

Newsletter



Welcome to the second META-TOO Newsletter

We are pleased to share an update as the META-TOO project is about to complete its second year of implementation.

META-TOO at Conferences: From Ethics to Design Strategies

META-TOO's presence in the research community is continuing to grow.



At **IEEE VR 2026**, the project contributed to the [IDEATEXR workshop on inclusion, diversity, accessibility, transparency, and ethics in XR](#), where META-TOO researchers facilitated discussion on how harassment in social VR can be studied without compromising participant safety. We also presented the paper "[Taxonomy of Interaction Techniques to Mitigate Inappropriate Social Behaviour in Social Virtual Reality](#)," which advances a structured perspective on design strategies for addressing harmful social interactions in virtual worlds.

META-TOO was also represented with a [workshop paper](#) and a [paper at CHI 2026](#), extending its visibility within the broader human-computer interaction community.

Looking ahead, we are pleased to share that META-TOO will be present at three impactful events in May. First, on 18-19 May, we will join the "**Justice, Law, and Jurisdiction in Immersive Environments**" panel during the conference [Human Rights in Immersive Realities \(XR\)](#) organised by the Council of Europe and EMRN. On 21-22 May, we will talk about gender, violence, and embodiment during the scientific **Biennale Embodiment: 20 Years On** in Venice. Finally, if you will be attending the [APS Annual Convention](#) in Barcelona on 28–30 May 2026, we would be glad to meet you there and continue the conversation about safer and more inclusive virtual environments during our poster presentation "**The Experience of Interview Harassment As a Bystander and Its Consequences**" on Friday morning!

Barcelona Meeting: Reviewing Progress and Planning Next Steps

This April, the META-TOO consortium met in Barcelona for the Project meeting, accompanied by a dedicated ethics session and PhD colloquium. During the visit, partners also had the opportunity to try out experiences currently being developed within the project in a shared demo session. The session offered a useful moment for exchange across XR-AI and psychology a discussion about designing experiments on balancing gender-based harassment, plausibility, and ethics.



Ethics Workshop: Broadening the Conversation

The ethics workshop provided an important space for reflection on the challenges of fighting harassment in social virtual reality. In addition to the project partners, the workshop brought together guest experts from other European universities, such as the University of Würzburg, the University of Bamberg, and the University of Barcelona.

Discussions addressed existing safety features in social VR, the protection of personal space, embodied AI in mental health settings, and broader ethical frameworks for evaluating social experience across intrapersonal, interpersonal, and interaction-level dimensions. The work initiated during this workshop will be continued in working groups and will result in a White Paper on research integrity, ethical recommendations, and gender equality.



PhD Colloquium: Technical Exchange and Feedback

The PhD colloquium complemented these discussions with a stronger focus on the technical aspects of development, creating space for feedback and exchanges on methodology and experimental design.



Widening actions

Work is currently advancing to strengthen NKUA's research management and organisational capacity as the main goal of the WIDERA initiative. The consortium is currently focusing on creating a checklist for effective knowledge transfer and startup creation, with Inria and IDIBAPS' mentoring role. Current activities include administrative exchange meetings, research lifecycle training, proposal-writing support, and collaboration between the partners' technology transfer offices to share best practices on innovation and spin-off development.

Together, these activities highlight META-TOO's ambition to unite expertise across computer science, psychology, and ethics to promote safer virtual worlds and build capacity in European academia.

To stay updated on META-TOO activities, publications, and upcoming events, follow our updates on our website and social media.



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