

## **Biografien MIT Workshops**

### **Claudia Chwalisz**

#### **Founder and CEO of DemocracyNext**

Claudia Chwalisz is the Founder and CEO of DemocracyNext, an international non-profit, non-partisan research and action institute with a mission to shift political and legislative power to people through empowered Citizens' Assemblies. She works to build new democratic institutions that give people agency and dignity through participation, that distribute political power equally through selection by lot (sortition), and that channel collective intelligence and enable people to find common ground through deliberation. Previously, Claudia served as the Innovative Citizen Participation Lead at the OECD, where she established and analysed an evidence base of around 600 examples of deliberative assemblies around the world, co-authored the "Catching the Deliberative Wave" report, and set standards for implementation and institutionalization. She was involved in designing the world's first permanent deliberative bodies made up of people drawn by a lottery in Ostbelgien, Paris, and Brussels. Claudia is an Obama Leader Europe 2023.

### **Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou, PhD**

#### **Head of Translational Research, MIT Center for Constructive Communication**

As the Head of Translational Research at the MIT Center for Constructive Communication, Dimitra Dimitrakopoulou leads sociotechnical research at the intersection of dialogue, technology, and design. By bringing deep expertise in participatory methods, qualitative analysis, and design research, she focuses on the design, prototyping, and advancement of social dialogue technologies and oversees the transfer of research methods, tools, and systems to practice and deployment.

### **Jad Kabbara**

#### **Postdoctoral researcher, MIT Center for Constructive Communication**

Jad Kabbara is a postdoctoral researcher at the MIT Center for Constructive Communication (CCC) working with Prof. Deb Roy. His broad interests are in Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing and its applications to address important societal problems at the intersection of social media, communication and political discourse. He received his PhD in Computer Science in 2022 from McGill University where he was part of the Reasoning & Learning Lab and the Montreal Institute for Learning Algorithms (Mila). His PhD research was at the intersection of computational pragmatics and natural language generation and natural language understanding. His work focused on the computational modeling of presupposition effects in natural language and was recognized with best paper awards from top NLP academic conferences (ACL 2018 Best Paper Award and COLING 2022 Best Short Paper Award). Prior to his PhD, he received a Masters in Machine Learning & Statistical Signal Processing from McGill University in 2014 and a Bachelors in Computer Engineering (with a minor in history) from the American University of Beirut (AUB) in 2011.

**Deb Roy****Director, MIT Center for Constructive Communication****CEO & Co-founder, Cortico**

Deb Roy is Professor of Media Arts and Sciences at MIT where he directs the MIT Center for Constructive Communication, and co-founder and CEO of Cortico, a social technology non profit that develops and operates a conversation platform designed to surface underheard voices both within communities and across divides. His research on applied machine learning, human-machine system design, and understanding large-scale social media ecosystems is directed toward developing safe and trusted spaces for meaningful, non-polarizing human connection and civic impact.

**Belén Saldías****Ph.D. Candidate, MIT Center for Constructive Communication**

Belén Saldías is a Ph.D. Candidate at the MIT Center for Constructive Communication. She joined MIT in 2018 and has worked under the supervision of Professor Deb Roy since then. Her thesis focuses on explaining machine-guided community content moderation. Her overarching interest is making the internet a safer and more fruitful place for children and historically marginalized communities, working on the intersection of machine learning and natural language processing with social sciences. In her TEDx Talk "Does AI Hold the Same Values We Do?", Belén invites the audience to consider the cultural biases built into tools like ChatGPT and shares some personal reflections on the hidden challenges of using AI. Belén enjoys sharing her research and learning from those who are outside of academia.