

Commendation – Louis D. Brandeis Privacy Award – Professor Joe Cannataci

Joe Cannataci completed his first book on Privacy thirty years ago, in 1986. His second book “Liability & responsibility for expert systems” was published in 1988 and devoted considerable focus on medical expert systems. In 1990 he was contributing to the European Commission’s programme on Advanced Informatics in Medicine. By 1992 he had continued his work on bio-medical computing with a study on “Legal aspects of picture archiving and communications systems”. Between 1992 and 1996, first as Vice-Chair and then Chair of the Council of Europe’s Committee of Experts on Data Protection, he co-authored the Council of Europe’s Recommendation on the Protection of Medical data Rec(97)5. He also co-authored one of the first comparative analysis studies on the protection of medical data in Europe, this time published in Amsterdam at the Medical Informatics Europe Conference in 1995. His work on privacy is not only related to the protection of patient data but is very diverse touching upon a wide range of application areas of information technology. He was Chairman of the Council of Europe’s Working Group on Data Protection and Insurance as well as its Working Group on Data Protection and New Technologies between 1994 and 2000.

In 2002 he was decorated by the Republic of France and elevated to Officier dans l’ordre des palmes académiques. His pioneering role in the development of technology law and especially privacy law was cited as one of the main reasons for his being made the recipient of such an honour as was his contribution to the development of European information policy. His scholarship includes dozens of work about privacy but also reflects his wide range of interests: he has written books and articles on data protection law, liability for expert systems, legal aspects of medical informatics, copyright in computer software and co-authored various papers and textbook chapters on self-regulation and the Internet, the EU Constitution and data protection, on-line dispute resolution, data retention and police data. His latest book “The Individual & Privacy” was published in the UK by Ashgate in March 2015 and is currently being translated into Chinese.

For the past several years Joe has worked extensively on developing an evidence-base for policy making in the field of privacy and new technologies with a particular emphasis on security science and a considerable deal of Joe’s time is dedicated to collaborative research in this area. He was overall co-ordinator for the CONSENT project dealing with privacy and user-generated content online, the SMART and RESPECT projects dealing with surveillance. He currently also co-ordinates the MAPPING project dealing with Internet Governance and privacy as well as the CARISMAND project dealing with privacy, culture and disaster resilience and response. To carry out this privacy-related research, Joe has held or currently holds research grants from the British Academy, the Council of Europe, COST, UNESCO and the European Commission, totalling in excess of Euro 30 million. He serves on the editorial board of six peer-reviewed journals.

Joe’s education has included a Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Malta with a doctoral thesis on Privacy & Data Protection Law and a degree in computers and law from the University of Oslo in Norway. He is also a UK Chartered Information Technology Professional (CITP) & Fellow of the British Computer Society FBCS. Joe Cannataci co-founded and still co-directs STeP – the Security, Technology & e-Privacy Research Group at the University of Groningen where he today is full Professor holding the Chair of European Information Policy & Technology Law. Very strongly attached to his native Malta, he devotes considerable time to his role as the Head of the Department of Information Policy & Governance at the Faculty of Media & Knowledge Sciences of the University of Malta. Also a full Professor (in an adjunct capacity) at the Security Research Institute and the School of Computer and Security Science at Edith Cowan University Australia, he dedicates time in Australia, Africa, Asia and the Americas to designing and leading field—work which explores privacy-related behaviour and perceptions of indigenous peoples.