies that societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business, third sector organisations, etc.) work together during the whole research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its outcomes with the values, needs and expectations of society.



This lecture will give you conceptual tools to approach these imperatives in a meaningful manner.



Why to talk about values?



- People often feel strongly about things their values → violating them may lead to aggression, rejection of your product or services (in a best case), and physical or psychological harm (in the worst case). But, on the other hand, not everything that people esteem, is of equal importance (>>there are different kinds of values): life, health, well-being (physical & psychological) are arguably more important than than aesthetic values (how the product looks like).
- Values have power to guide decision making and action. But not all of them rightfully so. Moral values have crucial importance in moral decision making – they are (in principle) overriding reasons that justify choices.
- Better understanding of what is important and what is not when designing your products and when offering professional services.



What value is



**Value** – something that is worth having,  
desirable (not the same as desired),  
**something GOOD.**



The word “good” is very tricky. It has different meanings, depending on the context (implicit values). Not all of these meanings are moral.

This is a good mobile application.	e.g.: This app fulfills the expectations of a customer.
This code is good.	e.g.: this code does what it was designed for, is clear, well documented, reusable, energy efficient, is verified and tested.
Mike is a good IT specialist.	e.g.: Mike knows how to fix problems
Sandra is a good person.	e.g.: Sandra is kind, honest and helpful.
This insurance policy was a good choice for our company.	e.g.: It was cheap.
Veges are good for you.	Eating veges contribute to your health.



“This burger is a good choice for your dinner”, may mean:

- It is a tasty burger (but it might be really unhealthy)
- It is cheapest in town
- It is a healthy burger (no carbs, not trans-fat etc., no vegetable oil), but may be not so tasty
- The materials for the burger come from sources that do not abuse workers producing it
- The meat for the burger comes from an environmentally-friendly farm

So what is the message?

“Good” may refer to different kinds of values.

Do not jump to conclusions when you see the word “good”, think about the intended meaning/meaning that best reflects what you want to say!

So, how do we make sense of all things that are called good?



## Moral vs non-moral values:

Not all values are moral and therefore not all of them have the the same weight in moral our decision making

It is important to remember:

### 1. Instrumental (good for something else) vs intrinsic good (good in itself)

- Keyboard has an instrumental value – for entering data into a computer.
- Health, wellbeing, autonomy (ability to guide your own actions), meaningfulness, self-respect, privacy, are goods in themselves.

They are to not desired for something else.

Moral values are intrinsic values. Non-moral values are instrumental.

### 2. Subjective (a matter of opinion) vs objective good (not depending on an opinion)

- 5 days a week on martial arts is good for me. But it not so objectively.
- Health is an objective good.

Moral values are objective values.

### 3. Non-universalizable vs universalizable good (something that is good for everyone under the same conditions). Moral values are universalizable.

### 4. Commensurable (are exchangeable for the same denominator) vs non-commensurable good (cannot be exchanged for something else).

- Property, time etc – commensurable (can be exchanged for money – economic value);
- Autonomy, freedom, health, wellbeing self-respect etc – non commensurable (moral value).

Non-moral values: aesthetic, prudential, cultural, historic etc.



Institutional facts & moral values



**Institutional facts** – conceptions, existing in a certain institution or establishments (in the broad sense; customs/traditions are also institutions).

E.g. honour as a value is an institutional fact (depends on certain social practices and conventions which are random)

**Moral value** is not an institutional fact (does not depend on social practices).



Values, desires and needs



These are often confused.

1. **Desire** – subjective mental state, the goal of which is to bring about a certain state of affairs. Objects of desires are subjective values, not moral because they cannot be universalized.  
- I desire to be a boxing champion. It is good for me, but not for you.

**Moral value** – something that there is an objective reason to desire → as good reason for you as it is for me (rationality).

2. **Need** – is an objective conditional requirement  
– if I want to survive in winter in Greenland, I need a good coat. No information about values.



So:

Does it mean that you should care only about moral values?

No, institutional facts (including cultural values), needs and desires of people are important too.

But moral values should score the highest in the rank order of the parameters that you take into account in your design.



# Thank you!

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Optional sources for you:

Ethics Unwrapped <https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu/glossary>

Stanford Encl. of Philosophy <https://plato.stanford.edu>

Baggini, J., & Fosl, P.S. (2007). The Ethics Toolkit: A Compendium of Ethical Concepts and Methods.

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