

# Call for Contributions

## Note: *On site and Online Options*

To accommodate many situations, we are offering the option for either physical presence or virtual participation. We would be delighted if all authors manage to attend in person but are aware that special circumstances are best handled by having flexible options.

## Submission:

1. **Inform the Chair** with the Title of your Contribution

2. **Submission URL:**

<https://www.iariasubmit.org/conferences/submit/newcontribution.php?event=DIGITAL+2026+Special>

Please select Track Preference as **DISP**

## Special track

### **DISP: Digital Inclusion and Societal Participation — Structural Barriers, Civic Agency, and Justice in Digital Transformation**

#### Chair

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Amizar Omar

School of Management - University of Bradford, UK [A.Omar4@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:A.Omar4@bradford.ac.uk)

Prof. Dr. Vishanth Weerakkody

School of Management - University of Bradford, UK [V.Weerakkody@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:V.Weerakkody@bradford.ac.uk)

along with

#### **DIGITAL 2026: Advances on Societal Digital Transformation**

July 05 - 09, 2026 – Nice, French Riviera, France

<https://www.aria.org/conferences2026/DIGITAL26.html>

Digital transformation is routinely framed as an engine of societal progress, yet the empirical record is uneven. Access asymmetries, algorithmic exclusion, and the concentration of design authority in technical and commercial actors reproduce and, in some cases, deepen structural inequalities that precede digitisation. Meanwhile, the normative vocabulary of "smart cities," "digital governance," and "citizen services" increasingly appropriates the language of participation without delivering its substance. This track interrogates that gap.

This track invites critically grounded, empirically situated contributions that examine digital inclusion and societal participation not as residual concerns but as constitutive criteria by which digital transformation must be evaluated. It addresses the conditions under which digital technologies expand or foreclose civic agency and the institutional, structural, and design choices that determine who benefits, who is excluded, and on whose terms.

**We invite paper submissions addressing the following topics, but are not limited to:**

- Structural dimensions of digital exclusion - socioeconomic, geographic, linguistic, disability-related, generational, and intersectional barriers to meaningful digital participation; beyond connectivity metrics toward capability and agency
- Citizen engagement and co-design in digital governance - participatory and deliberative models in smart city governance, public service digitalisation, and algorithmic decision-making; tokenistic versus substantive participation
- Algorithmic accountability and civic justice -bias, opacity, and discriminatory outcomes in public-sector AI; redress mechanisms and democratic oversight

- Digital public infrastructure and the commons -open platforms, data sovereignty, community-owned digital assets, and the limits of market-driven digital inclusion
- Inclusion by design versus inclusion as afterthought -universal design, accessibility standards, and the politics of retrofitting inclusion onto systems built without it
- SDG accountability in digital transformation -empirical and normative assessments of whether and how digital initiatives advance SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities), SDG 16 (Institutions and Justice), and SDG 17 (Partnerships)
- Digital literacy, capability, and critical citizenship -beyond skills training toward epistemic agency; the right not to be digitised
- Civic technology and grassroots digital innovation -community-led initiatives, digital activism, and non-institutional pathways to digital participation

### **Important Datelines**

Inform the Chairs as soon as you decide to contribute.

- Submission: May 16, 2026
- Notification: June 5, 2026
- Registration: June 17, 2026
- Camera-ready: June 17, 2026
- Confirmation of attendance (on site vs virtual): June 17, 2026

*Note: The submission deadline is somewhat flexible, providing arrangements are made ahead of time with the chair.*

### **Contribution Types**

- Regular papers [in the proceedings, digital library]
- Short papers (work in progress) [in the proceedings, digital library]
- Posters: two pages [in the proceedings, digital library]
- Posters: slide only [slide-deck posted on [www.iaria.org](http://www.iaria.org)]
- Presentations: slide only [slide-deck posted on [www.iaria.org](http://www.iaria.org)]
- Demos: two pages [posted on [www.iaria.org](http://www.iaria.org)]

### **Paper Format**

- See: <http://www.iaria.org/format.html>
- Before submission, please check and comply with the editorial rules: <http://www.iaria.org/editorialrules.html>

### **Publications**

- Extended versions of selected papers will be published in IARIA Journals: <http://www.iariajournals.org>
- Print proceedings will be available via Curran Associates, Inc.: <http://www.proceedings.com/9769.html>
- Articles will be archived in the free access ThinkMind Digital Library: <http://www.thinkmind.org>

### **Papers Submission**

<https://www.iariasubmit.org/conferences/submit/newcontribution.php?event=DIGITAL+2026+Special>

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### **Registration**

- Each accepted paper needs at least one full registration, before the camera-ready manuscript can be included in the proceedings.
- Registration fees are available at <http://www.iaria.org/registration.html>

### **Contacts**

Chairs: Amizar Omar, [A.Omar4@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:A.Omar4@bradford.ac.uk)

Vishanth Weerakkody, [V.Weerakkody@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:V.Weerakkody@bradford.ac.uk)

Logistics (Steve McGuire): [steve@iaria.org](mailto:steve@iaria.org)