



# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24

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# ABOUT US

The UCLA Institute for Technology, Law & Policy (ITLP) drives research and analysis of new and emerging technologies to ensure they are developed, implemented and regulated in socially beneficial, equitable, and accountable ways. Founded in 2020, ITLP is a collaboration between the UCLA School of Law and the Samueli School of Engineering. It currently is led by Executive Director Michael Karanicolas and Faculty Co-directors Mark McKenna and John Villasenor.

ITLP's three overarching goals:

1. Elevate academic inquiry and multidisciplinary research in works interconnecting technology and law.
2. Foster the next generation of scholars and policy-makers in the field through student enrichment and support.
3. Support faculty and staff at the vanguard of the intersection of technology and law to develop and offer courses.



# RECENT HIGHLIGHTS

Images, clockwise from upper left: Amethyst Phillips and Isabella Bosetti, J.D. class of 2024, are among the first UCLA students to graduate with a Technology Law specialization; Executive Director Michael Karanicolas speaks at a California Senate Judiciary Committee hearing in December; ITLP Faculty Co-Director Mark McKenna, Rep. Ted Lieu and Karanicolas; Kristina Meccia and Kevin Conrad (both J.D. '24) also earned Technology Law specializations.

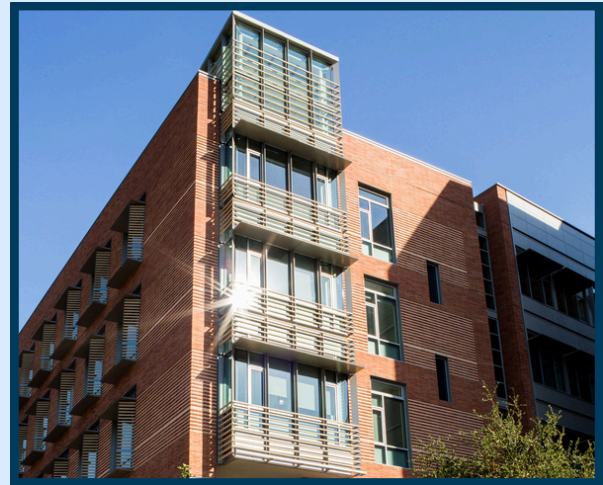
**MAY** The first cohort of law students to specialize in Technology Law has graduated! The formal specialization debuted in fall 2023, so the population of Tech Law students only will grow. See more on *Student Engagement*, page 6.

**APR** UCLA ITLP was included alongside many longer-established law and technology centers of Harvard, Yale, and Georgetown in a cy pres award settlement against Google, the result of privacy issues related to its stored location data. ITLP stands to receive \$1 million.

**MAR** ITLP hosted the **Los Angeles Copyright Symposium**, an annual conference bringing together students, professors and practitioners, held in partnership with The McCarthy Institute at Arizona State University's Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law.

# RESEARCH

ITLP advanced several groundbreaking projects on the challenges posed by artificial intelligence with research driven by affiliated faculty from both the law and engineering schools.



The first, led by Assistant Professor of Computer Science Nanyun Peng, explores **new methods for evaluating “hallucinations”** (the generation of unfounded information) by AI foundation models, in order to boost the reliability of AI language generation. The new framework, called AMRFact, uses Abstract Meaning Representations and outperforms existing systems for tracking hallucinations. It was presented at the 2024 Annual Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics, and additionally positions ITLP to drive policy discussions around large language models and the responsible professional use of artificial intelligence. Over the next year, ITLP also intends to connect this work to research into the use of AI by news media organizations and its impact on the information ecosystem.

