CONCEPT

Digital Ethics and Responsible Innovation: Privacy by Design, Dark Patterns and Impact Assessment

18 – 22 October 2027
Barcelona - Eixample district four-star



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Introduction:

Digital ethics and responsible innovation decide whether a new app, platform or connected device earns user trust or triggers complaints, churn and public criticism. Product teams ship features that over-collect personal data, nudge users through manipulative interfaces or quietly monitor staff, often because nobody asked the ethical questions before launch. This Core Concept course gives product, data, technology and risk leads a working method for spotting value conflicts, testing designs against privacy, fairness and autonomy, and setting ethics gates in the delivery cycle. Participants complete an Ethics Impact Assessment for a case digital product.

Course Objectives:

- Apply consequentialist, duty-based, virtue and social-contract reasoning to concrete design and data decisions in digital products
- Evaluate data flows for informed consent, purpose limitation, data minimisation and retention using a data ethics checklist
- Embed the seven Privacy by Design principles and Value Sensitive Design investigations into product discovery and backlog work
- Detect dark patterns, unfair outcomes and intrusive monitoring in interfaces, datasets and automated decisions and specify remedies
- Run an ethics review with stakeholders, an ethics board and launch gates that record decisions and conditions
- Produce an Ethics Impact Assessment for a digital product with risk ratings, mitigations and a monitoring plan

Target Audience:

- Product owners and product managers accountable for feature scope, roadmaps and release decisions
- Data and analytics leads who decide what personal data is collected, combined and reused
- Technology and engineering leads who design platforms, connected devices and automated workflows
- Risk, privacy and assurance managers who review new digital services before launch
- UX and service design leads who shape consent flows, onboarding and user choice architecture

Course Outline:

Day 1: Digital Ethics Foundations and the Responsible Innovation Landscape

- Digital Ethics Scope: Privacy, Autonomy, Fairness, Transparency and Accountability
- Ethical Theories Applied to Technology: Consequentialism, Deontology, Virtue and Social Contract
- Responsible Research and Innovation Dimensions: Anticipation, Reflexivity, Inclusion and Responsiveness
- Trust Failure Case Review: Data Misuse, Manipulative Interfaces and Public Backlash
- Product Ethics Maturity Self-Assessment and Value Conflict Inventory

Day 2: Data Ethics, Privacy by Design and Value Sensitive Design

- Data Ethics Principles: Ownership, Informed Consent, Transaction Transparency and Openness
- Purpose Limitation, Data Minimisation and Retention Schedule Worksheet
- Privacy by Design Seven Foundational Principles Mapped to the Product Lifecycle
- Value Sensitive Design: Conceptual, Empirical and Technical Investigations
- Constructive Technology Assessment and Anticipatory Scenario Workshops

Day 3: Ethics Impact Assessment Method and Stakeholder Engagement

- Ethics Impact Assessment Template: Scoping, Value Mapping and Harm Rating
- Direct and Indirect Stakeholder Mapping With Value Dams and Value Flows
- Consent Flow and Privacy Notice Redesign Using Layered Disclosure
- Stakeholder Consultation Plan: User Panels, Community Voices and Frontline Staff
- Ethics User Stories and Acceptance Criteria in the Product Backlog

Day 4: Dark Patterns, Bias, Surveillance and Emerging Technology Risk

- Dark Pattern Taxonomy: Confirmshaming, Roach Motel, Drip Pricing and Pre-Ticked Boxes
- Bias and Fairness Testing Across Datasets, Scoring Rules and Automated Decisions
- Workplace Monitoring and Surveillance Proportionality Test
- Emerging Technology Risk Profiles: IoT Sensors, Biometrics, Immersive Environments and Automation
- Ethics Board Charter, Review Triggers and Escalation Routes

Day 5: Case Study: Ethics Impact Assessment for a Digital Product

- Case Product Briefing Pack: Consumer Health and Wellbeing App With Wearable Data
- Responsible Launch Gate Checklist: Go, Conditional Go and Hold Criteria
- Ethics Impact Assessment Drafting: Harm Register, Mitigations and Residual Rating
- Post-Launch Ethics Monitoring Indicators and Complaint Signals
- Ethics Board Mock Review and Peer Challenge of the Assessment

Skills You Will Gain:

- Ethical Reasoning for Technology
- Data Ethics Review
- Privacy by Design Practice
- Value Sensitive Design
- Dark Pattern Detection
- Fairness Testing
- Ethics Impact Assessment
- Launch Gate Governance

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with an Ethics Impact Assessment for a case digital product, challenged by peers in a mock ethics board
- Catch manipulative interface patterns and excessive data collection before they reach users or reviewers
- Give product and engineering teams concrete acceptance criteria instead of abstract ethical principles
- Compare how product, data and risk leads from different sectors and countries handle difficult launch calls

Conclusion:

Responsible innovation depends on asking ethical questions early and recording the answers where delivery teams work. The course moves from ethical theory and the responsible innovation landscape, through data ethics, Privacy by Design and Value Sensitive Design, to a structured assessment method with stakeholders, then to dark patterns, bias, surveillance and emerging technology risk. The final day applies these methods to a case product, producing an Ethics Impact Assessment and launch gate decision that participants can adapt for their own digital services.