

Mohamed Ahmed

✉ mohamed@cs.toronto.edu

🌐 www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed

Research Experience

- 2024 – Present ◇ **Research Assistant**, Department of Computer Science, University of Toronto.
Member of the *Third Space Group* in the DGP lab where we conduct research primarily focused on ethics in computer science and critical computing.
- 2023 – Present ◇ **Research Assistant**, Citizen Lab, University of Toronto.
Lead and support interdisciplinary research at the intersection of technology and human rights with a focus on censorship measurement.
- 2023 ◇ **Intern**, Citizen Lab, University of Toronto.
Supported the communications team by developing tools to streamline the publications process, as well as supported researchers across several domains.

Education

- 2021 – 2026 ◇ **University of Toronto**
Honours Bachelor of Science
Major: Cognitive Science
Minors: Computer Science and Political Science

Publications

Peer-Reviewed Papers

- ◇ J. Knockel, J. Dalek, N. Aljizawi, **M. Ahmed**, L. Meletti, and J. Lau, “Banned Books: Analysis of Censorship on Amazon.com,” *Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies (PoPETs)*, vol. 2026, issue 3, Jul. 2026.
* In press.
🔗 [URL: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/papers/amazonpets2026.pdf](http://www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/papers/amazonpets2026.pdf)
- ◇ **M. Ahmed**, J. Knockel, and R. Greenstadt, “An Analysis of Chinese Censorship Bias in LLMs,” *Proceedings on Privacy Enhancing Technologies (PoPETs)*, vol. 2025, issue 4, Jul. 2025.
🔗 [URL: www.petsymposium.org/popets/2025/popets-2025-0122.pdf](http://www.petsymposium.org/popets/2025/popets-2025-0122.pdf)
- ◇ H. Sheta, **M. Ahmed**, and S. I. Ahmed, “Compassionately: Increasing Plurality Awareness Through Community-powered AI,” in *Muslims in ML Workshop co-located with NeurIPS 2024*, Vancouver, Canada, Dec. 2024.
🔗 [URL: www.openreview.net/pdf?id=zKPRYKrLhu](http://www.openreview.net/pdf?id=zKPRYKrLhu)
- ◇ **M. Ahmed** and J. Knockel, “Extended Abstract: The Impact of Online Censorship on LLMs,” in *Proceedings of the 2024 Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI)*, Bristol, UK, Jul. 2024.
🔗 [URL: www.petsymposium.org/foci/2024/foci-2024-0006.pdf](http://www.petsymposium.org/foci/2024/foci-2024-0006.pdf)

Publications (continued)

Reports

- ◇ J. Knockel, J. Dalek, N. Aljizawi, **M. Ahmed**, L. Meletti, and J. Lau, “Banned Books: Analysis of Censorship on Amazon.com,” Citizen Lab Report 179, 2024.
🔗 URL: www.citizenlab.ca/2024/11/analysis-of-censorship-on-amazon-com

Presentations

Talks

- ◇ **A Discussion on Censorship Bias in LLMs.** *SPRING Lab, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne.* Lausanne, Switzerland. November 2025. **Invited.**
🔗 SLIDES: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/slides/epfl2025.pdf
- ◇ **Who’s AI is it Anyways? Reframing AI Alignment in Terms of Censorship and Privacy.** *HotPETS 2025, co-located with PETS 2025.* Washington, DC, USA. July 2025. **Submitted.**
🔗 SLIDES: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/slides/hotpets2025.pdf
🏆 **HotPETS Best Talk Award**
- ◇ **An Analysis of Chinese Censorship Bias in LLMs.** *Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS 2025).* Washington, DC, USA. July 2025. **Submitted.**
🔗 SLIDES: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/slides/pets2025.pdf
- ◇ **Compassionately: Increasing Plurality Awareness Through Community-powered AI.** *Muslims in ML Workshop, co-located with NeurIPS 2024.* Vancouver, Canada. December 2024. **Submitted.**
🔗 SLIDES: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/slides/neurips2024.pdf
🔗 VIDEO: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jY5QCeyyXwY
- ◇ **The Impact of Online Censorship on LLMs.** *Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI 2024), co-located with PETS 2024.* Bristol, UK. July 2024. **Submitted.**
🔗 SLIDES: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/slides/foci2024.pdf
🔗 VIDEO: www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIx7WkFa8b4

Posters

- ◇ **Compassionately: Increasing Plurality Awareness Through Community-powered AI.** *Muslims in ML Workshop, co-located with NeurIPS 2024.* Vancouver, Canada. December 2024.
🔗 POSTER: www.cs.toronto.edu/~mohamed/posters/cmplyneurips.pdf

Volunteering

- 2025 ◇ **Teaching Assistant, MIT SPOCs for Gaza**
Assisted in providing high-quality computer science education to students in Gaza and those displaced from the region.
- 2024 – 2025 ◇ **Steering Committee Member, The Liberation Lab**
Organized events, workshops, and other club activities to bring together scientists and advocates to bridge the gap between science and activism.

Volunteering (continued)

- 2022 – 2024 ◇ **Director of Marketing**, EqualLearn Foundation
Developed marketing materials for our work to provide quality tutoring and education services to underprivileged communities in Calgary.

- 2021 – 2024 ◇ **Chief Technology Officer**, The Debtless Students
Built and maintained the website for The Debtless Students, an organization that students gain financial aid through free mentorship and support from major scholarship recipients.

- 2020 – 2022 ◇ **Senior MENA Columnist**, The Written Revolutions
Co-founded a youth-run journalism organization in which I wrote political articles that distilled complex geopolitical issues for a younger audience. I went on to develop the website and manage a team of columnists.

Awards and Grants

- 2025 ◇ **HotPETs Best Talk Award**
Who's AI is it Anyway? Reframing AI Alignment in Terms of Censorship and Privacy.

- 2024 ◇ **Jane McAdams Perron Scholarship**, University College, University of Toronto

◇ **ASSU Travel Grant** (x2), Arts and Science Student Union, University of Toronto

- 2023 ◇ **Reset Scholarship in Social Media and Democracy**, Department of Political Science, University of Toronto

References

- ◇ **Ronald J. Deibert**, Professor in the Department of Political Science, University of Toronto, and the Director of the Citizen Lab. Email: ron@citizenlab.ca.

- ◇ **Syed Ishtiaque Ahmed**, Professor in the Department of Computer Science, University of Toronto. Email: ishtiaque@cs.toronto.edu.

- ◇ **Jeffrey Knockel**, Professor in the Department of Computer Science, Bowdoin College. Email: j.knockel@bowdoin.edu.