

## **CASE 6: Thinking ahead about the possible uses of research results**

Carla plans to do research using freely available data from social media platform (i.e., data that the users posted as 'public'). Based on this data, she intends to develop models (using advance machine learning) that can help predict in which houses in a larger town or city it is most probable to find values greater than 100,000 Euros. If her research is successful, Carla would, of course, not publish where to find the houses but since her research is publicly funded, she will publish the methods that she used to predict the houses. Also, since the conferences where she publishes promote the idea of open science. Thus, in order to get published, she also must share the data that she used to develop her models.

Carla is aware that her research results (both the data as well as the method) could be used by companies for commercial purposes (e.g. insurance companies), or even by criminals who plan to use the information to find targets for burglary. She is not concerned about the potential for commercialization but about the danger that her results could be used for criminal purpose.

What should she do?

1. Carla should not do the research because the danger of misuse by criminals is too great.
2. Carla shouldn't do the research, because the commercialisation is unethical and also a waste of tax money (which funded the research).
3. Carla should do the research but make sure that she only publishes subsets of data such that correct results cannot be reproduced (only the applicability of the method could be reconfirmed).
4. Carla should do the research but inform the funding organisation about the benefits AND risks (i.e. she should describe the potential uses and resulting impacts to society – positive as well as negative).

*[If you make use of this for training purposes please acknowledge source as: EC-funded PRO-RES Project <http://prores-project.eu/>*

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