



We have asked Esther Keymolen, the inspirator of the panel on Trusted Identities, what she aims for with the panel.

What is the focus of your panel

Esther: “Trust is an important strategy to deal with the complexity and uncertainty of everyday life. When we trust, we have positive expectations of the actions of others. We stop looking for extra evidence, assume that people will not take advantage of our vulnerability, and that this one positive future

will become reality. However, in our current data-driven society, it is not sufficient to merely develop interpersonal trust relations, increasingly we also need to develop trust in networked technologies. With the arrival of increasingly autonomous applications, the question arises if and how trust in these technologies is still possible. To tackle this question, recently a lot of attention has been directed to data science practices (e.g. responsible A.I., algorithmic transparency, explainability,...), however, less attention has been paid to the design of the interface as an important aspect of the human-technology interaction. As human beings don’t interact with data or with algorithms but with applications, the design of the interface of these applications plays an important role in establishing or hindering trust.”

What questions will your panel answer? What dialogue are you looking for?

Esther: “In this panel we will bring together insights from philosophy of technology, social psychology and interface design to discuss the following questions:

- Why and in which ways does autonomy matter?
- How autonomous is autonomous technology?
- How can we understand autonomy as part of the human-technology relation?
- How can we design the interface of data-driven technologies/applications in such a way that they respect human autonomy?”

Are you optimistic about the autonomy of human beings, given the autonomy of technology?

Esther: “I don’t think that autonomous technology is really ‘autonomous’. Rather it refers to a reconfiguration that is currently taking place of the messy network of human and technological actors. The fact that decisions are increasingly delegated to technologies doesn’t mean that human responsibility and control completely disappear. If we are able to see the arrival of these so-called autonomous applications as a call for opening the black box of technology and actively start designing these applications in such a way that they actually reflect shared societal values, a trustworthy, data-driven society awaits us.”