

Dr. Jana Sedlakova

Philosopher and ethicist bridging disciplines to foster impactful science for the public good

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Education

02/2020 – 09/2024

PhD degree, Institute of Biomedical Ethics and History of Medicine, University of Zürich, Switzerland

Dissertation title: *Epistemic and Ethical Challenges of Conversational Artificial Intelligence in Mental Healthcare: Interdisciplinary Inquiry for Responsible Human-AI interaction*

PhD Committee: Nikola Biller-Andorno, Prof. Dr. med. Dr. phil., Manuel Trachsel, PD Dr. med; Prof. Dr. Viktor von Wyl, Prof. Dr. Eva Weber- Guskar

PhD Excellence Program, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich, 2022 – 2024

PhD Research Stay, Ethox Centre, University of Oxford, England, 2023

11/2016 - 05/2018

PhD candidate in Philosophy, University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Dissertation title: *Normativity of Knowledge: Binding Force of Reasons*

Supervisor: Prof. Fabian Dorsch

PhD program not completed due to the unexpected passing of my supervisor, Prof. Dorsch

10/2013 - 09/2016

Master's Degree in Philosophy, Charles University, Prague, Czechia

Erasmus program, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, 2014 & 2016

10/2010 - 09/2013

Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy, Charles University, Prague, Czechia

Employment History

10/2024 - ongoing

Postdoctoral researcher, Interactive visual data analysis group, Department of Informatics, University of Zurich

01/2025 – ongoing

Chair of Scientific Communities, DSI Health & Ethics, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich

02/2021-12/2024

Scientific Manager (20 %), DSI Health & Ethics, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich

02/2021-12/2022

Research Assistant (30-40%), Institute of Implementation Science in Healthcare, University Zurich

07/2020 – 05/2021

Research Assistant (10%), IBME; University Zurich

Research for the external mandate – Central Ethics Commission, development of guidelines for the concept of medical futility for Swiss Academie of Medical Sciences

03/2020 – 08/2020

Innovation Ethicist (80%), ethix, Zurich

Product development 'Ethical Identity' and pilot launch; research for ethix & external mandate, incl. 'Digital Trust Label' project for the Swiss Digital Initiative; preparation of lectures and workshops with industry

05/2019-02/2020

Innovation Manager in Edtech & Tutor Trainer (100%), Teachy, Bern

Developing and carrying out a new pedagogical approach and course for tutors focusing on skills; development of innovative products, incl. a matchmaking platform to find the most suitable tutors

02/2017 – 04/2019

Tutor in Theory of Knowledge and German, Elite IB Tutors, London

Grants & Awards

Best Paper Award. *A Design Space for the Critical Validation of LLM-Generated Tabular Data*, M. Sachdeva, Ch. Narayanan, M. Wiedenkeller, J. Sedlakova, and J. Bernard. EuroVA 2025

Brocher Foundation, main applicant, funding for a 4-week research stay, 2024

Scientific Exchange, *DSI- AI week*, main applicant, 12'500, Swiss National Science Foundation, 2023

UNIGE Funding Engaging Science and Society for More Resilience, *Legitimacy of Digital Research Methods in Switzerland: a public deliberation project*, co-applicant, 28'800, Joint Funding University of Zurich and University of Geneva, 2022

GRC Travel Grant, main applicant, 2'500, funding for a research stay at the University of Oxford, University of Zurich, 2022

Project Grant, *DSI-Approach: Defining a Good Research Question for Unstructured Data*: co-applicant, 10'000 CHF, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich, 2022

Project Grant, *Public Legitimacy of Digital Methods*: co-applicant, 10'000 CHF, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich, 2022

Scholarship for the PhD Excellence Program, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich, 2022 - 2024

GRC Peer Mentoring Grant, *Language and passive sensing in the age of digitalization ('Language and Passive Sensing Group'*, co-applicant, CHF 1'350, University of Zurich, 2021

GRC Grant for workshop organization: *"When ethics meets well-being and mental health apps: moral and social issues of pursuing the good life with a smartphone"*, co-applicant, CHF 3'800, University of Zurich, 2021

List of Publications

Journal articles

Sedlakova, J., Lucivero, F., Pavarini, G., Kerasidou, A. (2025). *Human-like Epistemic Trust? Navigating Responsible Human-AI Interaction in Mental Healthcare*. American Journal of Bioethics. 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2025.2526734>.

Sedlakova, J. (2025). *The Ethics of Humanlikeness of AI Therapy Chatbots: A commentary*. The Hastings Report. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hast.5010>.

Daniore, P./ **Sedlakova, J.***, Zavattaro, F., Knieps, M., von Wyl, V., Benhamou, Y., Gille F. (2025). *Public views on open data research in Switzerland: Implications for research, science communication, and policy*. Public Understanding of Science. [doi: 10.1177/09636625251330575](https://doi.org/10.1177/09636625251330575).

