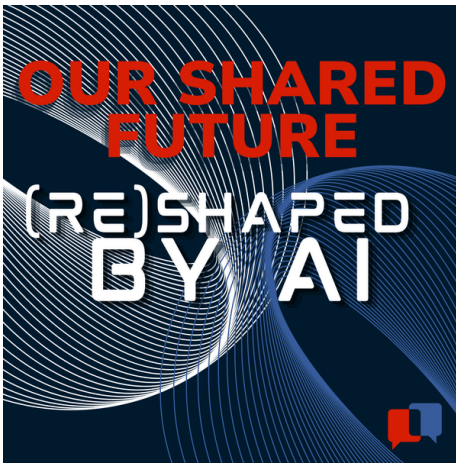




Artificial intelligence is already reshaping education, politics, media, medicine, business and the future of work at extraordinary speed. As tech companies race to build massive AI data centers, citizens and governments scramble to respond to fundamental questions about ethics, power, privacy, creativity and Democracy. Will AI create prosperity and innovation or deepen inequality and social isolation? What impact will it have on the workforce? And how do we preserve human judgment, trust and connection in a world increasingly mediated by machines?

FEATURED PANELISTS



Ruha Benjamin is the Alexander Stewart 1886 Professor of African American Studies at Princeton University and founding director of the Ida B. Wells Just Data Lab. A 2024 MacArthur Fellow, she is the award-winning author of *Race After Technology*, *Viral Justice*, and *Imagination: A Manifesto*. Her work explores the relationship between technology, inequality, and social change.



Dr. Donna Ginther is the Roy A. Roberts & Regents Distinguished Professor of Economics and director of the Institute for Policy & Social Research at the University of Kansas. Her research examines scientific labor markets, gender disparities, wage inequality, and science policy. She is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.



Kara Lowe is President & CEO of KC Tech Council, representing nearly 200 companies across Kansas City's tech industry. She leads efforts to shape public policy, strengthen the tech workforce, and support regional growth. Under her leadership, the Council launched KC TechBridge, an employer-led initiative connecting Kansas City residents with training and opportunities for tech careers.



Dr. Jeffrey Thompson is Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Research Technology & AI at the University of Kansas and Chief Research Informatics Officer at KU Medical Center. He leads research infrastructure, advanced computing, AI, and data science initiatives. He co-founded KU's Enhanced AI Center for Human Focused Research and helped develop the university's guiding principles for AI.



MODERATOR

Tiffany Hsu reports for The New York Times on information quality and threats to shared facts, including disinformation, political propaganda, conspiracy theories, and deepfakes. Her reporting examines why people believe what they believe and the consequences of those beliefs. A journalist for more than two decades, she previously reported for the Los Angeles Times.

ROVING REPORTER

Justin Stanley is a Professor of Communication Studies at Johnson County Community College, where he has taught public speaking and workplace skills for 19 years. He focuses on the intersection of AI and higher education, chairs JCCC's AI Taskforce, and leads a monthly faculty group exploring emerging AI trends.

FACT CHECKING: Allen Rostron and UMKC Law Students

APS CIVILITY TOOLS

During each program, American Public Square uses these tools to ensure conversations remain substantive, respectful, and based on facts.



MODERATED DISCUSSIONS

APS events are moderated by an objective facilitator who ensures each panelist is given due time to represent their position. Questions are tough, but fair and allow free flow of conversation.



NO APPLAUSE

APS has a rule that no applause is allowed during a program except at the beginning and end of the event. This is done so everyone can hear the conversation and helps encourage neutrality in the midst of the discussion.



CIVILITY BELLS

Civility Bells are made available for the audience to ring when panelists wade into false, overly dramatic or hyper-emotional territory. When a bell rings, the speaker must stop talking.



FACT SHEETS

APS compiles a fact sheet in advance of each Signature Program. This is reviewed beforehand by the panelists and distributed to the audience to ensure the discussion begins from a "common well" of information.



