

FemTech Innovation

Wellcome Trust Early Career Award 2024-2029



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Problem:

Health and healthcare are changing in response to three major shifts:

- Menstruation and women's health disparities are much more visible
- Surveillance is everywhere
- Public and private spheres of care provision and knowledge production are increasingly blurred

We do not understand the effects these changes will have.

Methods:

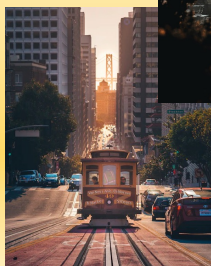
Extended, comparative ethnographic fieldwork

Follows three key sets of stakeholders, tracing their interactions and overlaps

- menstruating people
- tech developers
- the medical community (clinical and research)

Compares three locations

- regulatory and market landscapes around data protection and reproductive autonomy
- cultural and social practices around gender, sex, and health



San Francisco



Edinburgh



Postdoctoral research fellow's site of expertise, TBD

Research Vision:

This research approaches FemTech and the current changes in surveillance and menstrual health via a critical lens, yet also seeks to actively influence these developments.

It will shape debates in anthropology, science and technology studies (STS), and beyond, and intervene productively in discussions about the intersection of reproduction and data -- and how health technologies are influencing healthcare.

On one hand:

Positives of paying attention to menstruation and women's health inequities



On the other:

Negatives of a context heavily mediated by 'techno-solutionism,' profit, and private innovation.

What, exactly, is changing? Where do we want to head?

Fellowship impacts and innovations

Postdoctoral Research Fellow management represents an innovation in research culture by allowing greater autonomy and recognition of their expertise, in line with anthropology disciplinary norms.

Will develop methods for improved communication across silos in disciplines, sectors, and populations, and tools for measuring this.

Strengthened international research networks with UC Berkeley, UCSF, and institutions in the PDRF's geographical remit.

References

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Ford, A., Malcolm, R., Erikainen, S., Raeder, L., & Roberts, C. (Eds.). (2024). *Hormonal Theory*. Bloomsbury.

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