Call for Papers

Industry 4.0 Science, Issue 1/2026
Applied AI Ethics in the Workplace

We cordially invite you to submit a manuscript for Issue 1/2026 of Industry 4.0 Science.
The focus will be on **Applied AI Ethics in the Workplace**.

The invitation is aimed at teams of authors from science and industry. Contributions should include findings on applied AI ethics or human-centered AI use based on a specific use case and discuss their practical implications. With this focus, the call is aimed at teams from the HUMAINE competence center, the other BMBF-funded "Regionale Kompetenzzentren der Arbeitsforschung" (ReKodA) and associated partners.

Introduction

The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the workplace has become a reality in many organizations, whether in the provision of services or in the production of industrial goods. AI-related solutions are used for text and image generation, often on employees' own initiative. While measures for regulation and standardization (e.g. the 2024 EU-AI-Act) are still being developed , scientists and practitioners alike are already facing ethical considerations concerning the use of AI in organizations, the implications of which are being widely discussed. Initial insights from these discussions show that applied AI ethics relates to questions of technology design in the narrower sense (such as explainability of AI systems, fairness of the underlying data and reliability of the AI models used), which are essential for the functionality, usefulness and usability of the systems.
In addition, however, numerous criteria for applied AI ethics that are more strongly anchored in the areas of work design and organizational development have been identified. These criteria depend largely on the organizational context and affect a range of different stakeholders in the organization (AI users, human resources, technology development, corporate management, etc.). These criteria can be roughly summarized as follows (Haipeter et al., 2023; Kluge et al., 2024; Nitsch et al., 2024; Wilkens, Lupp & Langholf, 2023).

Core aspects of work design:

- Increasing human agency, and augmenting human capabilities
- Development of roles, professions and careers
- Securing employment and promoting adequate working conditions
- Physical and mental health of AI users
- Participation of employees

Supportive measures for organizational management and development:

- Sustainable management through AI integration
- Responsible knowledge management practices
- Clarification of responsibilities and processes

This call encourages scholarly and practitioner contributions that substantiate one of the above criteria for applied AI ethics in the workplace with theoretical insights and empirical findings. We particularly encourage contributions that render findings from one specific organizational context accessible and usable for those working in other contexts by outlining transcontextual principles and work design methods. A focus on industry and the healthcare sector is particularly desirable.

Industry 4.0 Science is the leading journal for all developments in the fields of 4IR and Smart Factory in both English and German. Articles are published online and as a print magazine (only German). Thanks to our new, bilingual website and the Open Journal System we can offer our readers an enhanced browsing experience, while also facilitating the efficient processing of submissions and reviews for our authors and reviewers.

Each article comprises approx. **16,000 characters** and **3–5 illustrations** and can be written in **German or English**. Articles should begin with a concise outline of the problem followed by a rigorous methodology. Explicit reference to one or more criteria for applied AI ethics should be made. Lastly, each article should present findings from a practical use case and evaluate their applicability for other use cases and contexts. Learn more about correct formatting in our Author Guidelines.

Please send your abstracts to valentin.langholf@rub.de by the deadline indicated below.

It is our priority to maximize the impact of your work. As members of Crossref, the leading organization for the promotion of scientific exchange, we can offer our authors all the advantages of open access at a very competitive rate—quickly and reliably. Learn more at www.industry-science.com/en/open-access.

Deadlines

Author registration, including working title and short abstract	**31-03-2025**
Feedback from the editors	**14-04-2025**
Submission deadline for manuscripts	**30-06-2025**
Completion of double-blind peer review	**30-09-2025**
Submission deadline for revised contributions (given positive reviews)	**30-11-2025**
Editorial finalization	**15-01-2026**

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