The second research project addresses a profound problem presented by AI: the ability to generate fake digital content which is indistinguishable from authentic content, also known as “deepfakes”. There is presently no reliable method for detecting whether content is AI-generated. Research led by Assistant Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering Yuan Tian aims to develop **a system that will watermark image data and make it less vulnerable to manipulation**. Although this system will not detect whether content or elements thereof are AI-generated, this mechanism creates assurances that a particular item at least was not AI manipulated, which will be essential to authenticating material involved in adjudicatory processes. This project is also connected to ongoing policy discussions around proposed mandatory watermarking and AI detection mechanisms, as well as to a new ITLP project on the likely impact of AI on the 2024 election:

ITLP and its partners at Report for America, a nonprofit that aims to strengthen democracy through improved local-level journalism, are researching potential election interference methods which could exploit AI to propagate disinformation in rural or down-ballot races where there is a dearth of news media attention. This project is designed to provide **recommendations for boosting media and data resiliency in America’s information ecosystem** in advance of the U.S. Presidential election. The research is being carried out by two ITLP research assistants, Aditya Sivakumar and Nisha McNealis, from the faculties of law and engineering, respectively, under the supervision of ITLP’s Executive Director.

ITLP in 2023-24 won a **National Science Foundation** grant to develop new models of proactive privacy enforcement, in collaboration with Professor Yuan Tian of UCLA's Samueli School of Engineering, and Yinzhi Cao of the Johns Hopkins Whiting School of Engineering. The project concerns developing new machine learning-powered privacy assessment tools and will engage leading policy-makers from European Union, United States, and California governments.

In April ITLP kicked off a policy project mapping revenue extraction models available to or used by major online platforms. This research examines the economic, legal, and public policy trade-offs associated with each and is motivated by a raft of legislative proposals including the **California Journalism Preservation Act**, which if enacted would levy various forms of taxes or fees on online platforms to help support news media organizations. While the project is agnostic on the fundamental question of whether online platforms should be obliged to pay fees, it aims to inform conclusions for constructing maximally efficient models and to avoid malformed incentive structures in the information ecosystem. This project is a collaboration between ITLP Doctoral Fellow Alessia Zornetta and Dr. Thomas Ash, an economist from the UCLA Anderson School of Management.

ITLP also concluded its second **Information Policy Lab** this spring. The Lab generated a series of research papers on privacy, content moderation, and governance challenges related to extended reality (XR), which will culminate in a published paper later this year. *Read more from the Lab:* <https://www.techpolicy.press/category/ucla-institute-for-technology-law-policy>.



*Pictured, top left: **Melodi Dincer** was ITLP's policy fellow in 2023-24 and co-instructs the Information Policy Lab.*



*Participating in the Information Policy Lab has been a unique and rewarding experience that has allowed me to think beyond the mere application of laws. I appreciated the opportunity to interact with leading voices in academia, law, and policy, and to learn the practical advocacy skills required in the private and public sectors.*

**Tammana Malik LL.M. '24**  
(pictured at left)

# STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Career development and mentorship is a key locus for engagement with students. In response to strong student interest, we offered a full “Careers in Tech Week” in the 2023-24 academic year. Attended by 90 students, the event featured a range of discussion and diverse career options, with speakers from Apple, the federal government (CIA), and many others.

Eight ITLP student researchers –two SJD, four JD, and two MEng– worked on several projects, including leading the drafting of both the amicus curiae brief and a submission to the copyright office, as well as the development of a workshop on AI and the Practice of Law.

ITLP continues to enhance UCLA’s course offerings in technology, law and policy – “Ethics for Computer Scientists” will be offered both this summer and in fall 2024.

*Nisha McNealis, M.Eng. '24, is researching the impact that AI will have on media coverage of local elections*



“ITLP’s interdisciplinary reach gives me the unique opportunity to connect and collaborate with students, faculty, and thought leaders with diverse areas of expertise.”

“Researching Generative AI and its intersection with Law and Policy has been extremely rewarding and directly applicable to problems arising in society.”



