

Agenda

Come Together: Digital Associations and Democracy

11 February 2019

Presented by: The Digital Civil Society Lab at the Stanford Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society, the University of Sydney Politics Department and the Sydney Policy Lab

OVERVIEW

Digital technologies and democracy are topics of intense public discussion. Having swung from techno-optimism to dire concern in many developed democracies, the public conversation makes only sporadic reference to the decades of scholarship on many elements of this fraught relationship. Both the scholarship and public discourse, however, emphasize the ways digital technologies challenge expression and privacy.

This one-day conference seeks to understand the state of research and practice regarding how digital technologies interact with our civic and political associational opportunities and structures. What new associational forms are being created to manage digital data for public benefit? How do technological design choices interact with our ability to associate with others? What are the ethical dimensions of data use by associations, and on community data as compared to individual data? Are new forms of inequality being exacerbated by digital technologies that digital associations can effectively mitigate?

Of particular interest are the interactions between algorithmic governance, political regulation, and collective action. This conference will gather Australian scholars, policy makers, and civil society actors to consider existing research on digital technologies, associational life, and implications for Australian democracy.

AGENDA

9:00 - 9:15 **Welcome and introductions: Why Digital Associations Matter**

*Marc Stears, Sydney Policy Lab
Ariadne Vromen, University of Sydney
Lucy Bernholz, Stanford University*

9:15 - 10:45 **Digital Associations and the Ethics of Data Use**

How are communities using digital technologies to strengthen their work, what are the ethical questions about digital data use that matter most to associations, and what new forms of association are being developed to take advantage of digital capacities safely, ethically and effectively?

***Lucy Bernholz** (moderator), Director, Digital Civil Society Lab, Stanford
Ellen Rennie, Associate Professor, RMIT University
Lyndon Ormond-Parker, ARC Research Fellow, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne
Jane Farmer, Director, Swinburne Social Innovation Research Institute, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne
Lyria Bennett Moses, Director, Allens Hub for Technology, Law and Innovation; Professor, UNSW Law*

Rohan Clarke, *Chairman, BCCM's Platform Cooperative Taskforce*

10:45 - 11:00

Break

11:00 - 12:30

Digital Design and Associations (Kimberlee Weatherall)

The design choices of digital platforms – from core internet infrastructure to moderation and algorithmic prioritizing – shape our online associational options. How can design choices about data portability, self-sovereign ID, encryption, trust mechanisms, and algorithmic sorting foster strong civic associational opportunities?

Kimberlee Weatherall (*moderator*), *Professor of Law, University of Sydney*

Julia Powles, *Associate Professor, University of Western Australia Law School*

Marta Poblet, *Associate Professor, Graduate School of Business and Law, RMIT University*

Monique Mann, *Vice Chancellor's Research Fellow in Technology and Regulation*

Craig Furneaux, *Subject Area Coordinator for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies, Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies, Queensland University of Technology*

Penny Harrison, *Director, Volunteering, Australian Red Cross*

12:30 - 1:00

Collective Discussion

1:00 - 2:10

Lunch - Tables of Interest

2:15 - 3:30

Paying for Change

How are our digital dependencies shifting how we pay for and seek funding for associational activities? What benefits are to be gained from building digital resources and what new costs and skills need to be developed?

Ariadne Vromen (*moderator*), *Professor of Political Sociology and Associate Dean of Research, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney*

Josephine Barraket, *Director Centre for Social Impact Swinburne (CSI), Swinburne University of Technology*

Tom Dawkins, *CEO, StartSomeGood*

Sarah Davies, *CEO, Philanthropy Australia*

3:30 - 3:45

Break

3:45 - 5:00

Associations and Policy Making

Associations have always played critical roles in shaping public policy making. How is this changing in the digital age? Where are there new possibilities and what are the risks?

Tanya Notley (*moderator*), *Senior Lecturer, Western Sydney University*

Scott Wright, *Associate Professor, University of Melbourne*

Lyndsey Jackson, *Founder of WeCollaborate and Chair of Electronic Frontiers Australia*

Hokyu Hwang, *Associate Professor, UNSW Sydney*

Ed Santow, *Human Rights Commissioner, Australian Human Rights Commission*

5:00 - 5:15

Discussion

5:15 - 5:30

Next Steps

5:30 - 6:30

Networking Reception