

Apollonian Consulting

| <u>Team Member Name</u> | <u>Year</u> | <u>Major</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Kayla Guran | 2025 | Philosophy |
| Leonard Delgadillo | 2024 | Math & Philosophy |
| Hunter Gomersall | 2025 | Philosophy |

Advisor(s): Dr. Marc E. Bobro

Topic: Neuralink: Revolutionary Brain Technology or Abusive Intrusion?

Audience: Neuralink Board of Directors

Sustainable Development Goal

SDG #10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Executive Summary

The natural world is rife with mysteries, and some of the most vexing mysteries are quite close to home, like those pertaining to the organ trapped within the confines of our skulls. The brain's mysteries make the Neuralink Corporation's ambitious objectives all the more exciting. The Neuralink Corporation, founded in February of 2016, is a neurotechnology company developing implantable brain-machine interfaces. In other words, these devices could allow users to "connect" their brains to various devices like computers or smartphones. Despite being relatively young, Neuralink has already achieved some degree of notoriety. From the extravagant claims made by its creator to the recent allegations of animal cruelty, the company has become a somewhat familiar fixture in today's headlines. The almost fantastical nature of the company's aforementioned promises has captured the imagination and prompted the worry of the general public. Fears regarding Neuralink's potential for rampant invasions of privacy, exacerbation of income inequality, infliction of neurological/psychological harm, and amplification of our overreliance on technology have divided the public's opinion. All of these factors and many more are precisely why a reassessment and reconfiguration of Neuralink's central purpose is vitally important now more than ever.

According to the United States Census Bureau, workers with a disability earn just 66 cents for every dollar their non-disabled counterparts earn. As such, Neuralink's stated aim of "enabling people with paralysis to directly use their neural activity to operate computers and mobile devices with speed and ease" has a very promising ring to it. However, those in charge of the project often express a far greater degree of excitement at the prospect of dispersing the technology into the market for general use. Lengthy, detailed projections of the technology's implications are both ubiquitous and abundant. However, we hold that it is of vital importance that the company does not lose sight of its more attainable, practical, and ultimately beneficial goal. Neuralink has the potential to significantly narrow the social and economic divide between disabled and non-disabled people. Though promises of "human-AI symbiosis" may seem far more exciting, the medical application of the technology holds more promise given the scientific, technological, and legal limitations of today. Rather than narrow social and economic divides, a misallocation of the proposed technology could compound them.