*Aditya Sivakumar, J.D. '26, is working on media and data resiliency in the US*

## Courses offered by ITLP faculty and staff in the 2023-24 academic year

### ENGINEERING

- Technology and Law** (80 students)
- Technology and Society** (40 students)
- Ethics and Responsibility in Technology** (20 students)

### LAW

- Digital Technologies and the Constitution** (23 students)
- Design Law** (23 students)
- The Information Policy Lab** (12 students)

# PUBLIC POLICY IMPACT

As US and EU regulators settle into new data protection frameworks while readying a new slate of laws about artificial intelligence, data security, product design, exclusion, expression, and manipulation, scholars are coming to terms with the limits of narrow and individualistic notions of privacy and embracing a broad and diverse approach to human information rules. Accordingly, ITLP in June co-sponsored **The Future of Privacy and Data Protection Law: A Conversation Between Academics and Regulators**, a private convening of academics and regulators under Chatham House Rules for a discussion around the future of privacy theory and practice. Along with participants from Boston University School of Law, the Cordell Institute for Policy in Medicine & Law at Washington University, the University of Minnesota Law School, and Trinity College Dublin, we explored the ways privacy and data protection are developing.

ITLP leadership in the spring also spoke on law and policy issues including

- **Transparency rules for online platforms**
- **The threat of extended reality (XR) as a vector for disseminating propaganda**
- **The regulation of novel financial technologies**

at Yale, Vanderbilt, New York University, Pepperdine, UC Berkeley, UC Davis, University of Southern California, University of Amsterdam, Utrecht University (Netherlands), the Law and Society Association Annual Meeting and the Annual Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics.

Among lawmaking entities whose staff ITLP members briefed and provided insight to this year are:



**Driving U.S. Innovation in Artificial Intelligence**

A ROADMAP FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE

**The Bipartisan Senate AI Working Group**

Majority Leader Chuck Schumer  
Senator Mike Rounds  
Senator Martin Heinrich  
Senator Todd Young

The image shows the cover of a report titled "Driving U.S. Innovation in Artificial Intelligence". The cover features the title in large blue font, a subtitle "A ROADMAP FOR ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES SENATE", and the United States Senate seal. Below the seal, it identifies the "The Bipartisan Senate AI Working Group" and lists its members: Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, Senator Mike Rounds, Senator Martin Heinrich, and Senator Todd Young.



The Bipartisan  
Senate AI Working Group  
May 2024

*“...This broad technology does not neatly fall into the jurisdiction of any single committee. We resolved to bring leading experts into a unique dialogue on some of the most profound policy questions AI presents...to help lay the foundation for a better understanding in the Senate of the policy choices and implications around AI.”*

Faculty Co-Director John Villasenor spoke at the **U.S. Patent and Trademark Office’s March 2024 Public Symposium on AI and IP**. ITLP Executive Director Michael Karanicolas testified on government uses of artificial intelligence at a joint hearing of the **California Senate Governmental Organization and Budget and Fiscal Review Subcommittees**.



In Fall 2023, United States Congressman Ted Lieu (left image above) visited to discuss AI regulation, and ITLP separately welcomed the **California Senate Judiciary Committee** and speakers across the news media, technology and related oversight industries for an informational hearing on journalism in the digital age.

In November, ITLP submitted an **amicus curiae brief**, in the Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, in support of a First Amendment challenge to the copyright anti-circumvention rules (Green v. Department of Justice). The brief was signed by several leading intellectual property experts, including UCLA School of Law Vice Dean and ITLP co-director Mark McKenna and Professors Neil Netanel, Pamela Samuelson (UC Berkeley), and Rebecca Tushnet (Harvard). ITLP also developed a memo for the U.S. Copyright Office’s consultation on AI, arguing against applying copyright protections for purely AI-generated works.



# SPEAKERS, SYMPOSIA AND MORE



ITLP hosted in March the Los Angeles Copyright Symposium, an annual conference bringing together students, professors and practitioners, held in partnership with The McCarthy Institute at Arizona State University's Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law. The March event was well attended by members of the Los Angeles legal, entertainment law and IP law community and attracted sponsorship from several law firms, as well as from tech giant Alibaba.

