Tonya Nguyen

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Interests: Human-AI Interaction, Evaluation of AI Systems, Algorithmic Fairness & Responsible AI, Social Computing, AI Policy Governance, Human Data & Computer Use

Education

Doctor of Philosophy in Information Science **Expected May 2026**
University of California, Berkeley

Bachelor of Arts in Human-Computer Interaction, Critical Theory **May 2020**
University of California, Berkeley

Skills

Research: Qualitative (MAXQDA, HeyMarvin), Quantitative Methods (Qualtrics, Prolific, MTurk, R), Controlled Experiments, Participatory Methods, Stakeholder Partnerships + Alignment

Technical: Python, ML (scikit-learn, NumPy, pandas; PyTorch, huggingface), Data Visualization (matplotlib/seaborn; plot.ly), front-end dev (Svelte, React.js, d3.js)

Selected Publications

Tonya Nguyen, Jean Garcia-Gathright, Hannah Washington, Alex Chouldechova, Hanna Wallach, Jennifer Wortman Vaughan. "Validating and Refining Generative AI Evaluations via Stakeholder Engagement". FAccT 2026.

Tonya Nguyen, Tara Kaviani, Liza Gak, Cathy Hu, Catherine Albiston, Niloufar Salehi. "How Explanations and Political Frames Shape Perceptions of Algorithmic Social Policies". (in submission)

Tonya Nguyen, Sabriya Alam, Cathy Hu, Catherine Albiston, Niloufar Salehi. Definitions of Fairness Differ Across Socioeconomic Groups & Shape Perceptions of Algorithmic Decisions. CSCW 2024.

Tonya Nguyen, Darya Kaviani, Niloufar Salehi. "It Actually Doesn't Feel Very Mutual:" How Technology Impacts the Values of Mutual Aid Groups in Practice. CHI 2025.

Richmond Wong, **Tonya Nguyen**. "Timelines: A Speculative World-Building Activity for Discussing Values and Ethics." CHI 2021.

Tonya Nguyen, Niloufar Salehi. "Implications of Conversational Artificial Intelligence." Fair & Responsible AI Workshop. Workshop Paper, CHI 2020.

"I Almost Fell in Love with a Machine": Speaking with Computers Affects Self-disclosure. Qian Yu, **Tonya Nguyen**, Sorivas Prakkamakul, Niloufar Salehi. Late Breaking Work at CHI 2019.

Research Experience

Graduate Research Assistant, UC Berkeley School of Information **Aug 2020 - Present**

- Studying algorithmic systems in high-stakes settings and aligning human values in sociotechnical design and AI policy.
- Ran mixed-methods + applied ML analyses, designed & prototyped interfaces, and conducted user & model evaluations focused on fairness & policies.

- Led community engagement partnerships and participatory design workshops with up to 10 community organizations in SFUSD; conducted 80+ one-on-one interviews, advised SFUSD's Research, Planning, & Assessment Dept. on their school assignment algorithm.

Research Assistant, Berkeley Center for Law & Technology **Aug 2020 - May 2021**

- Co-created Timelines, a speculative world-building activity used by practitioners to surface ethical risks in new technologies; adopted & adapted by 4+ teams as a facilitation template in academic and industry contexts.

Research Assistant, Stanford University **May 2019 - Aug 2019**

- Designed a computational team-formation method that masks prior team history to curb reputation carryover bias, improving coordination outcomes in online teams.

Research Assistant, Berkeley Institute of Design **Aug 2018 - May 2020**

- Interviewed 14 researchers, identified key insights to guide design decisions, and conducted 8 usability evaluations during live practice talks.
- Developed the front-end of SlideSpecs (React.js).

Lead Researcher, Berkeley Basic Needs Commission **Aug 2018 - May 2019**

- Designed surveys, conducted 20 interviews, and held 5 in-person workshops with university students to formulate actionable insights about basic needs insecurity.
- Led a 10-person research team to conduct a community engagement process with 20+ university organizations.

