

Annotation and Benchmarking on Understanding and Transparency of Machine learning Lifecycles (ABOUT ML)

Chapter 5: Conclusions

New conclusions will be created for each version released.

Version 0

The ABOUT ML project objective is to work towards putting forward a new industry emphasis on transparent ML systems and this is the first step in providing a guide for practitioners to start taking this goal seriously. The goal of this document was to synthesize insights and recommendations from the existing body of literature to begin a public multistakeholder conversation about how to improve ML transparency.

Key ideas include:

- Documentation is valuable both as a process and an artifact
- Internal documentation (for other teams inside the same organization, more detailed) and external documentation (for broader consumption, fewer sensitive details) are both valuable and should be undertaken together as they provide complementary incentives and benefits
- Avoiding misuse and harm from ML systems is a focus of current research and practice. Adhering to a documentation process that demands intentional reflection about how a system might be used and misused, in which contexts, and impacting whom is one first step towards potentially reducing harms. Incorporating feedback from diverse perspectives early, often, and throughout every stage in the ML lifecycle is another risk mitigation strategy. The Diverse Voices process from the Tech Policy Lab at the University of Washington is one formalized methodology for incorporating this type of feedback.