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Hochschule für Politik München  
an der Technischen Universität München

Call for extended abstracts

# Workshop: Digital Behavioural Technology, Vulnerability and Justice



Munich, July 1–3, 2019  
at LMU Munich and TU Munich

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# Workshop Theme

We are currently witnessing the arrival of digital technologies with the potential to have a deep impact on how we think, behave, and relate to others. New medical devices, for example brain implants, can be used for therapeutic purposes, but their potential is much vaster. Apps that track our behavior and body functions can be used for the purpose of improving our health, fitness or general well-being, but they might also create massive privacy and justice problems. While there is a great variety of technologies, what they have in common is that they track human bodies and that they rely on the aggregation of data that they extract from individual users.

These technologies are not introduced into a void, but into societies characterized by vulnerabilities and multi-dimensional inequalities, many of which are unjust. When seen through the lens of vulnerability and justice, the introduction of these new digital technologies raises intricate questions. While proponents argue that such technologies can help to reduce unjust inequali-

ties and discriminatory practices, critics fear that they will reinforce them. It is unclear what new forms of vulnerabilities they might create, and how they will impact on existing ones. It is likely that new forms of legal and institutional regulation will be required, especially in contexts in which powerful economic agents, e.g. business companies or insurance corporations, are involved. Some commentators warn, for example, that human autonomy and privacy as we knew them might become obsolete, or might turn into luxury items that only the economically privileged can afford.

This workshop will bring together scholars and scientists from disciplines such as political philosophy, public health ethics, sociology, economics, technology and neuroscience, to create a forum for discussion. We want to build bridges between ideas and individuals that allow for a comprehensive perspective on these new technologies that takes their political, social, ethical, technological and medical implications into account.

Specific questions to be discussed include, for example:

- What general issues of justice arise with regard to technologies such as brain-machine-interfaces, tracking apps or forms of artificial intelligence that influence human behaviour?
  - What forms of structural and epistemic injustice might be reduced or reinforced by these new technologies?
  - What is the conceptual and practical relation to vulnerability or “vulnerable groups”?
  - How should new digital behavioural technologies be regulated, and what criteria of procedural justice should be used for doing so?
  - What technological, regulatory or political solutions can provide remedies for justice-related problems with these technologies?
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# Keynote speakers include

Prof. Flis Henwood

Professor of Social Informatics; University of Brighton

Prof. Samia Hurst-Majno

Director, Institute for Ethics, History, and the Humanities; University of Geneva

Prof. Karola Kreitmair

Medical History and Bioethics; University of Wisconsin - Madison

Prof. Albrecht Schmidt

Chair for Human-Centered Ubiquitous Media, Institute of Informatics;  
Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich

Prof. Jonathan Wolff

Blavatnik Chair of Public Policy, Blavatnik School of Government; University of Oxford

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## Submission

Please submit extended abstracts of 900–1000 words that describe the paper in sufficient detail (given the interdisciplinary nature of the conference, this will help us to put together coherent panels). Slots for each talk will be approx. 30–45 minutes. Depending on the number of submissions, we plan for either plenary sessions or parallel tracks. We plan to edit a special issue in the Review of Social Economy on the workshop themes. All papers will go through an independent peer review.

Please submit your extended abstract at:

→ <https://easychair.org/my/conference.cgi?conf=digijustice2019;welcome=1;a=13645824>

Deadline: December 31st, 2018

Notification of participation: January 31st, 2019

Organizers: Lisa Herzog (TU Munich) and Verina Wild (LMU Munich)

Funding and support: Review of Social Economy, BMBF-Project META (LMU), BIDT, TU Munich