



## OER 2

# Collective Conflict Mapping

Fostering Reflection on Matters of Transparency  
in Educational Technology and AI Usage

### Scenario 1

#### Scenario

**authorship and intellectual property rights**

#### Actors

**authors**  
**users**  
**big tech companies**  
**governmental actors**

#### Summary of scenario

(presented at the beginning of the session)

With the rise of artificial intelligence, **authorship and intellectual property rights have become pressing issues, which are also strongly related to matters of (lacking) transparency**. Higher education institutions try to teach students how to ethically use and create original work. Yet, they struggle to find answers about whether and how AI affects these practices (e.g., how algorithms use original work as training data), and how problems of transparency can be addressed and regulated.

Let's dive into these issues and try to put ourselves into the shoes of the different actors involved.

And please don't worry: you don't need to be an expert in intellectual property or copyright matters. Just work with the knowledge you have!

## Phase 1: Mapping out

Let's start with a first round of mapping key actors involved in the scenario. We start with **authors** and **big tech companies** (AI providers) and then add **users** and **governmental actors**.

For each step, read the provided statements to put yourselves more easily into the actors' perspectives. Either read the statements to your students or let different students read the statements with distributed roles.

### Step 1: Positioning authors and big tech companies (AI providers)

We define **authors** for now as actors who have created original work, such as text or pictures. In the statements, we use the example of a researcher who acts as author when publishing work. While such research authors might, as the statements show, view the topic very differently, in this first step, you still should try to find an overarching position for this group.

Statement 1 author: *"I am a researcher who tries to make her findings visible to the public. Having said this, if AI uses my publications as training data and this results in more people seeing what I have found, this is great. I already got my credit for my original publication."*

Statement 2 author: *"I am deliberately sharing my work with a creative commons licence and hereby prohibit commercial usage because I believe that this work should not be used by proprietary providers to make money. So yes, I am deeply worried that AI might crawl the web and use my work as training data, also because this is a clear violation of the licence I chose."*

In turn, we define **big tech companies** as global providers of AI tools, which are offered to users on a subscription basis.

Statement: *"We in the company are under a lot of pressure, given the aggressive market competition of these times. We care about authors, but our main concern is to develop competitive AI tools, and for that we need as much and as good training data as possible. Also, transparency is of course important, but if we open up all training data to the public, we are at risk to lose our own intellectual property, for instance if providers in cheaper regions will copy our business models."*

#### Now it's your turn:

- Decide on a circle size for both actors and drag-and-drop them into the conflict map. Adapt the size and, if you like, use textboxes as descriptors.
- Position both actors relative to each other and pick the arrows that best describe the relationships between them. When you are doing that, explain your reasoning. You can again use a textbox to describe the nature of the relation or adapt the arrows to your needs.
- Discuss whether everybody agrees with the positioning or would change something.

## Step 2: Positioning users in relation to authors and companies

Similar to authors, **users** cover a huge spectrum of actors. We use university students as an example user group here. Again, try in this first step to find an overarching positioning for this group.

Statement 1 user: *“As a typical student, I am oftentimes challenged by the number of tasks that need to be done for my studies, and I frequently lack time to do everything right. I need to have good grades. Of course, I care about following the rules of scientific practice, but if the AI tool can provide quick and good results, that matters more.”*

Statement 2 user: *“I have heard about AI violating the rights of original authors. I don’t find that okay at all. However, when I use AI, I don’t really understand when it is reproducing original work and when it is generating something new. I also know that all AI tools are based on training data, but I don’t know where to find more information on what data exactly has been used by which tools.”*

### Now it's your turn:

- Decide on a circle size for users and drag-and-drop the shape into the existent conflict map. Adapt the size and, if you like, use a textbox as descriptor.
- Position the users relative to the authors and big tech companies and pick the arrows that best describe the relationships between them. When you are doing that, explain your reasoning. You can again use a textbox to describe the nature of the relation or adapt the arrows to your needs.
- Discuss whether everybody agrees with the positioning or would change something. Maybe you also need to adapt to the positions of the other actors.

## Step 3: Positioning governmental actors in relation to all other actors

Statement: *“As a governmental decision-maker, I try to serve the public, protect individuals, but also provide the conditions for economic actors to thrive. This always means to compromise. Also, we need to take into account that putting governmental decisions into actions requires a lot of time and procedures. I am well aware that many tech companies have actively violated intellectual property laws in the past and that each enacted law will be scanned for loopholes by companies.”*

In fact, governmental actors such as the EU have released a couple of important regulations in order to create a minimal baseline for obligatory information on AI training data that need to be made publicly available. For instance, [you can have a look here](#).

### Now it's your turn:

- Decide on a circle size for governmental actors and drag-and-drop the shape into the existent conflict map. Adapt the size and, if you like, use a textbox as descriptor.
- Position the governmental actors relative to the other actor groups and pick the arrows that best describe the relationships between them. When you are doing that, explain your reasoning. You can again use a textbox to describe the nature of the relation or adapt the arrows to your needs.
- Discuss whether everybody agrees with the positioning or would change something. Maybe you also need to adapt to the positions of the other actors.

## Phase 2: Fine-graining the map

Congratulations! You have created a first conflict map and have discussed many of the dilemmas and conflicting interests around AI-related authorship and intellectual property as well as around (lacking) transparency.