FACT CHECKERS

APS Programs feature real-time fact checkers to confirm the validity of comments made during the program. Audience members are encouraged to request specific fact checks throughout the discussion.



ROVING REPORTERS

The program's Roving Reporter is often from a local media outlet and engages with the audience to gather and curate questions, often identifying themes to ensure the most frequent questions are answered.



SO WHAT? NOW WHAT?

Panelists are given the opportunity to make closing statements in the form of answers to these questions. This allows them to restate their position on the topic at hand in a way that is actionable for the audience.

PLEASE SHARE YOUR RESPONSES AFTER THE EVENT

This feedback is very important to us. We value your time and want to design programming that helps you deepen your understanding of crucial issues as we build stronger, more connected communities. Take the post-event survey by using your smartphone to scan the QR code on the right or take the survey when we email it to you after the event.



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Our end-of-year gala will be held on December 7, 2026 at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Learn more about our speakers and sponsorship opportunities at EveningattheSquare.org

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WHAT TOPICS MATTER TO YOU?

We want APS to serve community needs. As you take the survey above, let us know what topics you'd like to see us tackle in 2027. It could be a local, state, federal, or global issue.



American Public Square is excited to begin a partnership with **AllSides**, a national leader in media bias analysis and balanced news coverage. Together we are launching curated fact sheets that draw from AllSides' expertise. We are sharing some immigration research from their Headline Roundup and Similarity Hub, a tool designed to highlight where credible sources across the political spectrum actually agree.

Recent News about AI

Trump Launches AI-Powered Government Website

Summary from the AllSides News Team

President Donald Trump announced a revamped [America.gov](#) website that is powered by an artificial intelligence (AI) portal that can answer questions about various government agencies. Some outlets on the left and center highlighted ways that the AI provides information that may contradict claims the president has made, while right outlets emphasized how the site will make accessing some government information easier.

The Details: The Trump administration said that the AI-powered site condensed 29,000 government websites into the model, which will allow people to ask questions in one place and receive answers the AI pulls from official government sources. Officials said the system can help guide individuals through government processes like Medicare enrollment, federal job applications, disaster assistance, and more.

For Context: Though some industry leaders have [called](#) for a slowing of AI development and warned of its potential dangers, the Trump administration has pushed for its continued development so the US can remain ahead of countries like China.

How the Media Covered It: [Newsweek \(Center\)](#) asked the chatbot questions about some of Trump's "controversial claims," including questions about who won the 2020 election, election fraud, climate change, Trump's felony charges, and other "politically sensitive topics." [Associated Press \(Lean Left\)](#) also reported that "President Donald Trump probably won't like some of the answers his new site says are sourced from government information," citing similar questions to Newsweek. However, Associated Press alleged that the site began modifying its answers as Trump was still speaking at the launch event on Tuesday. It reported that when asked a second time about the 2020 election, the site replied that it "couldn't answer 'political questions.'" [Deseret News \(Lean Right\)](#) included Trump's argument that the AI site "was restoring a promise from the country's founding by putting power and control 'back into the hands of the people.'" Deseret also included context about the ongoing debate about the need for AI guardrails.

From the Left

Trump touts America.gov, but its government-sourced AI answers undercut many of his statements

[Associated Press](#)



The Trump administration has lauded its revamped website America.gov as a way to simplify Americans' access to information and services scattered across a plethora of agency sites, but President Donald Trump probably won't like some of the answers his new site says are sourced from government information.

Asking the site — which says it's sourced via artificial intelligence from "official government sources" — questions about who won the 2020 election or about the name of the federal department that operates out of the Pentagon yields answers contrary to those Trump...

We Asked Trump's New AI Government Site About His Controversial Claims

[Newsweek](#)



The Trump administration's newly launched America.gov chatbot provided direct answers Tuesday to a series of questions about the 2020 election, presidential term limits, impeachment proceedings and other politically sensitive topics when Newsweek tested the system shortly after its debut.

