

TIGTECH |

5 MORE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TRUST

Learn more about the different aspects of trust and 2 new trust concepts outlined for discussion

(For the 7 key Drivers of Trust, see the separate document)



This was created as part of the final findings of the TIGTech, Trust in Tech Governance initiative

To see the full document, please click [here](#)

To know more about TIGTech and the 5 More Things to Know About Trust, please contact Hilary Sutcliffe on hilary@societyinside.com

5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TRUST

The following collection of insights is derived from a helicopter view of trust from branches of psychology, evolutionary psychology, neuroscience, behavioural and risk sciences, sociology, science and technology studies. Some are well known, some are new and arose from the research. They are intended as a 'primer' about trust which can be consider in relation not just to tech governance but other areas of life.

(Further information can be found in TIGTech Academic Anchor Document from Fraunhofer ISI, available [here](#).

Trust is an outcome, best achieved by focusing on others

Trust is the outcome of others perceiving trustworthiness and so bestowing their trust. But perhaps similar to love and happiness, the more doggedly trust is pursued for its own sake, the more elusive it may become. Also like love and happiness, it is more likely to result from turning one's attention outwards towards the needs of others than focusing only on personal objectives.

It is a hope about expectations fulfilled

A decision to trust signals a hope that an organisation or individual will fulfil an expectation we have of them. People trust individuals and institutions for specific reasons related to this hope and expectation – we don't lose trust in our plumber because he/she can't mend our computer or the Civil Aviation Authority for a failure to regulate the banks.¹⁴

Trusting people first makes them more likely to be trustworthy and to trust you back

Taking a proactive step to trust first, with the hope and belief, though no guarantee, that you will be trusted back, significantly increases the likelihood of being trusted. It also increases the likelihood of the other party acting in a trustworthy way themselves.^{15,16,17,18} Automatically distrusting and so exhibiting more defensive, uncooperative or disrespectful behaviour is, unsurprisingly, less likely to generate trust in return.

“Government officials who act in a trustworthy manner are more likely to elicit compliance, and virtually all agree that government regulators who trust the people they are regulating are more likely to evoke trustworthy behaviour and compliance”¹⁹

Trust is a spectrum not an either or judgement

Trust is not the simple black and white decision it is so often portrayed as – you either trust or you don't. It can be viewed on a spectrum of trust states from Passionate Trust to Passionate Distrust. These gradations may indicate different levels of confidence that the hope behind the trust decision will be fulfilled and correlate to different states of mind and potential actions. The speculative Trust Spectrum is an attempt to begin to map these different aspects of trust and corresponding behaviours.

Seeing trust in this more granular way opens up the potential for a richer understanding of the perspectives and related actions of stakeholders.



PASSIONATE TRUST



ACTIVE TRUST



PASSIVE TRUST



RESIGNED TRUST



PASSIVE DISTRUST



ACTIVE DISTRUST



PASSIONATE DISTRUST

Trust is dynamic, messy, personal and two way

Trust decisions are a two-way process. The perspectives and views of those seeking trust shapes their actions as do the perceptions of those potentially bestowing it. There appear to be three interconnected elements, which may consciously or unconsciously shape our interactions and who we trust and who we don't:

- 1 The world view and subsequent communications and actions of the trust seeker.
- 2 The context in which the decision is being made.
- 3 The world view (genetics & personal traits, experiences, context and world view) of the trust giver.

Awareness of the messiness of this trust dynamic is important in stimulating the empathy for others and self-reflection required to earn trust.



2 NEW CONCEPTS FOR TRUST THINKING






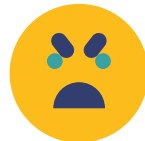

Trust as a Spectrum

Trust is not black and white – you trust or you don't – as it is so often portrayed. It is nuanced and ranges across a spectrum from – for example – Passionate Trust to Passionate Distrust. These gradations may indicate different levels of confidence that the hope behind the trust decision will be fulfilled and correlate to different states of mind and potential actions. The speculative Trust Spectrum which follows is an attempt to begin to map these different aspects of trust.



Seeing trust in this more granular way opens up the possibility for a richer understanding of the perceptions and related actions of different stakeholders. Linking these beliefs and actions to the Trust Drivers then allows a further opportunity to understand how the actions of the organisation are influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders.

