UNITAC Conference
Urban Tech for Equity

International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities

Hamburg, Germany | June 18 to 20 2024

HAMBURG
UNITAC
United Nations Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities

ABOUT

UNITAC Hamburg is organizing a hybrid conference from **18th to 20th of June 2024** to bring together academic institutions and practitioners to discuss how data-driven urban technologies can reduce social inequality. In our research and in projects we focus on the question how local residents from marginalized communities (often in informal settlements) engage with technology and we reflect the ambivalence between using "tech for good" and knowing that the same technology can create oppression and surveillance. We are tech developers and optimists and we want to share knowledge about how partners in other countries and other contexts are implementing urban and regional data projects that support empowerment and equity for local communities.

The conference takes place in the context of the "International guidelines on people-centred smart cities" process, which is being coordinated by UN-Habitat and discussed with all UN member states. Our focus is key consideration one in the concept paper: "Ensure the equal participation and appreciation of people, including women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and people in vulnerable situations, and ensure that digital and other new technologies contribute to reducing spatial, economic, social and digital inequalities, overcoming economic and social development challenges and supporting respect for human rights for inclusive cities." In line with UNITAC's research focus, the main emphasis of the conference is on **the spatial aspects of inequality**.

Web: https://unitac.un.org/Initiatives

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

AYONA DATTA
University College London

NANCY ODENDAAL
University of Cape Town

DAVID NEMER
University of Virginia

AGENDA DAY 01

Time	Session	Speaker
9:30 - 10:00	**Registration and welcome**	
10:00 - 10:15	**Introduction remarks**	**Gesa Ziemer** UNITAC
10:15 - 10:45	**International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities**	**Milou Jansen** UN-Habitat
10:45 - 11:15	**Keynote 1**	**Ayona Datta** University College London
11:15 - 12:00	**Critical friend 1 & public discussion**	**Pontus Westerberg** Teaching Public Service in the Digital Age
12:00 - 13:30	**Lunch**	
13:30 - 14:45	**Podium 1 - Collaborating**	**Moderator: Sophie Naue** UNITAC **Speaker 1: Ruth Nelson** Delft University of Technology **Speaker 2: Dênis Pacheco** Gerando Falcões **Speaker 3: Yael Borofsky** ETH Zürich
14:45 - 15:45	**Tools demonstration Walk and talk and coffee**	**UNITAC**
15:45 - 16:00	**Break**	
16:00 - 16:30	**Keynote 2**	**Nancy Odendaal** University of Cape Town
16:30 - 17:00	**Critical friend 2 & public discussion**	**Hilke Berger** HafenCity University
17:00 - 17:30	**Day recap and round of results**	**Moderator: Luca Mora** Edinburgh Napier University **Critical friend 1: Pontus Westerberg** Teaching Public Servants in the Digital Age **Critical friend 2: Hilke Berger** HafenCity University **Podium 1 moderator: Sophie Naue** UNITAC

AGENDA DAY 02

Time	Session	Participants
09:30 - 09:45	**Welcome and recap**	**Gesa Ziemer** UNITAC
09:45 - 11:00	**Podium 2 - Representing**	**Moderator: Livia Schaeffer Nonose** UNITAC **Speaker 1: Ollie Ballinger** University College London **Speaker 2: Mailén Garcia** DataGénero **Speaker 3: Laura Mugeha** Code for Africa
11:00 - 11:15	**Break**	
11:15 - 11:45	**Keynote 3**	**David Nemer** University of Virginia
11:45 - 12:30	**Critical friend 3 & public discussion**	**Alexander Jachnow** Namibia University of Science and Technology
12:30 - 14:00	**Lunch**	
14:00 - 15:15	**Podium 3 - Implementing**	**Moderator: Michael Hathorn** UNITAC **Speaker 1: Alexis Gatoni Sebarenzi** University of Rwanda **Speaker 2: Siddarth Hande** Kabadiwalla Connect **Speaker 3: Sage Cammers-Goodwin** University of Twente
15:15 - 16:15	**Walk and talk and coffee**	**Gesa Ziemer** UNITAC
16:15 - 17:00	**Daily recap and round of results**	**Moderator: Luca Mora** Edinburgh Napier University **Critical friend 3: Alexander Jachnow** Namibia University of Science and Technology **Podium 2 moderator: Livia Schaeffer Nonose** UNITAC **Podium 3 moderator: Michael Hathorn** UNITAC