The administration has promoted the AI-powered platform as a tool that draws information from official government sources and could become a public-facing gateway to federal information.

Trump meets with AI executives, says they signed 'morally binding' document

[Deseret News](#)



President Donald Trump on Tuesday announced the rollout of America.gov, which is an artificial intelligence portal for the federal government that can answer questions people may have for various agencies.

Also Tuesday, Trump met with AI executives, where he said they signed a "morally binding" document amid rising concerns over the emerging technology's capabilities.

Industry executives sounded a cautious but positive note after meeting with the president.

Is Digital Technology Making Us Lonely?

Summary from the AllSides News Team

Digital technology has increased access to information and convenience, but is it contributing to loneliness and poor mental health? Media on the left, right, and center have explored how digital technologies might be contributing to loneliness and disconnect amongst teens and adults.

The Cost of Community: Julie Beck, writing for [The Atlantic \(Left bias\)](#), highlighted the maxim, "Inconvenience is the cost of community," which has been repeated frequently on social media recently. Beck argued that sometimes the reason technology or innovation is even considered "convenient" is specifically because it "allows you to do something in isolation," such as self-checkout at the grocery store or conversationless trips on rideshare apps. However, Beck suggested that sometimes conveniences—such as avoiding small talk with strangers in rideshares or staying in to order delivery rather than socializing with friends—are actually a detriment to people as individuals as well as the society they're a part of.

Harm to Physical and Mental Health: Though many writers have highlighted the negative impact digital technologies and social media can have on mental health, The Times (Center) reported that teens are seeing an impact on physical health largely associated with increasing screen time. The [Centre for Social Justice](#) (CSJ), a think tank based in the United Kingdom, found that 37 percent of teens "hardly ever" left their bedrooms during free time. The Times wrote that "the retreat into bedrooms has coincided with a collapse in physical activity and an escalating crisis in adolescent health," citing a significant increase in teenage obesity rates and teens who participate in no physical activity inside or outside school. A senior researcher at CSJ said, "Restricting harmful social media is part of the answer. But taking away the screen without offering anything in its place will not work. We must rebuild real-world alternatives to time spent online."

A Loneliness Epidemic: [Blaze Media \(Right\)](#) cited former surgeon general Vivek Murthy's warning that "loneliness and social isolation increase the risk for premature death by 26% and 29% respectively" and argued that the connections that can be built online do not satisfy humans' "deep need for two-way connection." Blaze also highlighted comments from conservative podcaster [Glenn Beck \(Right\)](#) who talked about the sometimes unhealthy "parasocial" relationships fans can have towards celebrities or internet personalities. Beck said that even though listeners feel familiar with him or other people they listen to or interact with online, these kinds of relationships can be dangerous because "it satisfies the hunger without feeding you."

From the Left

[One Reason People Are Spending So Much Time Alone](#)

[The Atlantic](#)



When showing up for others feels hard, some strugglers have lately steeled themselves with a version of this maxim: "Inconvenience is the cost of community." It's a reminder, oft-repeated on social media these days, that if you don't want to be lonely—if you want to have robust relationships—you should occasionally do things that are effortful or even irritating, like cat sitting for a neighbor (or even just conversing with one!). You must give up on always pursuing maximum ease.

From the Center

[One in three 15-year-olds say they 'hardly ever' leave their room](#)

[The Times](#)



A third of 15-year-olds in England say they barely leave their bedroom except to attend school, research has shown.

A report warns that parents are raising a "bedroom generation" who spend their free time alone and on screens rather than building friendships and independence in the physical world.

From the Right

[People are more connected than ever, so why is loneliness literally killing us? Glenn Beck gives an uncomfortable answer](#)

[Blaze Media](#)



In this digital age we live in, there's never been more ways to connect with people thanks to the internet — and yet loneliness and social isolation are so extreme, they were declared an epidemic by the last surgeon general.