TIGTECH Trust Spectrum

States	Deep trust, wants others to place trust as well. Intolerant of alternative views.	Trust, but for specific reasons related to expectations.	Trust that is unengaged and related to expectations.	Dissatisfied and feeling forced into trust, trust due to lack of options or circumstances.	Distrusting and concerned, but not taking action.	Distrust, but for specific reasons, takes action related to this distrust.	Deep distrust, wants others to distrust as well. Intolerant of alternative views.
Trust							
	PASSIONATE TRUST	ACTIVE TRUST	PASSIVE TRUST	RESIGNED TRUST	PASSIVE DISTRUST	ACTIVE DISTRUST	PASSIONATE DISTRUST
Actions	Active campaigning, cooperation, endorsement; gathering the support of others and championing.	Takes steps to participate, collaborate, purchase or support.	Takes no actions either way, participates as required but is susceptible to events or opinions that would change trust level.	Takes actions that may seem like trust But are not. No loyalty, propensity to shift to more active distrust.	Skeptical, uncertain of the motives of others and ready for greater distrust.	Takes steps to make lack of participation known to others and to seed distrust.	Active campaigning and gathering of support for disruption.



Spotlight on

Resigned Trust

'Resigned Trust' may be more widely prevalent than the use of the term suggests. This was first coined in 2014 in relation to trust in science meaning 'I don't have much choice to trust or not, so I suppose I have to'. The state of mind is one of Active Distrust but the person exhibits the behaviours of Active Trust. It also shows the importance of context and expectation as a driver of trust.

An example of Resigned Trust might be someone who cares about data privacy, but uses social media. This person trusts social media in the context of effectively keeping them in touch with their friends, but not in the use of their data. To the platforms, because this person is an enthusiastic 'user', their behaviour and actions imply trust – but the person has a residual dissatisfaction with their choice.

Like other forms of distrust in tech, this may then shift to the governance system and individual regulators or politicians who are unable to effectively govern this concern that they have. In this way distrust in tech is a leading indicator of distrust in governance and if not adequately addressed may affect trust in individual companies spreading to governance systems more broadly.



Trust Mapping using the Trust Spectrum

A 'Trust Mapping' exercise could be used by institutions or processes or governance instruments. A facilitation and consultation process may be used to consider these questions and use them for an evaluation of how the organisation and its stakeholders may interact better to earn each other's trust.



- 1 Who is trust is important?
- 2 Where do they currently sit on the trust spectrum? (Remembering resigned trust and that one person could trust an organisation in one area but not another).
- 3 What specific behaviours do/would they display in relation to this trust state?
- 4 What behaviours would change if they moved up or down the Spectrum?
- 5 How would that affect both the organisation and the stakeholder?
- 6 What could influence this move eg context changes, other actors, cultures, politics, legal changes as well as hopes, aspirations, opportunities values, beliefs, fears, assumptions, concerns, incentives?
- 7 How could the actions of the trust mapper influence the changes positively or negatively? (Consider the Trust Drivers individually as stimulus. Explore potential Watch-outs and actions to actively earn trust).
- 8 What would be the 'goldilocks zone' – the optimal level of trust and behaviour for key actors? (Consider the value of a healthy scepticism to aid accountability, and the potential for manipulating for trust).

The Trust Dynamic – personal, contextual and two-way

TIGTech research took a helicopter view of trust issues considered by various branches of psychology, evolutionary psychology, neuroscience, behavioural and risk sciences, sociology science and technology studies.

