

An Open Letter to Google

May 10, 2021

We, the organizers of Black in AI, Queer in AI, and Widening NLP, are writing to voice our concerns about sustaining our sponsorship relationship with Google Research. We strongly condemn Google's actions to dismiss Dr. Timnit Gebru and Dr. Margaret Mitchell, disrupting the lives and work of both researchers and stymying efforts of the Ethical AI team they managed. We also denounce the dismissal of April Christina Curley from Google, which we view as a step backward in recruiting and creating inclusive workplaces for Black engineers in an industry where BIPOC are marginalized and undermined. Moreso, we stand with the countless others who've been in similar situations but haven't had this level of visibility and support.

While we cannot prevent individuals or organizations from using their influence and resources to diminish and cause damage to members of our respective communities, we can control how we engage with organizations that clearly are not willing to engage in challenging yet necessary conversations. Until Google addresses the harm they've caused by undermining both inclusion and critical research, we are unable to reconcile Google's actions with our organizational missions. **We have therefore decided to end our sponsorship relationship with Google.**

The potential for AI technologies to cause particular harm to members of our communities weighs heavily on our organizations. We share a mandate to not merely increase the representation of members from our respective communities in the field of AI, but to create safe environments for them and to protect them from mistreatment. Google's actions in the last few months have inflicted tremendous harms that have reverberated throughout our entire community. They not only have caused damage but set a dangerous precedent for what type of research, advocacy, and retaliation is permissible in our community.

We urge Google leadership to enact necessary and urgent changes to promote research integrity and transparency, and allow research that is critical of Google's products, starting with the changes [demanded by Google Walkout](#). Further, we expect Google to emphasize work that uplifts and hires diverse voices, honors ethical principles, and respects Indigenous and minority communities' data and sovereignty.

Finally, we extend the Google leadership an invitation to discuss these concerns in a meeting with the leadership teams of our organizations. A good-faith meeting would represent a first step in recognizing the impact of their decision on our communities and our diversity and inclusion work.

In solidarity,

[Black in AI](#), [Queer in AI](#), and [Widening NLP](#)