



Call for Papers

AI and the Future of Social Welfare: Recent Developments and Future Prospects

London, United Kingdom | 4-5 June, 2026

We are pleased to invite papers for an international conference, “AI and the Future of Social Welfare: Recent Developments and Future Prospects, organized by the International Network for Social Policy Teaching and Research (INSP); the London School of Economics (LSE); the University of California Berkeley Center for Comparative Welfare State Research; and the University of Maryland School of Public Policy. The conference will be held at the LSE in London, UK.

Organizing committee: *Chairs:* Douglas Besharov (University of Maryland), Timo Fleckenstein (London School of Economics), and Neil Gilbert (University of California, Berkeley). *Members:* TBD

Background: As in so many areas, artificial intelligence (AI) and various other tools of information science generally, hold great promise for increasing the efficiency and quality of policy research and program evaluation. Machine learning, deep learning, and generative AI are already speeding analyses, facilitating the use of innovative methodologies, and lowering costs on various dimensions (which also enables more extensive analysis)—all of which enhances the analytic capacities of organizations. Each day seems to bring another paper that uses AI for mapping, simulation, survey and data collection, data cleaning and organization, qualitative

data coding and synthesis, relational databases, visualization, pattern detection, and predictive modeling/models.

Paper Topics: We encourage submissions on themes related to “AI and the Future of Social Welfare,” *including but not limited to:*

- (1) **The conduct and administration of research**, including the increased speed and efficiency with which research can be conducted (affecting both research quality and quantity), new methods for conducting and synthesizing research, and the effects of uneven take-up of AI among current researchers;
- (2) **The development of policies and programs**, including the detection and description of societal trends that may require a policy response, the identification and assessment of policy options, and predictive modeling of outcomes;
- (3) **The operation and management of programs**, including eligibility determinations, service provision, customer service assistance, and predictive analytics of service provision; and
- (4) **Transparency, protective controls, and limits**, including protocols for reporting AI usage in research, detailed logs of AI prompts, replication of analyses using alternate AI systems, oversight of AI implementation in government programs; and fraud/error detection in social assistance programs;
- (5) **Ethics, and regulation**, including ethical frameworks for AI in public administration; transparency and accountability in algorithmic decision-making; bias, discrimination, and fairness in automated welfare systems; human oversight vs. automated decision systems in social policy; and data governance and citizen privacy in digital welfare; and
- (6) **Teaching**, including the use of AI as an educational tool, academic policies regarding use of AI, and creative AI assignments that stimulate critical thinking about social policy.

We encourage contributions from all relevant disciplines, including information science, social policy, economics, sociology, public health, and political science. We welcome comparative as well as case studies, policy evaluations, and academic and applied research.

Possible OUP Publication: At the author’s option, papers will be reviewed for inclusion in a possible Oxford University Press Handbook on AI and the Future of Social Welfare. (For an example of a similar handbook, see <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/the-oxford-handbook-of-family-policy-over-the-life-course-9780197518151?cc=us&lang=en&>). Presenting at the conference is not required to have a paper considered for the OUP Handbook, and presenting at the conference does not bind authors to submitting their papers to OUP.

Submissions: Authors interested in having a paper considered for the conference should submit a 250-500 word abstract using [this form](#). Papers will be accepted on a rolling basis, subject to capacity, until March 15, 2026. As such, authors are encouraged to submit abstracts as soon as convenient. Authors will be notified by March 31, 2026 of whether their abstract has been accepted.

The deadline for submitting final papers is May 15, 2026. Conference papers will be circulated approximately two weeks before the conference. Papers should be approximately 15-20 pages long. We welcome papers based on previous publications, updated as appropriate. Questions regarding your submissions should be directed to Douglas Call of the University of Maryland: dcall1@umd.edu.

Fees: Please note that there will be a \$250 conference registration fee if the paper is accepted, which includes a conference dinner.

We look forward to your participation in the conference and to engaging in discussions that will help shape future social policies in response to demographic changes.