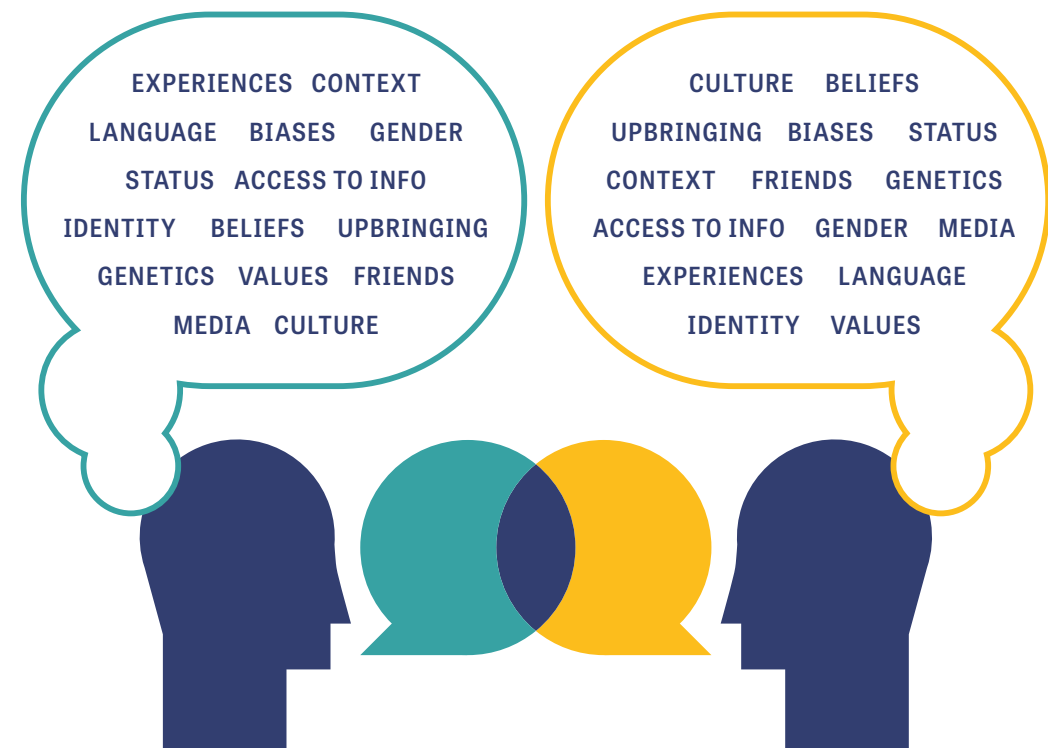
Many of these disciplines have different, sometimes contradictory views on trust. Each discipline brings its own strengths and perspectives into understanding how trust happens and how it fails, but also its unique focus, frame and assumptions about what matters.

A picture emerged of four factors which may influence who or what we trust and why – inherent Genetic Traits, Personal Experiences, Societal Context and World View. It shows that a trust judgement is messy, not simple to unpick the cause and effect. But it also highlighted how trust is a two-way street. The traits, experiences, context and world view of those seeking trust are just as influential as the perceptions of those potentially giving it.

Trust decisions have three interconnected elements, which may consciously or unconsciously shape our actions and who we trust and don't:

- 1 The world view and subsequent actions of the trust seeker.
- 2 The context in which the decision is being made.
- 3 The world view (genetics & personal traits, experiences, context and world view) of the trust giver.

TIGTECH Dynamics of Trust



Genetics and physical traits

Physical traits that influence our willingness to trust are hardwired into our bodies, meaning that those factors are on the whole unchangeable and thus difficult (or even impossible) to influence. For example:

- ▶ **Genetics may play a part** – The extent of genetic determinacy of tendencies to trust is much debated,^{104,105} as is the evidence of the genetic roots of related characteristics like attitudes to risk, or optimism or pessimism tendencies. (Though our experience of, for example stubborn optimists and pessimists makes it tempting to consider it true.)

- ▶ **Hormones and body chemistry** potentially play a role – the influence of levels of oxytocin in the body is proposed as making us more trusting even when our trust has been misplaced.¹⁰⁶ Of speculative interest also perhaps, is the finding that oxytocin is inhibited by stress and conflict, making individuals less likely to trust others in such situations. Findings on the impact of the gut microbiome on human behaviour make it appear likely that even the microbes inside our digestive system may also have some influence on our willingness to trust and cooperate.



► **Cognitive biases and shortcuts** – Governance tends to be imagined and delivered as if all actors in a trust relationship are purely ‘rational’ agents. This include the people developing the technology or product, the public responding to and using it, and the governors themselves. But we know from psychology and neuroscience that our brains play tricks on us to simplify complex decisions, like those relating to trust. We call those shortcuts ‘cognitive biases and heuristics’, as popularised by Daniel Kahneman in his influential book, *Thinking Fast and Slow*¹⁰⁷ and illustrated compellingly in the *Cognitive Bias Codex*.¹⁰⁸ However, whilst cognitive biases show promise in relation to trust, they appear to have limitations which are rarely explored. For example, the concept that we over-inflate the importance of something that just happened is called a Proximity Bias.

But potentially formative experiences, or events which are emotive or values based, which happened long ago may be far more influential in our inclination to trust than current happenings.

The challenge for governance is that it is one thing to know that biases and heuristics exist, another to put that knowledge into practice in governance design. The list of known influential heuristics is long; how and when our brains use them is fickle and context dependent. When we also add in flex and change in the other factors discussed here, it will be very difficult to ‘behaviour science’ your way into a heuristic-proof governance approach for trust.

More important perhaps, is to remember that those fixed traits exist, and that there is never a straight line between what you intend in your governance or structures, and how it will be interpreted and acted upon in real life. Testing things out in context, with real people & in real situations, remains critically important.



