

CALL FOR CHAPTERS

Digital Transformation(s): Social & Ethical Consequences of Rapid Technological Change

Editors

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The Centre for Digital Transformation (CeDiT) invites chapter proposals for a planned interdisciplinary book project on Digital Transformation(s): Social and Ethical Consequences of Rapid Technological Change. We're looking forward to individual or co-authored abstracts and would encourage young and early career scholars to submit a chapter proposal.

Book Description

Digital transformation is rapidly reshaping modern societies, including public services and business, educational, health and welfare systems. At the same time, digital technologies increase both the demand for and promise of new solutions to challenges of societal, economic, and ecological sustainability, social inclusion, and political participation. Furthermore, advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) raise new questions about the "truth" and trustworthiness of facts, ownership of creative content and growing concerns about discrimination, privacy violations, and job displacement. Critical examination is necessary to assess the social consequences of ubiquitous and increasingly independent digital technologies. However, digital transformation cannot be seen solely as an external force flagged by edtech providers imposing new developments on society and the political system, instead, we suggest moving beyond this dualistic perspective, and address the iterative interplay between technology and societal/political actors in the digital transformation.

This edited book brings together a variety of perspectives from across disciplines from the social sciences to critically examine some of the core challenges and opportunities associated with digital transformation. Moreover, the edited book offers both theoretical and empirical contributions that seek to explore and expand concepts of digital transformation. It is organized in four sections including 1) Introduction; 2) Theories to explain change (transformation if it where), conceptual lenses to observe, potential normative theories to assess; 3) Fields of observations - empirical cases of transformation organized into three thematic sections (Sustainable digital societies, Digital Governance, Sustainable digital citizenships, Responsible and ethical digital transformations); 4) conclusions and outlook.

Sustainable Digital Societies

Digital transformation has far-reaching implications for sustainability, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions. For instance, the increasing use of digital technologies, such as high-performance computing, cloud computing, and data centers, can have significant environmental impacts in terms of energy consumption, e-waste generation, and carbon emissions. Nonetheless, on the other hand, digital technologies may contribute to sustainable solutions by providing the means for smart energy use, intelligent mobility concepts or the creation of sustainable green jobs. Digital technology may thus both support and challenge sustainability, and in this section, we aim for chapters that bring nuances to these dimensions.

Digital governance

What consequences does digitalization (e.g., AI) have for the governing process? Will digitalization profoundly impact existing power structures and relations? Does automated governance using AI transform the role of existing institutions and governing routines, e.g., by making public accountability harder and the role of bureaucratic expertise more essential? How robust are public institutions and their governing processes in the digital era? In this section we aim for chapters that deal with consequences for accountability processes, for political steering, bureaucratic autonomy, etc.

Digital Citizenships

Digital Technologies promise to increase access to public and social services and open new avenues for political participation. At the same time, public servants and politicians face new challenges to manage digital and often anonymous interaction with their constituents and service recipients as well as dealing with the digital divide in service provision. As citizens, we must have the right skills to understand and manage digital information that is created from the various activities and services we all use. Citizens need digital competence including the ability to critically evaluate information in the digital realm and arrangements for data privacy and online safety are required, to be able to take part in the knowledge society, and digital competence is part of what we often refer to as digital citizenship. The section will explore various approaches towards digital citizenship empirically and theoretically.

Responsible and ethical digital transformations

In society, responsible and ethical digital transformations involve leveraging technology to promote inclusivity and prioritize human well-being. For instance, in healthcare, leveraging technologies such as telemedicine, electronic health records, and remote monitoring hold immense potential to enhance patient care, improve outcomes, and increase access to healthcare services. However, it is crucial to ensure privacy, maintain patient autonomy and preserve the doctor-patient relationship. In education, responsible and ethical digital transformations can create inclusive and equitable learning environments. This requires fostering digital literacy skills among students and educators and utilizing technology in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of students. In this section, we aim for chapters that address these perspectives, empirically and theoretically.

Target Audience

The primary audience for this book includes graduate students pursuing degrees in social science disciplines such as sociology, information systems, political science, anthropology, and others. It is also a key resource for social science scholars, including faculty members and researchers and will provide them with state-of-the-art insights and discussion about selected research problems on digital transformation. Additionally, practitioners working in fields related to social science research, such as policy analysts, program evaluators, and social researchers in non-profit organizations or government agencies, can benefit from the practical guidance provided in this book. Chapter proposals should fit in the proposed structure of the book and be written in English.

We are looking forward to short (300 words) abstracts.

Please send your ideas to any (or all) of the editors.

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Timeline

- Abstract submission deadline: [1. June 2024]
- Notification of acceptance: [25. June 2024]
- Draft of Chapter 1 Introduction [30. September 2024]
- Full chapter submission deadline: 1. November 2024]
- Peer review and revision period: [November -December 2024]
- Final version of chapters [1. March 2025]
- Publication: [November/December 2025]