CREATING CODES OF CONDUCT IN COMMUNITY

Through this Fellowship I'd like to organize Creating Codes of Conduct in Community (working title), an event focused using CoCs as a method of designing safer, more accessible tech arts communities. I'd like to focus on issues of race, gender and sexuality in this iteration but would love to see a future where this framework is applied to issues of ability, neurodiversity, class, status and more.

This event speaks in part to two Priority Areas. With the most recent necessity for BLM protests, the rise in Anti-Asian hate and new anti-queer and anti-trans legislations passed each month, there has never been a more critical time to invest in our intentions to create welcoming spaces that prioriize the safety of lesser served identities. In doing so, we create a higher likelihood of community accessibility to non-majority identifying folks. Admittedly this is a very Canadian definition of the term 'accessibility'. I know that many efforts should be made to use this category to consider the universal legibility and literal access of coding languages so I'm also hoping that this proposal speaks to the third priority area of Continued Support.

This project continues the laborious and fulfilling work that I have had the pleasure of doing alongside the ml5 team. For 3 years we've worked to redesign our CoC, Community Statement and Licence in order to take greater accountability for the potential harm of our machine learning library. Community has played a necessary role in the success of this work. It would not be possible without the collaboration of the NYU Engelberg Law Innovation Centre and leaders in the tech arts space who have generously provided feedback on our drafts.

We're focused on how a CoC signals to diverse communities that their experiences and their safety are taken seriously. Our assumption is that this approach may instill trust in diverse participants that ml5 will act in support of their safety as best we can with modern understanding of the stakes and issues. We're paving new ground in sisterhood with initiatives seen by p5, BUFU, the Ricoh Center and others.

I'd like to take these experiences that have so far been structured for ml5 and ITP and create a way for other tech arts spaces to do the same. It's challenging, fruitful work that can't be done effectively in isolation. I would like to see a future where more community is developed around those who are trying to design intentional communities. I'm curious about what it would look like to actively take on these responsibilities together.

In the Black community, I am known for impact driven, rapid community lead responses to issues as seen in last summer's Investing in Futures: Beyond Policing world building workshops that collectively designed more than 60 structures for police free societies collaboratively with over 400 participants.

As a tech arts educator and speculative designer, I have spent my career working through ways to support the diversification of our field. I've run workshops, classrooms and wide spread programs since 2009 on this subject and am listed in the Top 100 Black Women to Watch in Canada for these efforts. I've used Processing for over a decade in my work not only because of it's creative computational power but also because of its intentions to see a diverse world of creatives. This takes community and imagination to envision spaces yet unseen and trust in co-conspirators to aid in the process.

My proposed 3 day event has three goals to create:

a) Space for leaders to collaborate and share techniques.
b) Space for the public to get help redesigning their own local CoCs.
c) A digital downloadable zine of the strategies and techniques that can be distributed to aid communities in intentionally building safer, more accessible spaces for lesser served identities.

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DAY 1: Leaders from communities like p5.js, MMM, stewards of SFPC, ml5.js, BUFU, BSAM, Virtual Care Lab, Queer Futures Collective and Indigenous Friends will be invited to gather and to share approaches to creating safe, empowered tech spaces for lesser served identities* with the aim of archiving the strategies into the resource zine. Together we'll collectively imagine what a future tech arts community looks like and what a CoC would have to include in order to serve that community.

DAY 2: Open to the public, leaders are invited to share their strategies via keynotes and panels. In sharing circles, attendees can discuss their local impact driven work at libraries, makerspaces, after school programs and classrooms. Attendees will be able to book short time slots with our speakers to get one-on-one advice on their own CoCs.

DOCUMENTATION: A digital downloadable zine that archives all recommended tech arts CoC techniques that more thoroughly signal to lesser served communities they are welcomed and that their safety and experiences are taken seriously.

* Communities who have already expressed their interest in participating are highlighted in purple.