The cost of extreme loneliness and isolation is steeper than most realize. In his advisory, Vivek Murthy warned: "Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk for premature death by 26% and 29% respectively. More broadly, lacking social connection can increase the risk for premature death as much as smoking

Texas and California Find Common Ground on Data Center Limits

Summary from the AllSides News Team

Texas and California displayed some common ground recently with both states implementing limits on data center development.

"Not Exactly Surprising": [Business Insider \(Lean Left bias\)](#) highlighted the common ground found between California Governor Gavin Newsom (D) and Texas Governor Greg Abbott (R), saying the regulations are "Finally something" the states can agree on. The article said "It's not exactly surprising to see the two political adversaries set their sights on the same target, given that it's become a nonpartisan political issue," adding that "Democrats and Republicans have expressed concerns about the impacts of data centers, and Americans across the country have turned out to protest proposed developments."

"Angers Texas Communities": "Simply put, Texans must come first" according to Abbott. [The Texas Tribune \(Lean Left\)](#) highlighted Abbot's statements, saying his move "to stop issuing new permits for data centers" comes "as rapid data center development statewide angers Texas communities ahead of Abbott's November reelection bid."

"Backlash And A Pivot": [CalMatters \(Center\)](#) said that "Newsom clamps down on California data centers as voters turn against the industry," explaining that he "signed seven data center bills into law on Monday." The outlet highlighted that Newsom "contrasted the new regulations with President Donald Trump's hands-off approach to data centers and artificial intelligence." However, the article also mentioned that "Newsom's signature on the new laws represents a significant departure from his actions on data centers last year," adding that the "pivot from his [Newsom] own past vetoes" came after "facing growing public backlash."

RELATED: [The Insight: The Data Center Dilemma](#)

- **60% of U.S. adults “agree that artificial intelligence companies should release tools that can detect whether something was written using their AI.”** - YouGov
 - 65% of Democrats
 - 59% of Republicans
 - 57% of Independents
- **83% of Americans “favor requiring that any deepfake image or video distributed publicly must have a label that states that it is not real and was generated by AI”** - Voice of the People
 - 85% of Democrats
 - 83% of Republicans
 - 76% of Independents

- **83% of Americans “think Generative AI will make it at least somewhat more difficult to trust the news media.”** - Voice of the People
 - 82% of Democrats
 - 82% of Republicans
 - 84% of Independents
- **81% of Americans “favor requiring pre-testing of any new AI program that is going to be used to make decisions that can have significant impacts on people, including in healthcare, banking, housing, education, employment, legal services, and utilities.”** - Voice of the People
 - 88% of Democrats
 - 76% of Republicans
 - 71% of Independents
- **78% of U.S. adults “think there should be government regulations on how AI companies can use publicly available data to train their models.”** - Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute
 - 88% of Democrats
 - 76% of Republicans
 - 71% of Independents
- **77% of Americans “favor the US actively working with other nations to create an international treaty to regulate large-scale AI programs.”** - Voice of the People
 - 84% of Democrats
 - 71% of Republicans
 - 7% of Independents
- **74% of Americans “favor creating a new federal agency dedicated to taking a preventative and comprehensive approach to overseeing and regulating the development and use of AI programs.”** - Voice of the People
 - 81% of Democrats
 - 68% of Republicans
 - 68% of Independents
- **72% of Americans “are at least somewhat concerned about the increasing energy consumption of AI data centers.”** - Artificial Intelligence Policy Institute
 - 76% of Democrats
 - 70% of Republicans
 - 71% of Independents
- **69% of Americans “at least somewhat doubt that Generative AI development will protect Americans.”** - More in Common
 - 66% of Democrats
 - 71% of Republicans
 - 69% of Independents
- **63% of Americans “are not concerned about the possibility of AI resulting in losing their job, or having hours or salary cut.”** - YouGov
 - 61% of Democrats
 - 55% of Republicans
 - 70% of Independents

→ Find more statistics that show common ground at AllSides and More Like Us' [Similarity Hub](#).