

The Open-Source Global Justice Investigations Lab

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What is the Lab?

The Global Justice Investigations Lab brings together an international, interdisciplinary community of students, teachers/researchers, and societal partners—including civil society organizations and media outlets—to address global justice challenges through open-source investigations. The 20-week Lab consists of three components:

1. Team-taught lectures on topics such as global justice, human rights, disinformation, ethics, and trauma and resilience.
2. Practical workshops on digital investigation skills, including geolocation, chrono-location, internet scraping, satellite analysis, and vessel tracking.
3. Real-life case collaborations with societal partners.

The Lab integrates diverse knowledge forms and supports students in contributing to justice work. Students have directly supported advocacy reports, journalistic investigations, and legal accountability processes.

Core Concepts

The Lab is based on five key concepts: human rights and global justice, digital skills, interdisciplinarity, international community engaged learning, and trauma and resilience. Students learn about human rights frameworks, global justice networks, and mechanisms for holding individuals, companies, and states accountable for human rights violations and environmental harms.

Professional investigators train students in open-source methods, including satellite imagery analysis, corporate investigations, and flight and vessel tracking. Students apply these skills in interdisciplinary teams with societal partners, reflecting on both practice and theory. Trauma and resilience training ensures a safe learning environment, recognizing the emotional impact of exposure to conflict-related material, prioritizing well-being, informed consent, and supportive supervision.

Societal Partners

The Lab collaborates with non-profit organizations and media outlets working in human rights and global justice. We aim for long-term partnerships and regularly evaluate projects to ensure meaningful impact. Past and current partners have included a range of advocacy and media organizations in the field.



Student and Teacher Community

The Lab fosters a strong student–teacher community. The teaching team brings expertise from anthropology, computer science, conflict studies, criminology, law, and media and communications. This interdisciplinary mix enriches student guidance and models the collaboration the Lab promotes.

Students join through a selective application process, and none have withdrawn once admitted, creating a stable and mutually supportive learning environment. Alumni form the Global Justice Investigations Collective, continuing to collaborate on projects that extend the Lab’s mission beyond the formal course.



Student voice 2023-2024

*Overall, the lab has given me the privilege to learn about OSI [open-source investigations], [...] but, most importantly, has given **the opportunity to know myself better, to push my boundaries and get out of my (legal) comfort zone, to reaffirm my values and to fight my own biases.***

This was a lifetime experience.
