

Digital Inclusivity and Blockchain

26th February 2021

Join via Zoom:

<https://swanseauniversity.zoom.us/j/96835003790?pwd=WWdvYXRDRFN1cmxmQkhRKzFyZU9RUT09>



The question of digital inclusivity regards the opportunity for access to beneficial digital solutions such as blockchain. Digital inclusivity is often oversimplified to the question whether one is an Artificial Intelligence (AI) enthusiast or sceptic. Yet, there are other solutions, beyond AI, such as blockchain that few are even noticing for their paramount potential and the advantage for those who adapt to using them. In reality, while digital inclusion may go even beyond AI and blockchain, places of similar adaptability to digital innovations may share a common spatial pattern. If that's true, some places will gain enormous advantage in terms of inclusivity in the new digital world in comparison to digitally lagging regions. Put differently, inequalities in space will aggravate.

The aim of this event is to highlight that the spatial pattern of adaptability to digital innovation which has to be ensured not to overlap with the existing spatial patterns of inequality and poverty. The reason for this is the potential of the digital innovation to alleviate poverty. Meanwhile, missing to participate in the digital innovation will open a new pocket for inequality to emerge. Thus, to ensure that we prevent widening inequality in space, we need to consider where the centers of poverty in space lie and how to target and stimulate the digital inclusivity therein.

For this purpose we bring together one of the main technological experts on blockchain technology, researchers of first class academic excellent prominent with their leading work on regional deprivation and forefront decision makers with engagement in both topics. Thus, we expect the event to contribute towards clarifying the role of AI and blockchain in the process of adaptation of regions, their entrepreneurial ecologies and their consumers to the technologically changing reality. AI and blockchain are to be debated as crucial new forms of endowments on which future regional resilience depends.

Preliminary Programme

9:00 – 9:30 - Opening – Annie Tubadji & Simon Rudkin

9:30 – 11:30 - Session 1 – Blockchain Expertise

- Wei Zhang - Senior researcher, nChain - Introduction to nChain and its outlook on enterprise blockchain and the importance of digital inclusion.
- Sebastian Ploetzener - Communications manager, nChain - Setting the scene for blockchain in the context of digital inclusivity.
- Jack Davies - Researcher, nChain - Micropayments as a means of inclusion and economic development.
- Chloe Tartan - Researcher, nChain - Using blockchain data to tackle problems in digital inclusivity.

11:30 – 11:45 – A Special Welcome Address

- Professor Hamish Laing – Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales

11:45 – 12:30 – Session 2 – Geographies of Poverty

- Professor Andres Rodriguez-Pose (LSE) – “Geographies of Deprivation, Entrepreneurship and the Uptake of Innovation by Regions”
- Professor Yogesh Dwivedi – “Digital Futures: Past, Present and Future Activities”
- Associate Professor Frederic A. Boy – “Understanding societal zeitgeist through machine learning on search engine queries”
- Assistant Professor Annie Tubadji – “Cultures of Digital Inclusion - the Urban-Rural Divide”
- Dr. Vasileios Galanos – Edinburg University – “The Role of Narratives in the Social Shaping of AI , Digital Realities, and Blockchain: infusing innovation with mythology, science fiction, psychology, and policy”

12:45 – 1:15 – Lunch break

1:15 – 2:00 – Session 3 – Geographies of Digital Inclusivity in Policy

- Professor Marijn Jansen, Delft University of Technology- Adaptive governance for trustworthy Artificial Intelligence in the Netherlands
- Professor Santosh K. Misra - Tamil Nadu e-Governance Agency, Commissioner of e-Governance, Govt of Tamil Nadu, India – Blockchain and Poverty Alleviation in India

2:15 – 3:15 - Round Table: Technical Experts, Scientists and Practitioners – Together along the New Pathways Ahead

3:15 – 3:30 – Closing words – Annie Tubadji

Organizing Committee:

Annie Tubadji, Swansea University
Simon Rudkin, Swansea University
Wanling Qiu, Swansea University
Frederic A. Boy, Swansea University
Timothy Hinks, University of West of England
Martina Battisti, Grenoble Ecole de Management