

**Oxford Internet
Institute**

**Wednesday 5th
April at 4:30**



RANKING DIGITAL RIGHTS



TALK: Building a global standard for ICT sector accountability on privacy and freedom of expression

We depend on dozens of companies – such as Facebook, Google, Apple, and Vodafone – for the digital products and services that increasingly shape our personal lives, careers, and even politics. But how well do these companies respect users' rights to privacy and freedom of expression?

On 23 March the Ranking Digital Rights project housed at New America's Open Technology Institute released the 2017 Corporate Accountability Index: a ranking of 22 of the world's most powerful telecommunications, internet, and mobile companies on their disclosed commitments and policies affecting users' freedom of expression and privacy. (To view the full results, data, and analysis see <https://rankingdigitalrights.org/index2017>.)

Despite progress by some companies since the inaugural 2015 index, "companies do not disclose enough information to their users about policies and practices affecting freedom of expression and privacy," concludes the 2017 Index report. "As a result, most of the world's internet users lack the information they need to make informed choices

The project's director Rebecca MacKinnon will present key findings from the new Index and describe how the Index has affected company policy since the project's inception. She will conclude with a discussion of the potential role of indexes and benchmarks in the broader internet governance ecosystem, drawing from a recent paper published by the Global Commission for Internet Governance. (See <https://www.ourinternet.org/research/corporate-accountability-free-and-open-internet>)

Rebecca MacKinnon is a leading advocate for the rights of internet users around the world. She is author of *Consent of the Networked: The Worldwide Struggle For Internet Freedom* (Basic Books, 2012) and is founder and director of New America's Ranking Digital Rights project whose Corporate Accountability Index ranks the world's most powerful internet, mobile and telecommunications companies on their policies and practices affecting users' freedom of expression and privacy. MacKinnon also co-founded the citizen media network Global Voices, a borderless community of writers, digital media experts, activists and translators. She was a founding board member of the Global Network Initiative and currently serves on the board of the Committee to Protect Journalists. Fluent in Mandarin Chinese, MacKinnon was CNN's Beijing Bureau Chief from 1998-2001 and Tokyo Bureau Chief from 2001-2003. More recently, she has taught at the University of Hong Kong's Journalism and Media Studies Centre and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. She has held fellowships at Harvard's Shorenstein Center and Berkman Center for Internet and Society, the Open Society Foundations, Princeton's Center for Information Technology Policy, and the New America Foundation. MacKinnon received her AB magna cum laude from Harvard University and was a Fulbright scholar in Taiwan. She lives in Washington DC.

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