ITLP leadership were panelists at the **United Nations Internet Governance Forum 2023**, and presented at the **Intellectual Property Scholars Conference** (convened annually by Stanford, UC Berkeley, Cardozo and other law schools), and an AI event hosted by the American Legislative Exchange Council.

On campus, the Institute continued its popular lunchtime seminars featuring speakers at the intersection of tech, law and public policy. On-campus events engaged more than 500 attendees this spring. (See *Events and Engagement*, page TK.)

# ITLP PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH (2023-24)

## Academic publications

- Nikita Aggarwal, [Amazon's Pricing Paradox](#), 37 *Harv. J.L. & Tech.* 1 (2024), with Rory Van Loo.
- Nikita Aggarwal, [Locating Consumer Credit Regulation](#), 46 *Cardozo L. Rev.* (forthcoming 2024).
- Michael Karanicolas, [Challenging Minority Rule: Developing AI Standards that Serve the Majority World](#), 71 *UCLA Law Review - Discourse* (2024).
- Mark P. McKenna, [Amazon's Quiet Overhaul of the Trademark System](#), 113 *California Law Review* (forthcoming 2025), with Jeanne Fromer.
- Mark P. McKenna, [Design Patents Aren't Patents \(And It's a Good Thing Too\)](#), 92 *George Washington Law Review* (forthcoming 2024), with Mark A. Lemley.
- Mark P. McKenna, [Competition and Congestion in Trademark Law](#), 102 *Texas Law Review* 437 (2024), with Christopher Buccafusco and Jonathan Masur.
- Mark P. McKenna, Externalizing Trademark's Limits, in [Charting Limitations on Trademark Rights](#), Barton Beebe and Haochen Sun, eds. (Oxford University Press, 2023)
- Mark P. McKenna, [A Qualitative Method for Investigating Design](#), *Handbook on Empirical Studies in Intellectual Property Law*, Estelle Derclaye, ed. (Edward Elgar 2023) (with Jessica Silbey)
- John Villasenor, [Ten Thousand AI Systems Typing on Keyboards: Generative AI in Patent Applications and Preemptive Prior Art](#), 26 *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law* 375 (2024).
- John Villasenor, [Artificial Intelligence, Trade Secrets, and the Challenge of Transparency](#), 25 *North Carolina Journal of Law and Technology*, 495 (2024).
- John Villasenor, [Generative Artificial Intelligence and the Practice of Law: Impact, Opportunities, and Risks](#), 25 *Minnesota Journal of Law, Science, and Technology* 25 (2024).
- Alessia Zornetta, Clearing The Haze: Is The EU Digital Services Act Finally Forcing Platforms To Open Up About Content Moderation?, *Notre Dame Journal on Emerging Technologies*, forthcoming Fall 2024
- Alessia Zornetta, The Pitfalls of the European Union's Risk-based Approach to Digital Rulemaking, *UCLA JOLT* (accepted for publication).

# ITLP PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH (CONT'D)

- Alessia Zornetta and Ignacio Cofone, Artificial Intelligence and the Right to Privacy in [Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights](#) (Quintavalla, Temperman eds), Sep. 2023.

## ITLP research

- *Amicus Curiae* Brief of Legal Scholars in Support of Plaintiff-Appellants and Reversal in Matthew D. Green, et al., v. United States Department of Justice, et al.
- Initial Comments In Response to August 30, 2023 Notice of Inquiry and Request for Comments from the Copyright Office.