Notable Honors and Awards

- UC Dissertation Fellowship (**$30,000**) **2025**
- Diversity and Inclusion Award, ACM CSCW **2022**
- Meta Research Grant for Fairness in Two-Sided Markets (**$100,000**) **2022**
- NSF Grant for Designing & Evaluating Software Systems to Advance Equal Opportunity (**$750,000**) **2021**
- NSF GRFP Honorable Mention Recipient **2022**
- Center for Technology, Society, & Policy Fellowship ($2000) **2021**
- Berkeley Center for New Media Research Grant ($5000) **2020**

Teaching

Head Graduate Student Instructor, Tangible User Interfaces **2021**
Designed syllabus focused on HCI, lectured on critical & speculative design; designed & graded physical computing assignments (Arduino, C++). Course evaluation: 6.42/7.00 vs dept avg 5.60/7.00.

Head Undergraduate Instructor, User Interface Design & Development **2020**
Taught the human-centered design process and interface design (e.g., prototyping, contextual inquiry, heuristic evaluation, etc.).

Co-founder & Facilitator, Beyond Design Thinking **2019**
Founded a student-led course on alternative methods to design thinking to approach wicked problems in the design of sociotechnical systems.

Academic Service

- PhD Student Representative at the UC Berkeley iSchool **2024-2025**
- Associate Chair (AC) for CHI 2026 **2026**
- ACM FAccT Program Committee **2022 – Present**
- Reviewer at ACM CHI (AC), ACM CSCW **2022 - Present**
- PhD Applicant Feedback (UC Berkeley iSchool) **2021 - Present**

Workshop and Panel Organizing

Sociotechnical Perspectives on Public Interest Technology **2025**
Lauren Chambers, Cedric Deslandes Whitney, **Tonya Nguyen**, Morgan Ames, Deirdre Mulligan. Society for the Social Studies of Science (4S), 2025.

Case Studies in Public Interest Technology: Bridging Research and Practice **2024**
Lauren Chambers, Nasser Eledroos, **Tonya Nguyen**, Cedric Whitney, Dan Bateyko, Jared Katzman. Workshop at the ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, CSCW 2024.

"Who has an interest in`Public Sector Technology'? Critical questions for working with local governments & impacted communities." **2022**
Stapleton, L., Saxena, D., Kawakami, A., **Nguyen, T**., Ammitzbøll Flügge, A., Eslami, M., Holten Møller, N., Lee, M.K., Guha, S., Holstein, K. and Zhu, H. Workshop at the ACM Conference on Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, CSCW 2022.

Talks & Panels

Rich Evaluations of Sociotechnical Systems and AI, Stanford University **2026**

How Stakeholder Evaluation Can Improve Measurement, Microsoft Research STAC, online **2025**

Participatory Design Can Improve AI Science and Evaluation, *Pareto AI,* San Francisco **2025**

Measuring Representational Harms in GenAI: A Stakeholder-Validated Approach, Microsoft Research FATE, NYC **2025**

It Actually Doesn't Feel Very Mutual: How Technology Impacts the Values of Mutual Aid Groups in Practice, in Yokohama, Japan, CHI 2025 **2025**

The Values We Live By: Enactment, Alignment, and Politics in Sociotechnical Systems Design and Development, Qualifying Exam, UC Berkeley **2024**

Definitions of Fairness Differ Across Socioeconomic Groups & Shape Perceptions of Algorithmic Decisions, in San José, Costa Rica, CSCW 2024 **2024**

Sociotechnical Perspectives on Public Interest Technology, in Seattle, WA, 4S **2024**

What does fairness mean in public school assignments? in Denver, CO, Law & Society Association **2024**

Guest lecture, *Evaluating Expectation Violation Theory in Public School Assignment* **2024**
Data Science 241: Experiments and Causal Inference, UC Berkeley

Guest lecture, *School Assignment, and its Limitations* **2023**
INFO 203 Social Issues of Information, UC Berkeley

Democratic Engagement and Procedural Justice in Algorithmic School Assignment, **2022**
in Washington, D.C, SREE

Understanding social movements online, at the Center for Technology, Society, & Policy **2022**
at UC Berkeley

Scaled Humanity!: How Task Design and Context Affects Online Collaborative Dynamics, **2019**
Stanford HCI

Feminist HCI and Postcolonial Computing, Undergraduate Guest Lecture, Stanford HCI **2019**