Experiences

The accumulation of our experiences and trust decisions seems very likely to influence who and what we trust and why. For example:

- ▶ **Our very earliest experience relating to attachment in our early years** and the feeling, or not, of safety during our upbringing is formative.¹⁰⁹
- ▶ **Whether we have been trusted in the past** matters – trust seemingly begets trust. Being regularly trusted builds confidence and an inclination to reciprocate and allows us to bestow our trust more generously.
- ▶ **Whether our trust decisions have been well-placed** seems likely to have an effect. If we have been ripped off, discriminated against, or had our trust betrayed, we may be less trusting generally, especially in a similar situation.
- ▶ **The breadth (or not) of opinions we were exposed to in our formative years¹¹⁰** is influential because it constrains how broadly we cast our views of who or what we consider trustworthy. Cults, for example, have a very narrow view of those whose opinion can be trusted, where diverse, or multicultural upbringings may broaden our curiosity and tolerance of different perspectives and, potentially, our inclination to trust could be more widely dispersed.

Context

The importance of context makes sense when we remember that trust exists in great part to help us navigate our environments successfully. It functions as a signal that helps us cut through the noise and act – fundamentally tuning into one question – is this ‘safe’? It makes sense, then, that our decisions to trust are highly context dependent.

Both personal context and cultural context matter; our decision to trust is influenced by our immediate circumstances and social influences. This perhaps feels obvious, publishing this piece in a post-Covid-19 world. Who would have thought that the decision of whether or not it was safe to pop to the shops for a pint of milk would suddenly be a matter of trust? Do you trust your Government’s guidance on Covid-19



safety – in general, or this week? Do you trust the shop-keeper and your fellow customers to keep adequate social distancing? As the context changes, it can rapidly throw up new questions as matters of trust and shape our standards of proof.

In some ways, this feels like bad news for governors; context is a driver as wide as the sky – and equally uncontrollable. Where do you start in shaping governance that is a bit less fragile to context – without foolishly aiming to be context-proof? There are a few factors that deserve particular attention in our pursuit of trustworthy governance:

▶ **Trust is influenced by the context of our expectations.** Our inclination to trust is often specific to quite a narrow context and aligned to the expectations of the relationship or decision at hand; we don't lose trust in someone for failure to deliver something we don't expect of them. For example, we might trust a bank to keep

our money safe, but not to run air traffic control. We might trust a regulator to ensure products are safe, systems are fair, the rules are proportionate – but may not trust them to arbitrate on ethics – or quite possibly not trust them if they don't effectively take ethics into consideration – these human factors adds complexity again.

▶ **Trust decisions are influenced by cultures and social norms.** Cultural attitudes, expected behaviours and the way things are done where we live affect general and personal approaches to trustworthiness and trust. The level of 'generalised trust' – the inclination of citizens to trust each other (sometimes called social capital) is part of this cultural context. This may influence, for example, attitudes to authority and civic institutions, tolerance of risk or uncertainty, views about science, technology or academia, social attitudes to innovation, nature or community. Understanding these

dynamics is particularly challenging for technology and tech governance which is transnational.

▶ **The views and actions of our influencers.** Friends, colleagues, icons, chosen media can also be a hugely significant factor in the weighting of who or what to trust; our brain gives the actions of the people around us outsized influence in our decisions about risk and safety. Edelman's famous Trust Barometer shows fluctuations in who is most trusted in society, but as trust in institutions becomes more fragile 'someone like me' is growing in importance as a trusted source.



- ▶ **What's happening now plays a part.** Writing this report amidst the Covid-19 crisis, citizens, politicians, commentators are now much more present to the repercussions of trust and distrust and its components. Trust and distrust of institutions, individuals and sources of information is fluctuating as the virus and lockdowns strategies progress, each influenced by all of the factors in our list here and the drivers of trust to come in the next chapter. We don't just see it – we feel it; the ebb and flow and emergence of new trust challenges but also the rewards of being trusted are evident on a day by day, sometimes moment to moment basis.

Governance can learn multiple things from this list. Firstly, you must be aware of people's expectations and whether they are adequately met. Secondly, do not take for granted the aspect of culture and social norms as that is where many assumptions creep in, which might be damaging in the long term. They should be actively analysed; especially now when social change has accelerated during global lockdowns. Last but not least, in order to adapt governance to the moment, you have to know how common opinion is changing – or, for narrower issues, how the views of your audience of interest and their influencers are changing. That sounds far easier than it is – also requiring you to know what 'influencers' even matter to this group, and having a very clear view of who you are interested in understanding in the first place.



