



## Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Conference

Athens, Greece  
July 7-9, 2025



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# HARTZMAN AWARD HIGHLIGHT

SJ HEMMERICH

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY ANALYSIS

The theme of the 18th Equality, Diversity and Inclusion International Conference from 7th-9th July 2025 in Athens, Greece was *AI and Diversity in a Datafied World of Work: Will the Future of Work Be Inclusive?* I presented a paper, *Nonbinary and Trans Gender Equity in AI: Current Downfalls and Future Opportunities*, as part of Stream 4: Artificial Intelligence and Gender Equity. I received several positive comments, a few questions, and engaged in useful follow-up conversations throughout the conference. At the conference, I networked with several people and had extensive conversations with folks from the UK, South Africa, and France. These conversations will have a lasting impact on my work. Gender and culture was one important topic which arose. Another topic that piqued my interest engaged in the possibilities for community-informed AI created by using African Ubuntu philosophy and decoloniality. Many other presentations were focused on improving the AI we have and mitigating bias that is baked into its foundation.

Some presentations on disability, accessibility, and AI were quite interesting. When AI is specifically programmed to assist people with varying disabilities, it can really improve their quality of life and/or the independence they can have in their daily lives. Accessibility that is baked into programs can be very helpful, while add-on accessibility features can be quite cost-prohibitive. Conversely, large scale AI often not only perpetuates, but also exacerbates, ableism, infantilizing disabled people and presuming incompetence.

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I think now about how AI created from large datasets for mass consumption may always perpetuate the gendered biases we hold. Building an AI system capable of expecting and celebrating sex and gender minorities would necessitate intentional work, a brand-new foundation, and programmers willing to imagine possibilities. I gained so much from attending this conference, and the ideas continue to percolate as I continue my work.