

Intel's Experience Insights Lab (XIL) seeks to commission several essays on the theme of **“technology and social participation.”**

Our goal in this activity is to gain an understanding of the intellectual landscape across several academic disciplines including (but not limited to) sociology, anthropology, science and technology studies, social movement studies, communications, media studies, and design studies. We are essentially looking for literature-reviews: we want to know about big ideas and major debates, central texts and case studies, and significant thinkers and practitioners who are shaping these discourses. We are also interested in hearing the author's particular point of view, and will welcome provocative submissions that challenge our assumptions and suggest alternative areas of investigation.

Our definition of “social participation” is intentionally vague; at this stage our goal is to be inclusive and exploratory. However, here are a few guiding questions that should give some indication of what we are thinking:

1. Does the advent of ubiquitous information and communications technologies (ICTs) enable new forms of social organization? If so, how do these organizations function? How are resources acquired and mobilized? How are notions of collective identity manifest? What is the relationship with history, with longevity, and with memory? Does scale matter - what can a massive organization do that a 4 person collective cannot (and vice versa)?
2. How do ICTs enable (new) forms of collective experience or action? Does the ability to create and share hybrid media artifacts provide fodder for new kinds of shared projects? How do social movements coalesce around and make use of “data” (loosely interpreted)?
3. How might established institutions (e.g. governments, corporations, NGOs) use ICTs to engage constituents? Conversely, how do constituents use ICTs to hold these institutions accountable? What are the opportunities, and what are the risks for both institutions and constituents? How does power function in these arrangements?

The essays are intended for internal use by XIL – a collection of social scientists, designers, and engineers who think critically about the future of technology. You'll notice a preoccupation with novelty in the above - we're particularly interested in new and emergent phenomenon. We're less interested in, say, correlations between internet use and membership in civic organizations, breathless accounts of various “Twitter revolutions,” or best known practices for e-government initiatives. While we seek a historical and theoretical grounding, our orientation is both material and forward-looking - at the end of the day, XIL's charter is to inform the design of new technologies and experiences. Submissions will be evaluated on whether or not they are likely to help us on our way.

The essays are ideally suited for faculty and/or mid-to-late stage PhD candidates – people who have passed their quals and begun work on their dissertations, or who are actively publishing in this area. Although XIL will commission the essays, we don't need to own them - authors are welcome to publish and/or repurpose the text in whatever way they see fit. Similarly, essays may make use of the author's prior work, although we would expect essays to be tailored to meet our requirements.

We plan to commission four essays at US\$2500 each. Interested authors should submit a brief (1 paragraph) abstract indicating their general approach and the literature(s) that they will cover. Abstracts are due to Tad Hirsch (tad.hirsch@intel.com) by **Dec 10**. Essays are expected to be completed by **March 31, 2011**.