Inclusion or equity?:

Accessibility as digital fairness, justice, and rights

7 December 2021

The Digital Inclusion Conference 2021: Making Digital Services Accessible for All

Ada Lovelace Institute

Welcome

Today’s theme is ”Making Digital Services Accessible for All”

- Keynote on the Barriers and Solutions to the Digital Divide
- Case Study: Creating Accessible Platforms for People with Disabilities
- Case Study: Supporting Elderly and Digitally Excluded Groups
- Interactive Session: Delivering Digital Inclusion and Assisted Digital in Community Settings
- Case Study: Improving Outcomes for Digitally Disadvantaged Young People
- Case Study: 100% Digital Leeds

Please ask questions on EventsAir throughout the presentations

Opening Provocation

When is inclusion disenfranchising or disempowering?

When is exclusion an act of agency or choice (self-exclusion)?

…and how should we build services to account for these experiences, too?

The Ada Lovelace Institute

We use a range of research methodologies to explore socio-technical questions relating to data and AI.

Our mission is to ensure that data and AI work for people and society. We believe that a world where data and AI work for people and society is a world in which the opportunities, benefits and privileges generated by data and AI are justly and equitably distributed and experienced.

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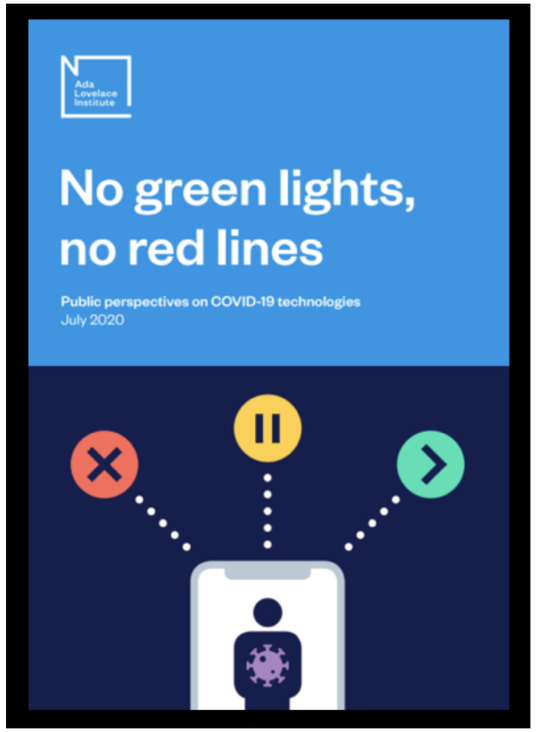
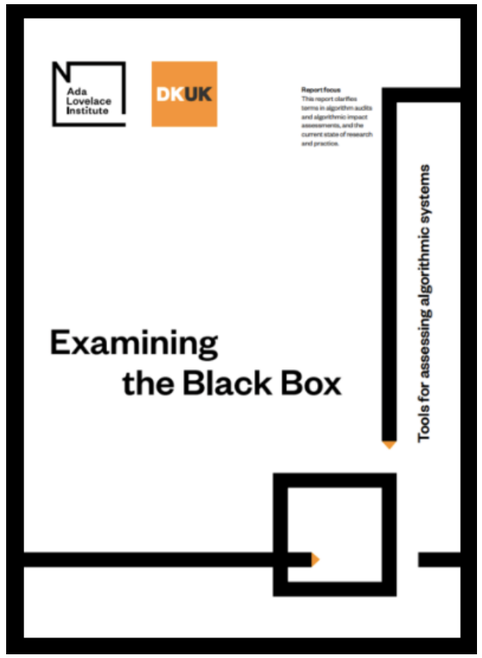
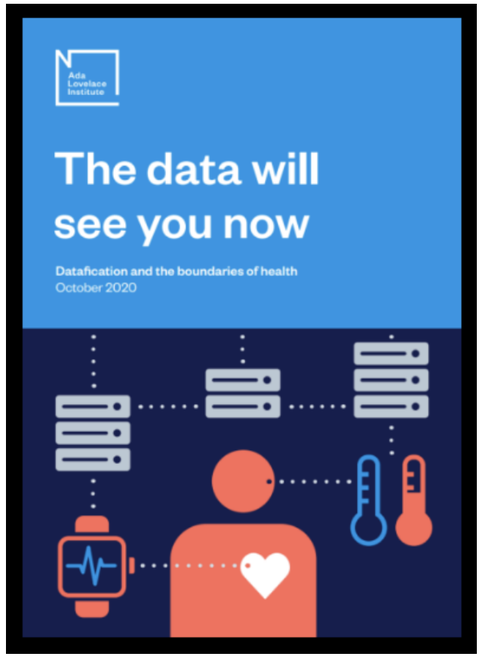
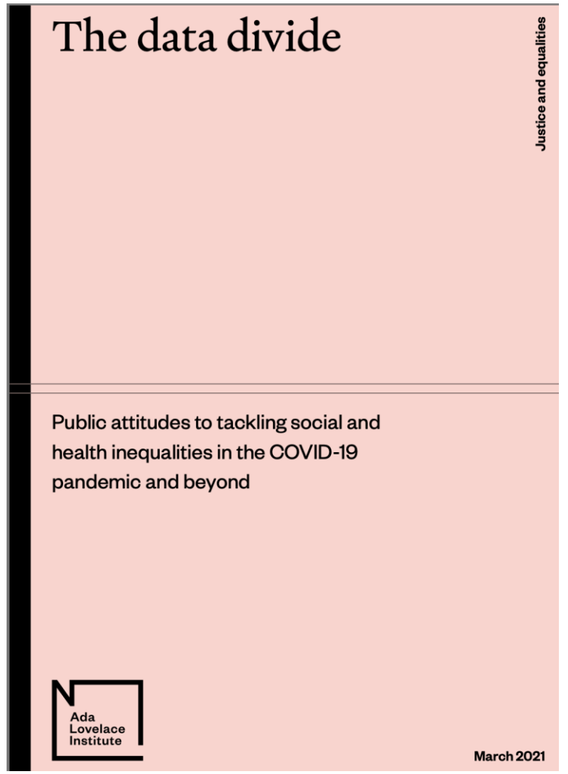






