

Gender Shades: The MIT Audit That Made Amazon, IBM and Microsoft Confront Facial-Recognition's Gender Gap

Gender Equality · Good practice · United States of America

Quality score: 89/100

Evidence strength: Descriptive / self-reported

Summary

MIT's 2018 'Gender Shades' audit found facial-analysis systems misclassified darker-skinned women's gender up to 34.7% of the time vs under 1% for lighter-skinned men — evidence cited when Amazon paused police use of Rekognition and IBM exited facial recognition.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Transferability / replicability	3/3
Impact on gender equality	1/1
Effectiveness	1/1
Efficiency	0/1
Evaluated outcomes	1/1
Sustainability	1/1
Achievement / evidence	1/1
Gender-mainstreaming embedding	1/1
Curator validation	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[MIT Media Lab; Amazon; IBM](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[Gender Shades project](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[MIT Technology Review: the fight to stop Amazon selling facial recognition to police](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

[Amazon: one-year moratorium announcement](#) — accessed 2026-09-13

Cite this — Evidoria. *Gender Shades: The MIT Audit That Made Amazon, IBM and Microsoft Confront Facial-Recognition's Gender Gap*. Persistent ID: a993f112-4177-48cd-b171-a966506ddffc.