Viganò, E., Hauser, Ch., Cacciatori, E., Ferrario, A., **Sedlakova, J.** (2025). *Mapping and Mitigating the Pains of Responsible Artificial Intelligence Implementation: An Analysis of Swiss Organizations*. 2025 IEEE Swiss Conference on Data Science (SDS), Zürich, Switzerland, 2025, pp. 119-126, [doi: 10.1109/SDS66131.2025.00023](https://doi.org/10.1109/SDS66131.2025.00023).

Sedlakova, J., Stanikic, M., Gille, F., Bernard, J., Horn, A.B., Wolf, M., Haag, C., Floris, J., Morgenshtern, G., Schneider, G., Zumbunn Wojczyńska, A., Mouton Dorey, C., Ettlin, D.A., Gero, D., Friemel, T., Lu, Z., Papadopoulos, K., Schläpfer, S., Wang, N., von Wyl, V. (2025). *Refining established practices for research question definition to foster interdisciplinary research skills in a digital age: Consensus study with nominal group technique*. JMIR Medical Education. [DOI: 10.2196/56369](https://doi.org/10.2196/56369).

Morley, J., Hine, E., Roberts, H., Sirbu, R., Ashrafian, H., Blease, Ch., Boyd, M., Chen, J. L., Chiavegatto Filho, A. D. P., Coiera, E., Cohen, I. G., Fiske, A., Jayakumar, N., Kerasidou, A., Mandreoli, F., McCradden, M. D., Namuganza, S., Nsoesie, E. O., Parikh, R. B., Reddy, S., **Sedlakova, J.**, Sunbul, T., van Baalen, S., van Kolschooten, H., Floridi, L. (2025). *Global Health in the Age of AI: Charting a Course for Ethical Implementation and Societal Benefit*. Minds & Machines 35, 31. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11023-025-09730-3>.

Sachdeva, M., Narayana, Ch., Wiedenkiller, M., **Sedlakova, J.**, Bernard. J. (2025). *A Design Space for the Critical Validation of LLM-Generated Tabular Data*. ArXiv. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2505.04487>.

Matt, M., **Sedlakova, J.**, Bernard, J., Zeppelzauer, M. Waldner, M. (2025). *Scalable Class-Centric Visual Interactive Labeling*. Computers & Graphics. 2025: 104240. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cag.2025.104240>.

Ferrario, A./**Sedlakova J.***, Trachsel, M. (2024). *The Role of Humanization and Robustness of Large Language Models in Conversational Artificial Intelligence for Individuals with Depression: A Critical Analysis*. JMIR Mental Health. [DOI: 10.2196/56569](https://doi.org/10.2196/56569).

Sedlakova, J. (2024). *Conversational AI for Psychotherapy and Its Role in the Space of Reason*. Cosmos + Taxis, 12(5+6):80-87.

Sedlakova J., Trachsel, M. (2023). *Conversational Artificial Intelligence in Psychotherapy: A New Therapeutic Tool or Agent?* The American Journal of Bioethics. [doi: 10.1080/15265161.2022.2048739](https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2022.2048739).

* These authors contributed equally.

Sedlakova, J., P. Daniore, A. Horn Wintsch, M. Wolf, M. Stanikic, Ch. Haag, Ch. Sieber, et al. (2023). *Challenges and Best Practices for Digital Unstructured Data Enrichment in Health Research: A Systematic Narrative Review*. PLOS Digital Health 2 (10): e0000347. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pdig.0000347>.

Sedlakova, J., A. L. Westermair, N. Biller-Andorno, Ch. A. Meier, M. Trachsel. (2023). *Comparison of Analog and Digital Patient Decision Aids for the Treatment of Depression: A Scoping Review*. Frontiers in Digital Health 1;5:1208889. [doi: 10.3389/fdgth.2023.1208889](https://doi.org/10.3389/fdgth.2023.1208889).

Trachsel M., **Sedlakova J.** (2022). *Ethics of telepsychiatry versus face-to-face treatment: let the patients make their autonomous choice*. Journal of Medical Ethics. Jan;48(1):32-33. [doi: 10.1136/medethics-2021-108073](https://doi.org/10.1136/medethics-2021-108073).

Biller-Andorno N., Aebi-Müller R., Salathé M., **Sedlakova J.** (2021). *Ineffectiveness and unlikelihood of benefit: dealing with the concept of futility in medicine*. SAMW Empfehlungen. Schweizer Akademie der medizinischen Wissenschaften.

Sedlakova, J., Iaquinto, S., Nißen, M., Trachsel, M., Biller-Andorno, N., von Wyl, V., (2024). *The Role of Humanization and Ethically-Sensitive Design of Chatbots Asking Questions Related to Mental Well-Being*. Computers in Human Behavior. (under review).

Book Chapters

Gille, F., Papadopoulos, K., **Sedlakova, J.**, Zavattaro, F., Brall, C. (2024). *Vertrauen: Welche Rolle spielt Vertrauen in Digitalwirtschaft*. In: Staffler, L., Ebersberger, B., Jobin, A. (eds) Digitalwirtschaft. Springer Gabler, Wiesbaden. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-45724-2_6.

Sedlakova, J., Ferrario, A., Trachsel, M. (2025). *Empathy in Mental Health Care Interventions by Conversational Artificial Intelligence*. In: Empathy in Clinical Psychiatry and Mental Health Care: Clinical, Philosophical, and Scientific Perspectives. Oxford University Press (forthcoming).

