Introduction

ETHICOMP conference series

The ETHICOMP conference series was launched in 1995 by the Centre for Computing and Social Responsibility (CCSR). Professor Terry Bynum and Professor Simon Rogerson are the founders and joint directors. The purpose of this series is to provide an inclusive European forum for discussing the ethical and social issues associated with the development and application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Conferences are held every 18 months. There have been five previous conferences, ETHICOMP 95 (De Montfort University, UK), ETHICOMP 96 (University of Salamanca, Spain), ETHICOMP 98 (Erasmus University, The Netherlands), ETHICOMP 99 (LUISS Guido Carli University, Italy), ETHICOMP 2001 (Technical University of Gdansk, Poland) and ETHICOMP 2002 (Universidade Lusiada, Lisbon, Portugal). Delegates and speakers from all continents have attended. Over 400 papers have been presented at the six conferences. All abstracts from the ETHICOMP conferences are posted on CCSR's renowned website. Most of the leading researchers in computer ethics as well as new researchers and doctoral students have presented papers at the conferences.

The conference series has fostered much international collaboration and resulted in exciting new ideas being presented at ETHICOMP by newly formed author partnerships. Indeed the series has been key in creating a truly international critical mass of scholars concerned with the ethical and social issues of ICT. Indicative of this is the International Society for Ethics and Information Technology formed in 2000 and now associated with the series. The established academic journal, *Information, Communication and Ethics in Society* was launched at ETHICOMP 2002 and reflects the principles on which ETHICOMP has been founded. Most recently the electronic *ETHICOMP Journal* (www.ccsr.cse.dmu.ac.uk/journal) has been launched to further the work of the conference series and enable those in the field of computer ethics to gain access to the rich resource of papers from the ETHICOMP conference series. All papers from the conference series will appear in the electronic journal.

The ETHICOMP name has become recognised and respected in the field of computer ethics.

ETHICOMP 2004

Information and communication technologies have profound social consequences. They create opportunities but they also raise significant social and ethical risks for individuals, organisations and society in large. We need to study the impact such changes have on us and in the way we use technology in our interactions with each-other, with organisations, and with government agencies.

Consequently ETHICOMP 2004 focuses on these "Challenges for the Citizen of the Information Society". The aim of the conference is to present and discuss the social and ethical impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on individuals as consumers, as employees and as citizens. Within this overall theme there are three broad subcategories: the context of the Information Society, the social and ethical issues for consumers in the Information Society and the social and ethical issues for employees, workers and managers in the Information Society.

This book of proceedings contains the papers presented at the conference. Papers are published in alphabetical order of the first author's surname. Together the papers represent a body of new work from over 100 authors from around the world. It is an important contribution to our understanding of who we can survive and flourish in this new age.

A conference is not just about the written papers. It is about dialogue, collegiality and friendship. The conference directors and programme committee thank you in your roles as authors and delegates for making ETHICOMP 2004 a reality. We hope you will enjoy the conference and be inspired to continue to contribute to this vital area.