

# Portraits and Data Doubles

Yellow indicates online adaptations

Objective: Introduce the topic of profiling including how others can create representations of us, and how this applies to the collection of personal data. The activity is designed to reveal how representations of us through data are incomplete and inaccurate.

Participant Number: Participants will work in pairs

Materials: Pen/pencil and paper, or a digital drawing device

Duration: 20 minutes (30 minutes extended version)

## 💡 Preparation:

- Prepare enough pieces of paper and pencils/pens for each participant
- Online: inform participants that they will need pen and paper, and their videos on.
- Decide a question that the participants will answer during their introductions such as:
  - describe your motivation for taking part in the workshop;
  - share what you are currently studying or working on

## ✅ Activity

- Divide the group into pairs and decide who is '1' and who is '2'
- Set a timer for 3 minutes: '1' will draw a portrait of '2' while '2' introduces themselves and answers the predetermined question.
- After 3 minutes, switch: set the timer again, '2' is now drawing '1' while '1' answers the question.
- After 6 minutes, ask participants to show their drawings and introduce their partners.
- Encourage participants to share by showing your own drawing and explain that no one can

draw a masterpiece in 3 minutes.

- Online: put the pairs into break out rooms, or if that is not possible, ask each participant to draw a selfie in 3 minutes and to introduce themselves.

## 💬 Discussion Themes:

- Just as this portrait is a representation of us, so is our 'data double' – the collection of data that other people, companies or data brokers use to form a picture of us and use to identify us.
- Within this exercise, the participants had to pick key physical identifiers (like glasses or hair styles). Data collectors also have to work within the limit of data that can be collected and hosted in databases.
- Usually our data double is a combination of single words, phrases, or numbers held in a spreadsheet or database. These points of data and the databases can be held by an entity for years and can also be sold or traded across companies or even industry.