09:30 - 09:45	**Welcome and recap**	**Gesa Ziemer** UNITAC
09:45 - 11:00	**Podium 4 – Maintaining**	**Moderator: Lisa Reudenbach** UNITAC **Speaker 1: Anindita Sarkar** University of Bonn, University of Delhi **Speaker 2: Omar Nagati** CLUSTER **Speaker 3: Dennis Mwaniki** UN-Habitat
11:00 - 11:15	**Break**	
11:15 - 11:45	**Closing dialogue**	**Moderator: Sophie Naue & Livia Schaeffer Nonose** UNITAC **Speaker 1: Alexis Gatoni Sebarenzi** University of Rwanda **Speaker 2: Sage Cammers-Goodwin** University of Twente **Speaker 3: Mailén Garcia** DataGénero
11:45 - 12:00	**Reflections on capacity building**	**Pontus Westerberg** Teaching Public Service in the Digital Age
12:00 - 12:45	**Closing reflections in the context of the International Guidelines on People-Centred Smart Cities**	**Moderator: Milou Jansen** UN-Habitat **Lennard Kehl** GIZ **Luca Mora** Edinburgh Napier University **Gesa Ziemer** UNITAC

PANELS

The interface between society and technology is addressed under the four action points: collaborating, representing, implementing and maintaining in relation to digital data-based projects that engage with vulnerable groups.

ACTION 1 - COLLABORATING:
We focus on the practice of collaboration rather than using the term participation. This involves the question of how digital applications can enable activities on an equal footing, in which power imbalances are minimized and all partners can contribute equally. Local knowledge and local interests are essential for this and the right skills for creating project constellations for a collaborative working environment. How do we collaborate to make active co-creation happen?

ACTION 2 - REPRESENTING:
All projects are based on data collections. We are well aware of the phenomenon of "missing data", which means that data for a particular analysis is not available at all or the data that is available is not representative. Non-existent data can lead to a fundamental "epistemic injustice" - the title of the book by philosopher Miranda Fricker - which critically highlights disadvantaged groups as "hermeneutically marginalized". How can we collect missing data and how can we integrate them into a broader data ecosystem of a city or region without this being a disadvantage for the local community?

ACTION 3 - IMPLEMENTING:
As part of the transformative research that we represent, we address specific social inequities and aim to support a positive, sustainable change. We try to achieve "actionable knowledge" that generates a practical effect and is understood as an intervention in real-world conditions, i.e. that goes far beyond prototyping. What needs to be considered in the implementation phase of urban tech projects?

PANELS

ACTION 4 - MAINTAINING:

One of the important principles of transformative research and projects is cooperation with local stakeholders as well as the uptake and maintenance of technologies and activities. We seek to create trust, ownership, and responsibility also by discussing the limits of our data collections and tools. How can ownership and responsibility be created so that local institutions and stakeholders continue to use technologies in the long term, adapt them to their evolving needs, and develop new ones?

All speakers, panel guests, critical friends, observers, moderators, and of course our audience, that is eager to discuss, should reflect about the use of urban technology with vulnerable groups in the context of these four aspects. The results of various discussions will be documented, summarized and published open source soon after the conference as inspiration for the UN-Habitat International Guideline process and further research and projects.

VENUE

HafenCity University Hamburg
City Science Lab
Hongkongstr. 8

ONLINE

UNITED NATIONS
OFFICE OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

UN-HABITAT

hcu HafenCity
Universität
Hamburg