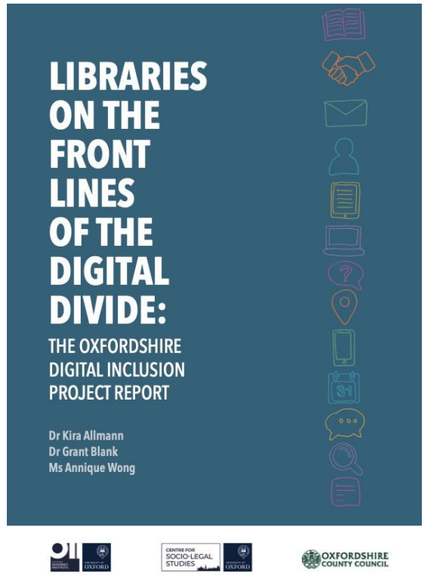


About me

I do community-embedded research to highlight the contextual factors contributing to both exclusion and inclusion

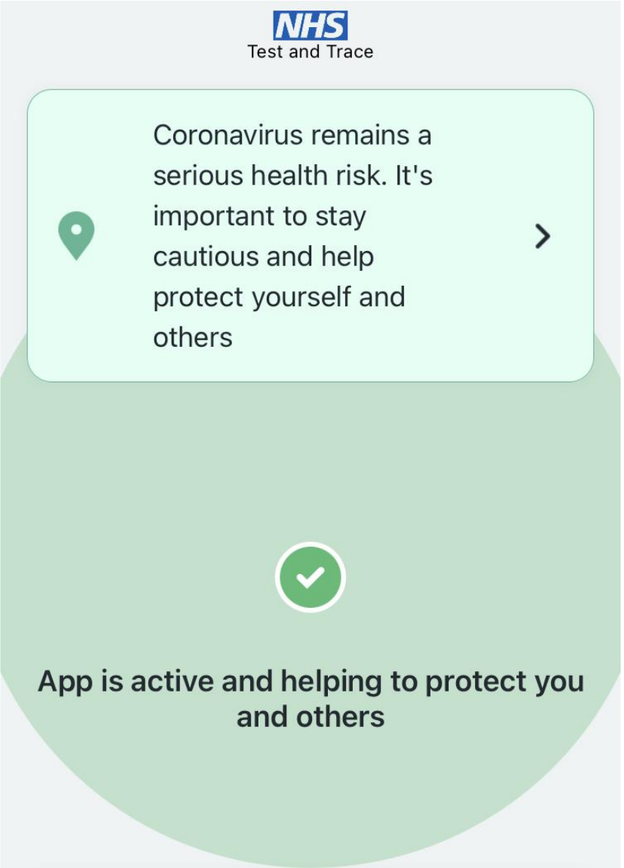
Community-owned internet in rural areas

UK Digital Poverty Evidence Review 2022



Oxfordshire Digital Inclusion Project (Public Libraries)

Understanding the impact of data-driven systems and technologies on health inequalities



Take, for example, the **shielded patient list** (QCovid risk prediction algorithm):

Inclusion:

- Protection of potentially vulnerable people
- Prioritisation for certain health services like vaccines
- Forced isolation resulting in loss of social contact and employment for already-vulnerable people
- Confusion, lack of trust, leading to skepticism about data and technology