## Broader interest

- Nikita Aggarwal, [Are We Mis-Regulating AI?](#) *Chicago Tribune*, Feb 2, 2024.
- Nikita Aggarwal & Rory Van Loo, [Prime Day Buyers, Beware. Amazon Makes it Hard to Find the Best Deals](#), *Chicago Tribune*, Oct 10, 2023
- Michael Karanicolas, [Tougher AI Policies Could Protect Taylor Swift — and Everyone Else — from Deepfakes](#), *Scientific American*, Feb 8, 2024.
- Michael Karanicolas, [The AI Industry is Steaming Toward a Legal Iceberg](#), *The Wall Street Journal*, Mar 29, 2024.
- John Villasenor, [Rendering misrepresentation: Diversity failures in AI image generation](#), The Brookings Institution, Apr 17, 2024. (with Jeremy Braun)
- John Villasenor, [Keyword Search Warrants and the Fourth Amendment](#), The Brookings Institution, Feb 22, 2024.
- John Villasenor, [How the White House's AI Executive Order could increase U.S. cyber vulnerabilities](#), The Brookings Institution, Nov 22, 2023.
- John Villasenor, [Does the First Amendment Confer a 'Right to Compute'? The Future of AI May Depend on It](#), *Scientific American*, Sept 26, 2023.
- John Villasenor, [A primer on some key issues in U.S. v. Google](#), The Brookings Institution, Sept 19, 2023.
- John Villasenor, [How close are we to AI that surpasses human intelligence?](#), The Brookings Institution, Jul 18, 2023. (with Jeremy Braun)

# ITLP EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

Fall 2023 to Spring 2024 (total audience = 1157)

**Aug 28 - ITLP welcome reception**

Introducing the Technology Law Specialization to students and fostering a community among interested students. Attendance: 52

**Aug 30 - Tech Talks with Nikita Aggarwal: Consumer Credit, Information and Inequality**

ITLP Research Fellow Nikita Aggarwal discussed fintech matters. Attendance: 27

**Sep 7 - Tech Talks with Rep. Ted Lieu: The National AI Commission Act**

Congressman Ted W. Lieu was invited to speak with the UCLA Law community about his proposed National AI Commission Act. Attendance: 85

**Sep 13 - Tech Talks with Edward Lee: Creators Take Control**

Chicago-Kent (Illinois Tech) Professor of Law Edward Lee presented his book, "Creators Take Control: How NFTs Revolutionize Art, Business, and Entertainment". Attendance: 52

**Sep 26 - Prof. Rick Hasen on Social Media and Democracy**

Collaboration with the Safeguarding Democracy Project; a conversation about elections, speech and disinformation with Katie Harbath, Former Director of Public Policy, Facebook and CEO of Anchor Change; Josh Lawson, Advisor to the Aspen Institute on A.I.; Yoel Roth, former head of Trust and Safety at Twitter; and Brandon Tucker, Senior Director of Policy & Government Affairs at Color Of Change. Attendance: 72

**Oct 11 - Tech Talks with Rebecca Hamilton: War Crimes Investigations and the Stored Communications Act**

American University Professor of Law Rebecca Hamilton discussed her publication on future-proofing U.S. laws for war crimes investigations in the digital era. Attendance: 50

**Oct 16-20 - Tech Careers Week**

An in-person, week-long event showcasing careers in the tech law space ranging from patent, government tech careers, privacy, public interest careers, and in-house tech sector positions. Attendance: 90

**Oct 25 - Tech Talks with Andrew Selbst: Unfair AI and FTC Interventions**

Asst. Professor Andrew Selbst discussed "Unfair Artificial Intelligence: How FTC Intervention Can Overcome the Limitations of Discrimination Law". Attendance: 67

**Nov 3 - Technology and the Practice of Law**

This full-day workshop, held by ITLP in partnership with the Beverly Hills Bar Association, covered topics in AI, machine learning, and the future of law related to emerging technologies. Attendance: 60

# ITLP

## EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

### **Nov 8 - Tech Talks with Chris Riley: Data Empowerment**

The Executive Director of the Data Transfer Initiative presented on interoperability. Attendance: 65

### **Jan 17 - Tech Talk with Michael Karanicolas: Trust and Safety in the Metaverse**

ITLP's executive director on the enormous potential of Immersive technology, and the great risk it carries without effective moderation of extended reality (XR) Attendance: 46.

