# DATA, ALGORITHMS, ABSENCE AND ALTERITY

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**Abstract:**
Data, Algorithms, Absence and Alterity
EASST Open Panel Proposal

The ontological politics of our time seem to be increasingly tied to an algorithmic and datafied production of society and nature. Life is permeated by automated systems, learning machines, tracking devices, and sensors. But what is made as real is closely tied to what becomes made unreal—to what is excluded from thingness in practice.

In this open panel we want to explore the politics of absence and alterity in algorithmic and data practices. How are things made absent in practice? What happens to the objects that are not cared for? Things that do not become matters of concern? What hidden or ignored multiplicities are removed from enactment? And who can decide what is included in the present? In this panel we want to examine the practices and politics of what Lee (2021) has dubbed ontological overflows—how things are excluded from becoming matters of concern. These ontological overflows have great consequences: they decide what objects are not there, how things are removed from becoming real, as well as the boundaries of the objects that are made present.

Exploring how objects, phenomena, and people are unmade, excluded, and othered requires developing methodological and analytical sensibilities that allow for studying the above-mentioned practices and politics of othering. Such a move interpellates STS scholars regarding how to notice (Gherardi and Cozza, forthcoming) and trace not only data produced by algorithms but also those data that fall 'in between' and, most of the time, risk to remain unnoticed. In other words, the question becomes how to study how absences and alterities are generated in algorithmic and data practices.

This panel welcomes conceptual, theoretical, and methodological contributions that explore how ontological overflows are produced and handled in practice, as well as their effects on producing absences, alterities in algorithmic and data practices. The panel welcomes both conceptual papers and case studies that help develop our methodological and analytical sensibilities towards absence and alterity. We want to ask: How can we pay attention to ontological overflows? How can we understand how certain things don't get a grip on reality? How can we follow the things that are excluded?

References
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