World View

'Worldview' in this section relates to how people filter their experience of reality through their values and beliefs. Values are those things we see as important, beliefs are the things we hold to be true. Together, they shape our opinions, assumptions, behaviours and responses to others and the world around us.

- ▶ **Values** drive our true purpose as a human being; and they are what helps us to discern what feels right and what feels wrong (according to us); both about our own actions and of those around us.
- ▶ **Beliefs** are our generalisations about the world and our best guesses at what is true based on reality as we see it. Beliefs do not require facts. If you are a 'Make American Great Again' die hard, then facts about Donald Trump are not important. We actively seek out resources that

support or corroborate our beliefs and ignore the ones which don't. Which is why Henry Ford's quote of 'If you believe you can, or believe you can't, you are always right' makes so much sense. While the idea of cognitive shortcuts are often thought to be limited to behavioural heuristics hardwired into our brains, there is less understanding about how our personal beliefs and values also help us reduce complexity and provide barriers against information overload. They help us to filter a fragmented world filled with contradictory narratives, giving us a sense of clarity and direction.¹¹¹ The emerging field of 'Cultural Cognition'¹¹² further explores how individual and cultural values and beliefs shape attitudes and behaviours.

- ▶ **Our sense of identity and how we view ourselves plays a central role.** Much of these cultural, political, experiential, personal influences, values and beliefs

coalesce into a narrative we weave about ourselves – 'I am an environmentalist, a conservative, a scientist, an outsider, an American, a football supporter, an artist, a rebel'. Our need for internal coherence aligned to this identity will shape our actions and our decisions of who to trust and why. This is the basis too of Kahneman's What You See Is All There Is (WYSIATI) concept.¹¹³

- ▶ **Group belonging matters** – Humans need to belong. Linked to our sense of identity are those who share common values, beliefs, identities with us. Those who are not 'in' this group with us are 'other' – political affiliations provide interesting learning here. In others, it seems more influential as an important lens through which we judge other's actions or who is in and who is out and who is wrong and who is right. (For example, discussions with a thoughtful UK Conservative voter and Brexiteer,



explored how he struggled to believe in man-made climate change despite significant reflection. A pivotal factor in his scepticism was because 'environmentalism' was the domain of 'left-wing hippies and tree-huggers' and he was not one of those).¹¹⁴

- ▶ **Our perception of the benefit of the decision together with our perception of the risk**, and so where we place our trust, is also filtered through our values and beliefs. A selfish cost-benefit analysis is considered by some to be the leading driver of trust. It is of course important, but it appears inextricably linked to all the other human factors and clearly also senses of altruism or social justice.¹¹⁵

- ▶ **Our perceptions of other's behaviours** are also filtered through the lens of our values and beliefs, (particularly in relation to the 10 Trust Drivers). We base this on our direct experience, their reputation, how others view them (particularly those we trust) their actions towards us and other's their language, attitudes and their seeming alignment with our own values and beliefs.

All of the above combined explains why it's often so hard to convince people to change their minds. Accepting that we may be wrong about our deeply held beliefs could cause a collapse of the carefully curated worldview that allows us to navigate the world. To ask us to change our beliefs is to ask us to give up a safety net – to engage with complexity rather than short-hand – and to teeter the dominos of the other beliefs, behaviours and attitudes that follow. Awareness of those factors is crucial to building effective trust.

The Trust Dynamic and the 7 Trust Drivers

The 7 Trust Drivers in some ways transcend the messiness and of trust decisions. But in particular the awareness of the dynamic nature of trust may help in stimulating the empathy for others and self-reflection required to build trust – in particular underpinning the trust driver of Respect.



GREAT RESOURCES FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT



OECD Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions

https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/governance/innovative-citizen-participation-and-new-democratic-institutions_339306da-en

OECD Open Government Unit

<http://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/>

OECD Best Practice Principles on Stakeholder Engagement In Regulatory Policy

<http://www.oecd.org/governance/regulatory-policy/public-consultation-best-practice-principles-on-stakeholder-engagement.htm>

Excite2020 Action Catalogue of methodologies for citizen Engagement

<http://actioncatalogue.eu/search>

Involve Knowledge Base – Case studies, Methods & Myths and Facts about citizen involvement

<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/methods>

Nesta – Centre for Collective Intelligence and Collective Intelligence Playbook

<https://www.nesta.org.uk/project/centre-collective-intelligence-design/>

<https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/future-minds-and-machines/3-what-collective-intelligence/>

Participedia

<https://participedia.net> – a global crowdsourcing platform for researchers, activists, practitioners and anyone interested in public participation and democratic innovations.

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