

Call for registration:

THE PROMISE AND PERILS OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR GOVERNING DIGITAL PLATFORMS

*Global Transformations & Governance Challenges
Leiden University, the Netherlands (hybrid format)*

18-19 January 2024

Policymakers, civil society organisations, and academics around the world are increasingly framing the governance of digital platforms in terms of human rights, and seeking to extend the principles of human rights law to govern digital platforms. Yet while human rights offer a salient language of social justice, it is unclear whether they are legally and conceptually adequate to address the most important political, social and economic questions and conflicts raised by the 'platformisation' of social life. Critical literature suggests that the individualistic legal protections and non-confrontational language of human rights have historically been as likely to stabilise state and corporate power as to undermine it. Popular discourses promoting human rights as the natural or obvious legal and normative framework for platform governance have yet to see any sustained self-reflexivity over the potential and limits of such framings in this domain.

This two-day hybrid workshop, funded by the Global Transformations and Governance Challenges Initiative at Leiden University, aims to provide a space for critical and interdisciplinary reflections on the evolving relationship between human rights and digital platforms. We hope this will be the start of an ongoing conversation around the potential and limits of human rights as a tool for social justice struggles in the context of platformisation, and on the potential need for alternative norms and frameworks.

The workshop is open to all, but advance registration before January 15th is necessary. **Please register here:** <https://forms.gle/WGPjgE8oUMAEyYs8>.

All scheduled sessions will take place at Universiteit Leiden Locatie Wijnhaven, Turfmarkt 99, 2511 DP Den Haag. The sessions on 18 January will take place in *Room 3.48*, The session on 19 January will take place in *Room 3.60*. Those registered to join us online will receive a Zoom link a day before the event.

Convenors:

- Dr. Jelena Belic, *Lecturer, Leiden University – Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences*
- Dr. Matthew Canfield, *Assistant Professor, Leiden University – Faculty of Law*
- Rachel Griffin, *Ph.D. Candidate, Sciences Po Law School*
- Dr. Henning Lahmann, *Assistant Professor, Leiden University – Faculty of Law*
- Dr. Barrie Sander, *Assistant Professor, Leiden University – Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs*

Programme: Thursday 18th January
(Room 3.48, Universiteit Leiden Locatie Wijnhaven)

9:30 – 10:00

Registration and coffee

10:00 – 10:30

Introduction

10:30 – 12:15

Human rights in the global platform economy

Discussants: Barrie Sander (Leiden) and Beatriz Botero Arcila (Sciences Po)

‘Reconciling Human Rights and Anti-Colonial Demands for a Just Digital Economic Reorder: Towards a Redistributive Regulation for Digital Social Security Programmes’
Serena Natile (Warwick University)

‘The Problem of Regulating Digital Intermediaries: Insights from the Public Utility Doctrine’
Leander Stähler and Charlotte Ducuing (KU Leuven)

‘EU and the Standards of Digital Civilisation’
Petros Terzis and Joris Van Hoboken (University of Amsterdam)

12:15 – 13:30

Lunch

13:30 – 15:15

Human rights, platforms and political mobilisations

Discussant: Matt Canfield (Leiden)

‘Claiming Citizenship, Nationalism, and Politics on Web 3 Platforms: A Case Study of the Rohingya Digital Diaspora’
Suruchi Mazumdar (OP Jindal Global University) and Haiqing Yu (RMIT University Australia)

‘Fashionable Women’s Rights and Political Violence in a Digitally Mediated World’
Bahareh Badiei (Rutgers University)

‘Virtual protests and the protection of digital rights in the African human rights law’
Joris Joël Fomba Tala (University of Douala)

15:15 – 16:00

Coffee break

16:00 – 17:45

Human rights & platform accountability

Discussants: Henning Lahmann (Leiden) and Tasniem Anwar (VU Amsterdam)

‘Review Ceremonies: Why Online Adjudication is Messy’
Moritz Schramm (Humboldt University)

‘Platform companies’ responsibility and the governance gap’
Catherine MacDonald and Kebene Wodajo (University of St. Gallen)

‘Two Challenges for Measuring Human Rights Impacts of Corporate Conduct in the ICT Sector’
Ramiro Alvarez Ugarte (Universidad de Buenos Aires)

Programme: Friday 19th January
(Room 3.60, Universiteit Leiden Locatie Wijnhaven)

- 10:00 – 10:30** **Arrival and coffee**
- 10:30 – 12:15** **Social and economic rights in the age of platforms**
Discussants: Vladimir Bogoeski (University of Amsterdam) and Ben Wagner (TU Delft)
- ‘Decent Work for Platform Domestic Workers – Human Rights as a Challenge to Inadequate Protection’
Natalie Sedacca (Durham) and Joe Atkinson (Southampton)
- ‘Housing Data: Using a Social Rights Approach to Protect the Right to Housing’
David Eliot (University of Ottawa) and Alexandre Petitclerc (Université de Montréal)
- ‘Balancing Digital Inclusion and Human Autonomy: Exploring the Right to Digital Exclusion’
Pietra Vaz Diógenes da Silva and Sofia Chang Nogueira (Federal University of Minas Gerais)
- 12:15 – 13:30** **Lunch**
- 13:30 – 15:15** **Platforms and shifting understandings of ‘human’ rights**
Discussants: Jelena Belic (Leiden) and Rebecca Mignot-Mahdavi (Sciences Po)
- ‘Human Rights and the Governance of ‘Terrorism’ and ‘Violent Extremism’ Online: Moving From a Framework of Legal Norms Towards Emergent Infra-Legalities Dynamics’
Gavin Sullivan (Edinburgh University)
- ‘Dignity Over Transparency’
Liat Lavi (University College of London: Bezalel Academy)
- ‘Beyond Freedom of Expression: The limits of human rights frameworks for moderating AI-generated speech’
Louisa Bartolo and Dominique Carlon (Queensland University of Technology)
- 15:15 – 16:00** **Coffee break**
- 16:00 – 17:45** **Human rights in content moderation**
Discussants: Rachel Griffin (Sciences Po) and Paddy Leerssen (University of Amsterdam)
- ‘International Human Rights Law in Content Moderation and the Risks of “Misdiagnosing” Its Limits’
Stefania Di Stefano (Geneva Graduate Institute)
- ‘Free Speech Globalization’
Molly K. Land (University of Connecticut)
- ‘A Third-world Critique on Human Rights-Based Approach to Content Moderation: Can an African Approach offer an Alternative Solution?’
Yohannes Eneyew Ayalew (Monash University)
- 17:45 – 18:00** **Closing remarks**