### **Jan 29 - Artificial Intelligence and Judicial Process: Towards a Full Transformation of Pretrial and Trial Phases**

Collaboration with the Transnational Program on Criminal Justice and the International and Comparative Law Program; Distinguished Spanish scholar Jordi Nieva Fenoll discussed the impacts of A.I. on criminal trials. Attendance: 47.

### **Jan 31 - Lunch Workshop with Alberto De Franceschi: EU Digital Services Act**

Professor De Franceschi from the University of Ferrara spoke to ITLP students and faculty about E.U. approaches to regulation and the implementation challenges of the Digital Services Act. Attendance: 20.

### **Feb 6 - Panel: Policy Challenges in the Metaverse**

Part of the Information Policy Lab on extended reality—Professor Eugene Volokh, Tech and Human Rights Expert Brittan Heller and Associate Dean, Research and Technology in the School of Theater, Film and Television Jeff Burke discussed policy implications. Attendance: 51.

### **Mar 8 - Los Angeles Copyright Symposium**

Students, faculty, and participants from corporate and public sector law addressed pressing issues at the intersection of copyright law and technology. Attendance: 118.

### **Mar 20 - Tech Talk with James Park on Cryptocurrency Regulation**

Professor of Law James J. Park discussed the application of securities regulation and corporate law to cryptocurrency, in pursuit of an appropriate governance framework. Attendance 53.

### **Apr 3 - Tech Talk with Yuan Tian on Novel Approaches to Privacy Enforcement**

Professor Tian presented a new paradigm of enforcement, where machine learning powered tools allow regulators to assess privacy compliance at scale and in advance of any breach. Attendance: 27.

### **Apr 10 - Cory Doctorow Book Talk: The Internet Con and The Bezzle**

Doctorow is an author, journalist and activist who offers provocative and innovative perspectives on our relationship with technology. Attendance: 54.

# ITLP EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

## **Apr 11 – IPLA Lunch with David Nimmer**

·David Nimmer is a renowned expert of copyright law and the editor of Nimmer on Copyright, the standard reference in the field. Attendance: 15.

## **Apr 12 - Festschrift for Eugene Volokh, Gary T. Schwartz Distinguished Professor of Law**

A celebration and symposium of the career of Professor Volokh and his contributions to UCLA and the broader scholarly discourse. Attendance: 33.

## **Apr 17 - Tech Talk with Alessia Zornetta on Platform Transparency Reporting**

·ITLP SJD candidate Alessia Zornetta presented on the early results of the E.U.'s Digital Services Act. Attendance: 35.

## **Apr 26 - Frank McCourt Book Talk: *Our Biggest Fight: Reclaiming Liberty, Humanity and Dignity in the Digital Age***

McCourt is the founder of Project Liberty, a \$500 million initiative to transform the internet through new, equitable technology and rebuild social media in a way that enables users to own and control their personal data. He spoke about his book and roadmap for upgrading the internet and building infrastructure for a healthier version of the web. Attendance: 38.



## **UCLA** Institute for Technology, Law & Policy

FOUNDED IN 2020 as a collaboration between the UCLA School of Law and the Samueli School of Engineering.


LED BY Executive Director Michael Karanicolas and Faculty Co-Directors Mark McKenna and John Villasenor, with many affiliated faculty across the Law and Engineering Schools.

AT THE VANGUARD of the intersection of technology and law –

- Innovative curricula at a top-ranked law school
- A multidisciplinary approach and community
- Focus on the next generation of legal experts, technologists, consumers and educators.

 [itlp@law.ucla.edu](mailto:itlp@law.ucla.edu)

 [law.ucla.edu/itlp](http://law.ucla.edu/itlp)

 School of Law  
385 Charles Young Drive East  
Los Angeles, CA 90095