

URL: <https://ecorner.stanford.edu/clips/platform-governance/>

Responsible Innovation Labs executive director Jon Zieger defines “platform governance,” and explains why it became a focus of his organization’s efforts to create responsible innovation frameworks.



## Transcript

- Platform, governance is the set of decisions 00:00:08,420 one makes around who can use a platform, under what circumstances, when will they be deprived of the ability to use it, with what sort of process will they be deprived of the ability to use it and so on, right? You can certainly cast it more broadly.. I think there are broader aspect of it.. There's, questions around that touch on privacy and data usage and other things, but the core of it for us has been closer to what you might call ethical use or acceptable use, right? It's really this question of who can use a platform and under what circumstances, and that's been an issue, obviously, for a long time for the information platforms, for the social media companies.. Particularly over the last few years, and especially after the January 6th capital, call it an insurrection, I don't know why we're calling it these days, but anyway, capital thing that happened, is a bunch of companies that were well outside of the narrative on that question found themselves right in the middle of it, right? And so you have Amazon web service, you know, a web service is as low level of an infrastructure provider as you are going to have, right.. All the way, pretty much to the bare metal of the internet, except for the telecodes right, who have a different kind of statutory framework that applies to them, making decision to off board another platform, right, Parlor, and a set of other users as well, and effectively kicked them off of the internet, right.. You have, obviously, you have Twitter deciding independently that the president United States can no longer speak on its platform and so on.. Without making any judgements about whether any of those decisions were the right decisions or wrong decisions, what happened was a bunch of companies realized they had really, they had sort of acceptable use or similar kinds of policies, which often amounted to a sentence or two in the terms of service.. But those were effectively, what we lawyers would call holding statements, right? They were not often, they're not very well thought out.. We will get back to this at some point in the future, right.. And what has happened after January is I think a wide swath of companies have realized we really need to think much harder about this and build policies, frameworks, and internal processes that are much better calibrated to deal with this set of issues..

And so that's kind of why, and we had a number of those folks reach out to us, partly because this is an area that I have spent a lot of time on in my career and one where I talk to a lot of my general counsel, colleagues about when they understood kind of the mission that we were embarked on, the discussion was, well hey, this would be a great place.. If you can help us, this would be a great place to do it.. And so that's sort of, so that's why I say it's a little opportunistic.. I think if we had, in November of last year, was not the area where we were going to start, there with some other areas, but this one kind of rose to the fore...