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**Management of  
Social Transformations  
Programme  
National Committee**



**Slovenian National Committee of the  
UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Program (MOST), and  
School of Advanced Social Studies, Nova Gorica, Slovenia**

in cooperation with

**Slovenian Social Science Association**

*cordially invite you to submit paper proposals for the*

## **17<sup>th</sup> Slovenian Social Science Conference**

***Is digital transformation a social transformation?  
Coping with re-emerging social challenges for humanity***

*October 17-18, 2024, Novo mesto, Slovenia*

**Conference Date:** *October 17-18, 2024*

**Location:** *Novo mesto, Slovenia*

**Abstract Submission Deadline:** *September 10, 2024*

**Notification of Acceptance:** *September 15, 2024*

**Full paper submission (not mandatory):** *December 15, 2024*

**Conference fee:** *Free of charge*

**Keynote speaker:** **Jo Ann R. Regan**, Catholic University of America

Jo Ann R. Regan, PhD, MSW, FNAP is the Dean of the National Catholic School of Social Service (NCSSS) at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., USA. NCSSS offers BSW, MSW,

and PhD programs, and a fully online asynchronous clinical practice MSW program. Before coming to NCSWS, she worked for nine years at the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), the national association in the United States representing social work education with over 800 accredited baccalaureate and master's degree programs and educators advancing quality social work education. Dr. Regan led national accreditation, education, research, faculty, student, and digital technology initiatives. Her research and publications have focused on distance and online education and the use of technology for social work education and practice, competency assessment, and accreditation. She was awarded a 2021 Fulbright Scholar research award at Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic where she compared the social work competencies and standards for advancing quality social work education in the U.S. and Czech Republic.

### ***Scope of the Conference:***

Digital transformation and social transformation are intrinsically linked, as the former significantly influences and shapes the latter. Digital transformation involves the integration of digital technology into all areas of society, fundamentally changing how we live, work, and interact. This pervasive shift affects social structures, communication patterns, economic activities, and cultural norms. By altering the accessibility and distribution of information, digital transformation can democratize knowledge, foster social inclusion, and empower marginalized groups. However, it can also generate inequalities and create new forms of social stratification. Therefore, while digital transformation is a critical driver of social transformation, its impact is complex and multifaceted, necessitating careful consideration of both its benefits and challenges.

Besides influencing other aspects of life, digital transformation is revolutionizing pedagogical approaches by reshaping how education is delivered, accessed, and experienced. Integrating digital tools and platforms into educational settings has enabled more personalized and adaptive learning experiences catering to diverse learning styles and needs. Virtual classrooms, online resources, and interactive software have made education more flexible and accessible, breaking down geographical and temporal barriers. This shift has facilitated the adoption of blended learning models, where traditional face-to-face instruction is complemented by digital content, fostering a more engaging and interactive learning environment. Additionally, data analytics and artificial intelligence are being used to track student performance in real time, allowing educators to provide timely feedback and support. However, this transformation also requires educators to develop new digital competencies and pedagogical strategies to leverage these technologies effectively. Consequently, digital transformation is not only enhancing the quality and reach of education but also prompting a re-evaluation of teaching methodologies, curriculum design, and the role of educators in the digital age.

Digital transformation is also significantly impacting the mental well-being of persons, presenting both opportunities and challenges. The advent of digital mental health tools, such as mobile apps, teletherapy platforms, and online support communities, has made mental health services more accessible and flexible. These innovations allow individuals to seek help discreetly and conveniently, breaking down barriers associated with stigma, cost, and geographical limitations. Moreover, digital platforms can offer continuous support and monitoring, providing real-time interventions and personalized treatment plans based on data analytics. However, the digital age

also brings challenges to mental well-being, including increased screen time, social media pressures, and the potential for cyberbullying, all of which can contribute to stress, anxiety, and depression. The rapid pace of digital change can lead to feelings of overwhelm and digital fatigue. Therefore, while digital transformation holds promise for enhancing mental health care, it also necessitates a balanced approach that includes digital literacy, ethical considerations, and strategies to mitigate potential negative impacts on mental well-being.

***Proposed conference tracks and topics:***

**Track 1: Digital Transformation and Social Change**

**Digital Communication and Social-Media:**

- Impact of Social-Media on Social Interactions and Relationships
- Online Activism and Social Movements in the Digital Age
- Ethics and Responsibility in Digital Communication
- Influence of Algorithms on Information Consumption and Perception
- Harnessing Social-Media for Social Good: Case Studies and Best Practices

**Digital Literacy and Skills Development:**

- Integrating Digital Literacy into Formal Education Curricula
- Lifelong Learning in the Digital Era: Opportunities and Challenges
- Digital Skills Training for the Workforce of Tomorrow
- Empowering Citizens through Digital Literacy Programs
- Innovative Approaches to Digital Skills Assessment and Certification

**Digital and sustainable in industry and working environment**

- Digitalization of Manufacturing Processes
- Energy Management and Resource Optimization at Home and in Industrial Settings
- Digital Innovation for Sustainable Product Development with Environmental Considerations
- Smart Cities and Sustainable Urbanization
- Circular Economy Models Enabled by Digital Technologies

**Digital Inclusion and Equity:**

- Bridging the Digital Divide: Strategies for Inclusive Access
- Addressing Socioeconomic Disparities in Digital Literacy
- Promoting Gender Equality in Digital Spaces
- Overcoming Barriers to Technological Adoption in Underserved Communities
- Government Initiatives for Ensuring Digital Inclusion