Sedlakova, J., Trachsel, M. *The Ethics of Digital Mental Health Care: Conversational Artificial Intelligence and Online Therapy*. In: Mental Health Ethics: Current Controversies and Emerging Debates. Oxford University Press. (under review).

Selected Conference & Workshop Presentations

Keynote presentation at **University of Zurich**, Legal, ethical and implementation challenges of AI in healthcare conference, 06/2025

Title: *Epistemic and ethical approaches towards human-AI collaboration*

Presentation at the **Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München**, Ethics of Generative AI & Conversational Agents, 09/2024

Title: *The role of conversational AI in mental healthcare: the importance of conceptualization, epistemology and ethics*

Presentation & Panelist at the **University of Basel & University Hospital Basel**, Symposium Navigating the Future of Mental Health Care: The Role of Digital Innovations and Generative AI, 05/2024

Title: *Ethical, conceptual and epistemic challenges of generative AI in mental healthcare*

Presentation at the **University of Graz**, AI Ethics & Human-Computer Interaction, 03/2024

Title: *Ethically-sensitive Conversational Design of Chatbots Asking Questions Related to Mental Health and Well-being: An empirical study*

Presentation at **Alan Turing's CDT Conference**, 10/2023

Title: *Responsible Interaction Design of Conversational Agents in Healthcare*

Presentation at the **University of Zurich**, Medical Knowledge in and out of the Clinic, 06/2023

Title: *Data quality and knowledge generated by chatbots*

Presentation at the **Oxford Global Health and Bioethics International Conference**, 06/2022

Title: *Conversational Artificial Intelligence as Digital Therapist: When Does a Simulation of Human-like Features Make Sense?*

Presentation at the **World Congress of Psychiatry**, 10/2021

Title: *'The relation between conversational artificial intelligence and the concept of self'*

Teaching Activities

Co-lecturer, DSI Minor, Digital Skills Module, University of Zurich, Spring Semester 2025

Designing and giving a lecture and exercise: *ChatGPT and Beyond: Interdisciplinary Approaches to AI Literacy*

Teaching Assistant, Department of Informatics, University of Zurich

Designing and integrating content from philosophy of science, epistemology and ethics into seminars and lectures from the interactive visual data analysis group (IVDA)

Giving lectures, supervising students and marking exams

IVDA seminar: research skills in literature review methods focusing on interdisciplinary topics relevant to visual analytics

Interactive Data Science in Digital Health: seminar focusing on bridging health research with data science approaches

IVDA lecture: introducing fundamental concepts and techniques of interactive-visual data analysis, highlighting human-centered AI, human-in-the-loop and responsible human-AI collaboration

Lecturer, DSI Minor, Digital Skills Module, University of Zurich, Spring Semester 2024

Designing and giving a lecture *Ethical, legal and societal implications of AI*

Lecturer & Teaching Assistant, Ethics Center, University of Zurich, 02/2023-09/2024

Designing and giving exercises and lectures, supervising master students within an ethics program for continuous education

Lecture: Ethik der Big Data und KI-Forschung: Welche Rolle spielt Vertrauen?

Seminar: AI Ethics: Understanding the key concepts, methods and concerns in ethics of AI

Lecturer, Faculty of Medicine, University of Zurich, 02/2022-06/2022

Design and give two lectures *Human Enhancement* and *Digital Medicine* within the elective module 'The concept of man in medicine'

Lecturer, PhD Program, Digital Society Initiative, University of Zurich

Design and give a workshop on mindfulness for fostering resilience and academic skills for PhD students

Science Communication & Outreach

[Blogpost articles](#)

Writing blogpost articles on my personal webpage focusing on the role of philosophy and ethics as well as my experiences in academia to provide helpful mindfulness tools for PhD students and researchers

[Podcast episode](#), **Frontiers**, 2024

Contribution to a, international podcast Frontiers bridging science and society with an episode *Could AI chatbot be your therapist?*

E-learning course for older adults, University of Zurich, 2024

Creation and design of an online course for older adults *An Introduction to Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence*. This course was part of Erasmus 60+ project organized by the Healthy Longevity Center, Department of Psychology

KI, Politik und Gesellschaft, Ortsmuseum Meilen, 2023

Speaker and panelist at a public event focusing on societal challenges of AI, organized by Ortsmuseum Meilen and Mindfire Stiftung, Zurich

DSI meets USZ, University Hospital Zurich, 2023

Organization of and presentation at a networking event connecting researchers with clinicians

DSI AI – week, University of Zurich, 2023

Organization of academic and public events, incl. a public panel discussion “Making Sense of AI Hype”

Apero philo, University of Zurich, 2023-2024

Organization of public event series to meet and discuss philosophical challenges related to digitalization and innovation in a systematic and argumentative way

Reatch, thinkthank for science communication, Zurich, 2019-2021

Organization of the public series of talks *Pizza, Philosophy and Science*

Languages: Slovak (native), Czech (C2), English (C2), German (C2), French (B1)