You already saw in the statements that users or authors are highly heterogenous, making it necessary to more strongly differentiate within each group. In the following steps, **we invite you to make your map even more fine-grained by adjusting the shapes and arrows to such within-group differences.**

### Step 4: Differentiating types of authors

- Which types of authors did pop up during your discussion? Our example was researchers, but what about artists or activists?
- Did you discover strong differences between such types of authors? Do you think particular types of authors could be grouped?
- What about cultural background of authors? Authorship has very different meaning in different cultures. Which normative ideas about authorship framed your discussion?

### Step 5: Differentiating types of tech companies

- What about companies that themselves problematize AI training practices and that try to install different types of business models?
- Did you consider the regional location of tech companies? How might the actor position change if you are a tech company in Europe, the US or China?
- How about emerging small tech companies versus big tech?

### Step 6: Differentiating types of users

- Did you discuss a differentiation between aware/caring and unaware users?
- What about the age group of users?
- What about tech developers? Aren't they also users?

## Step 7: Differentiating types of governmental actors

- Which governmental actors would have more power in these matters than others? Why?
- Are there parts of governments which are closer to tech developers and/or authors than others?
- Do party differences matter?

## Phase 3: “What would change if...”

– using future speculations to develop agency

Whilst the first two phases focus on the disentanglement of actors’ relations and an understanding of the involved complexities, phase 3 takes the crucial ETH-TECH step towards ‘What’s next?’.

To start this phase, you can create slide copies of the developed map within the template and then develop different scenarios within the map copies.

Use the following questions **to engage students to imagine different future scenarios and to develop collective agency to enhance more ethical technology and AI usage, even within given constraints**. Don’t only consider realistic scenarios, but deliberately aim for hopeful, utopian, dystopian or even absurd scenarios. This can support broadening our scope of creative imagination!

### How would the map change...

- ...if work generated by AI would be assigned the same legal status as work created by human authors?
- ...if copyright claims would be associated with values such as creative expression rather than content production?
- ...if governments and big tech companies would massively enhance the transparency of training data?
- ...if authors would be paid (e.g., through AI tool subscription fees) when the company uses their work for AI training?
- ...if authorship would be replaced by an idea of collective property right?

You can, of course, imagine further scenarios – be creative and challenge the status quo!

## Rounding up

Have a look at the developed conflict maps and collectively **reflect on the activity**. The following questions can help you:

- How do participants feel when looking at the map?
- What was their personal highlight during the process? What did they learn or understand differently?
- How did they feel discussing the future scenarios? Which emotions did the different scenarios trigger?

Based on the scenarios and discussions, brainstorm how this exercise could inform your technology and AI usage strategies in class/in the university with regards to transparency matters. Here are some ideas:

- Checking more intensively/ collectively investigating the terms and conditions of used technologies,
- Boycotting non-transparent technologies,
- Requesting insights to/ transparency regarding collected data (as guaranteed in the GDPR),
- Considering matters of intellectual property more carefully,
- Providing opt-in/opt-out strategies regarding data collection or technology features; requesting those options from university leadership.

Regarding the specific context of this scenario (research (re)used in the context of AI), [you might also find inspiration here](#).

Of course, these are only some ideas. You will develop many more! Also, you can use our OER on [Empathetic Contract Creation](#) to collectively define rules for future technology and AI usage in your context.

Maybe you want to engage your students with the topic further after the mapping (e.g., providing material, through group work, etc.) and revisit the map after they have acquired additional knowledge. For instance, [students could engage with the ambiguous case of Scopus AI](#). You can also use the other ETH-TECH material, such as the [Framework of Self-Reflection Tools](#), to facilitate interaction with the topic.

Finally, explore options for disseminating the map. For instance, share the map with colleagues, use the material for other events (e.g., exhibitions), let other classes continue with your maps, or compare results across classes. The map can further serve as foundation for essay writing, research assignments, or (artistic ways of) [countermapping](#) activities.

### If you want to dig deeper into the topic:

Ahmed, A., Cooper, A. F., Koyejo, S., & Liang, P. (2026). Extracting books from production language models. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2601.02671*. <https://arxiv.org/abs/2601.02671>.

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European Union Intellectual Property Office (2025). EXECUTIVE BRIEFING. The Development of Generative Artificial Intelligence from a Copyright Perspective. [https://euipo.europa.eu/tunnel-web/secure/webdav/guest/document\\_library/observatory/documents/reports/2025\\_GenAI\\_from\\_copyright\\_perspective/2025\\_GenAI\\_from\\_copyright\\_perspective\\_executive\\_brief\\_en.pdf](https://euipo.europa.eu/tunnel-web/secure/webdav/guest/document_library/observatory/documents/reports/2025_GenAI_from_copyright_perspective/2025_GenAI_from_copyright_perspective_executive_brief_en.pdf).

Jana, S., & Goswami, A. (2026). Artificial Intelligence Redefined Authorship: An Unprecedented Evolution in the Field of Art and Literature. In *Artificial Intelligence and Technology: Systems Management, Decisions and Control for Sustainability in the Digital Age* (pp. 337-348). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-032-10016-0\\_27](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-032-10016-0_27).

Mazzi, F. (2024). Authorship in artificial intelligence-generated works: Exploring originality in text prompts and artificial intelligence outputs through philosophical foundations of copyright and collage protection. *The Journal of World Intellectual Property*, 27(3), 410-427. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jwip.12310>.

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