**Cybersecurity and Privacy in the Digital Age:**

- Emerging Threats and Trends in Cybersecurity

- Safeguarding Personal Data in the Era of Big Data
- Balancing Security and Privacy in Digital Platforms
- Legal and Ethical Implications of Digital Surveillance
- Building Trust in Online Transactions and Communication

## **Track 2: Transformative Pedagogical Approaches**

### **Innovative Teaching Methodologies:**

- Flipped Classroom Models and Active Learning Strategies
- Project-Based Learning: Engaging Students in Real-World Problem Solving
- Gamification and Game-Based Learning in Education
- Experiential Learning: Bridging Theory and Practice
- Student-Centered Approaches to Teaching and Learning

### **Technology Integration in Education:**

- Blended Learning Environments: Balancing Online and Face-to-Face Instruction
- Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality in Education: Immersive Learning Experiences
- Mobile Learning: Leveraging Devices for Anytime, Anywhere Learning
- Adaptive Learning Systems: Personalized Education for Every Student
- AI and Machine Learning in Education: Enhancing Teaching and Learning Outcomes

### **Lifelong Learning and Adult Education:**

- Upskilling and Reskilling Adults for the Future of Work
- Continuing Education Programs for Professional Development
- Digital Literacy Training for Older Adults: Bridging the Generation Gap
- Flexible Learning Pathways for Non-Traditional Learners
- Community-Based Adult Education Initiatives: Case Studies and Success Stories

### **Curriculum Development for Diverse Learning Environments:**

- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Fostering Inclusivity and Equity in Education
- Global Citizenship Education: Preparing Students for a Diverse World
- Environmental and Sustainability Education Across the Curriculum
- Integrating STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics) in Education
- Multimodal Learning: Harnessing Multiple Forms of Representation and Expression

## **Track 3: Mental-wellbeing in the Digital Age**

### **Approaches to Mental Health in a Digitally Connected World:**

- Online Therapy Platforms: Opportunities and Challenges
- Telepsychiatry: Delivering Mental Health Services Remotely
- Digital Mental Health Interventions for Specific Populations (e.g., Youth, Elderly)

- Mental Health Apps and Self-Help Tools: Efficacy and Accessibility
- Digital Biomarkers for Mental Health Assessment and Monitoring

### **Counselling Strategies for Different Demographic Groups:**

- Culturally Competent Counselling in a Digital Context
- Tailoring Counselling Interventions for Adolescents and Young Adults
- Addressing Mental Health Needs of Marginalized and Vulnerable Populations
- Supporting Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Individuals in Digital Spaces
- Counselling Approaches for Aging Populations: Age-Friendly Design and Support

### **The Role of Psychosocial Support in Education:**

- Integrating Mental Health Education into School Curricula
- School-Based Mental Health Services: Models and Best Practices
- Peer Support and Mentorship Programs for Student Well-Being
- Teacher Training in Mental Health Literacy and Support Skills
- Promoting Resilience and Coping Strategies in Educational Settings

### **Interventions for Crisis and Trauma in Digital Contexts:**

- Crisis Intervention Strategies in Online Communities and Social Media Platforms
- Digital Crisis Hotlines and Support Services: Accessibility and Effectiveness
- Trauma-Informed Care in Online Counselling and Support Groups
- Online Crisis Response and Disaster Preparedness: Lessons Learned
- Ethical Considerations in Digital Crisis Intervention and Support Services

### **Submission Guidelines:**

The submission is done in the following stages:

1. **Conference Abstract submission:** via <https://conference.fuds.si/> by 10th of September 2024.
2. **Notification of acceptance:** via email by September 15, 2024
3. **Programme of the conference:** October 5th, 2024
4. **Full paper submission** (not mandatory to ensure conference participation): December 15, 2024 via ConfTool

### **Full paper submission guidelines** (not mandatory to ensure conference participation):

1. **Length of paper:** Between 6,000 - 8,000 words, including references, tables, and figures.
2. **The paper structure:** Title, Abstract, and Keywords (up to 5) and adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style 17th edition (author-date) citing style.
3. **Review process:** All submitted articles will be double-blind peer-reviewed. Authors will receive feedback and, if necessary, requests for revision. The organizing committee is in contact with the editorial company Cambridge Scholars Publishing, to publish the selected full papers through the edited volume. The remaining full papers will be published in the Research in Social Change Journal.

**Contact Information:**

For any queries regarding the call for papers or the conference, please contact:

- **Conference Chair:** Assoc. prof. dr. Tamara Besednjak Valič
- **Email:** [sssc@fuds.si](mailto:sssc@fuds.si)
- **Website:** <https://www.fuds.si/en/research/conference-sssc/>

**Organizing Committee:**

*Prof. dr. Matej Makarovič*, Slovenian National Committee of the UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST), Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto

*Prof. dr. Borut Rončević*, School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, International Sociological organisation

*Assoc. prof. dr. Tamara Besednjak Valič*, Rudolfovo – Science and Technology Centre Novo mesto, Slovenian Social Science Association

*Asist. prof. dr. Erika Džajić Uršič*, Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto, Rudolfovo – Science and Technology Centre Novo mesto

*Asist. Janja Lozar*, School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica, Faculty of Information Studies in Novo mesto

*Administrative support:*

*Nina Humar*, School of Advanced Social Studies in Nova Gorica

*We look forward to your contributions and participation in what promises to be a stimulating and enriching conference.*