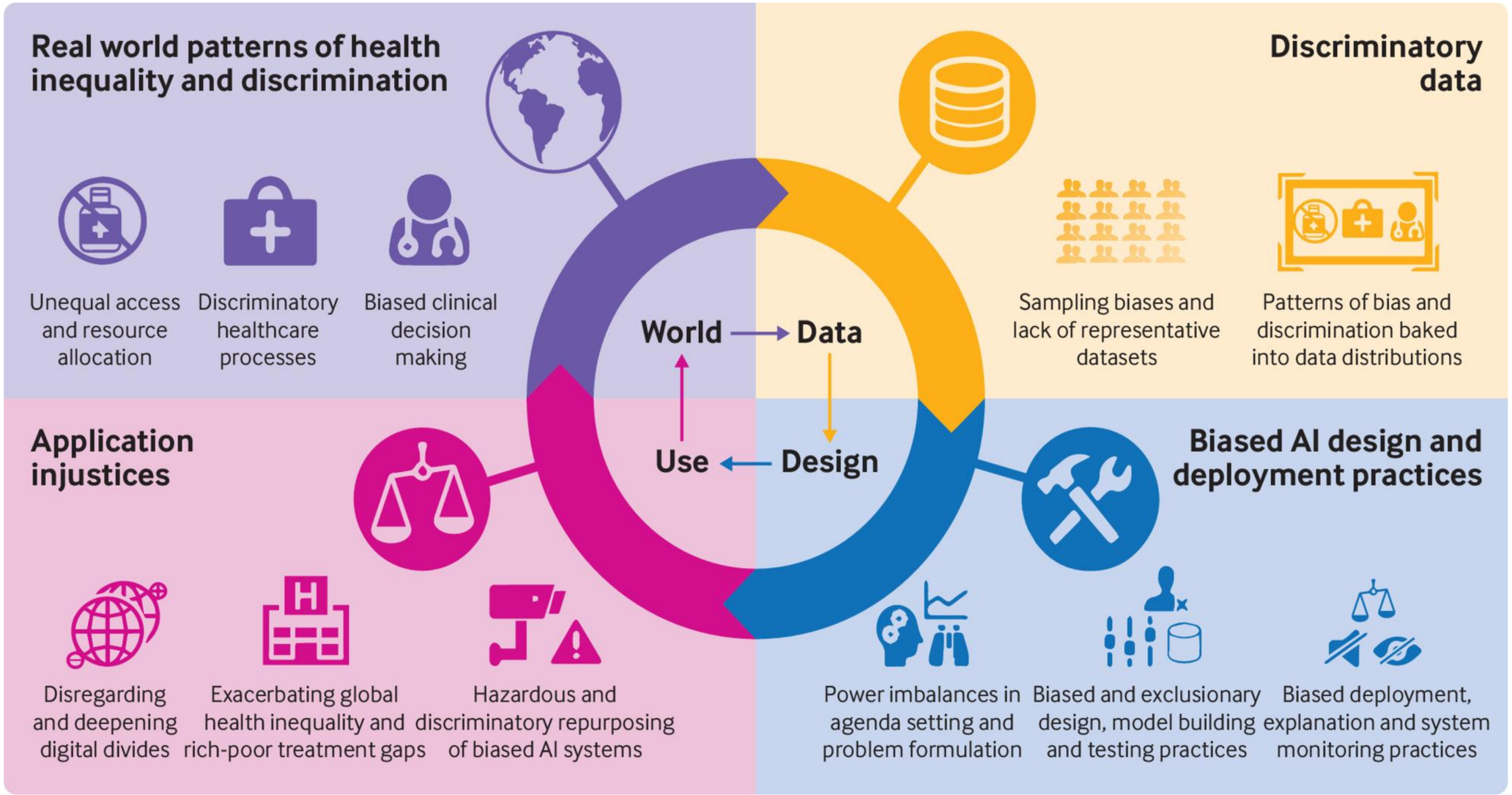
Exclusion

- Higher risk of exposure to the virus
- Clinically vulnerable people unable to access priority services because they don't appear in the data due to *other* exclusions
- Confusion, lack of trust, leading to skepticism about data and technology

Q: How are people made visible and invisible to these systems? How do design choices impact people's visibility and likelihood of exclusion/exploitation/stigmatisation?

Unless we change the way we think about and build **systems**, inclusion in the digital world as we know it can mean further **disadvantage**

The relational inputs/impacts of DDS



Leslie D, Mazumder A, Peppin A, Wolters M K, Hagerty A. Does “AI” stand for augmenting inequality in the era of covid-19 healthcare? BMJ 2021; 372 :n304 doi:10.1136/bmj.n304

We need top-down and bottom-up perspectives

2022 Lived Experience Research

Aim: to make visible the invisible inequalities and relationships among different forms of inequality at the intersection of people's everyday lives and data-driven technologies/systems adopted to address COVID-19.

Not to assume: inclusion (in datasets and access to technologies) is always the ultimate good, nor that exclusion is involuntary, unconsidered, or detrimental.

Going to where people already are: regional field sites across the UK, working with community groups that have experienced multiple disadvantage

The Health Foundation

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Accessibility is not just about improving the digital world *as it is;* it is also about building the digital world differently – with these perspectives at the centre

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