



INTRODUCTION

Rapidly evolving technologies are impacting labour markets. Whether it will be through increased automation of cognitive tasks, or the development and adaptation of algorithmic management practices in app-based operations and traditional firms, many of these changes are likely to be profound. With profound change comes both great opportunities and challenges. From a Nordic perspective, the long-standing consensus over the merits of technological advancement, favouring mitigation of adverse effects over prohibiting regulation, is challenged. Among the challenges are possible adverse effects from technological unemployment, the rise of flexible or precarious work arrangements on gig-platforms, limited access to social security and benefits from work, or safety, privacy, and ethical concerns. Opportunities in the form of more and better prospects to employment and labour market inclusion, entrepreneurship, innovation, and productivity increases, and more.

In order to further our understanding of these developments, more high-quality research is needed. Such research will likely benefit from perspectives from different disciplines. Trends at the firm level and labour markets, developments in law and jurisprudence, as well as perspectives from entrepreneurs, systems developers, workers, and labour market actors are all crucial.

We therefore call for research contributions on a broad spectrum of topics related to labour market developments and algorithmic management. The scope includes everything from flexible work arrangements through gig-economy platforms, algorithmic management practices in “traditional” firms, and effects from new and older regulations, to issues relating to data, surveillance, and ethics.

We invite research contributions from backgrounds in business, economics, sociology and humanities, law, computer engineering and data science, preferably with an interest over such developments in the Nordic region. Applications from academia, non-profits, policymakers, and other stakeholders are all welcome.

BUSINESS, ECONOMICS & TECHNOLOGY

Multi-sided platform economies and digital platforms provide a technological means for matching supply and demand in real-time and on potentially unprecedented scales. This has given rise to a wide variation of new business models that allows for more flexible and adaptable organisations of work on behalf of both job seekers and firms looking to access human capital. This development unfolds against the backdrop of a wider technology-driven structural change in labour markets in what has broadly been coined as the future of work.

Platforms oftentimes utilise algorithms and algorithmic management practices to facilitate matchmaking and to lead and direct work. Both the matchmaking as such and the implementation of algorithms to facilitate transactions have substantial impact on the development of labour markets within a growing number of sectors. This development creates new opportunities but also raises organisational issues on both firm- and labour-market level. What type of work and human capital is supplied and demanded through these platforms? Are there qualitative differences across sectors or across the economic geography between urban and rural regions? How is the distribution of within- and between organisational activities, regulations and governance mechanisms affected? Are the boundaries of firms changing? How will the dynamics within the labour market change? How are employees, contractors and employers affected as groups?

We invite contributions from the fields of business and economics or related fields dealing with the economics of technology that may examine, among others, the following aspects:

- New business models, relationships to traditional enterprises, and market access requirements related to multi-sided platform
- Changing boundaries and theories of the firm: how platform-based models are changing the boundaries and role of the organisation in the economy
- Shifting dynamics and conditions in the labour market, including developments associated with the so-called gig economy or sharing economy related to multi-sided platform economies

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- New ways of working, managing workforce, and the future organisation of work in newer and older firms
- Asymmetric information and trust-building
- Regional and sectoral variation in the development and effects of multi-sided platform economies in the labour market
- Variations in the use and impact of multi-sided labour platforms across different types of work and human capital
- Institutional change and conflicts of interest related to the development of multi-sided platforms in different sectors
- Effects of algorithmic management and digital labour platforms on innovation and entrepreneurship
- Participatory design in building platform infrastructure and/or algorithmic management practices, digital regulation and compliance in digital environments

SOCIOLOGY & HUMANITIES

Digital platforms and online marketplaces for goods and services operate across a wide variety of labour markets and economic contexts. From developed to developing countries, platforms have lowered barriers to participate in some types of labour markets, but also often changed the rules of participation and rewards.

We welcome contributions from academics, non-profits, policymakers, and other stakeholders that address the ways social and cultural forces shape both opportunity and inequality for diverse populations of platform workers. Studies that focus on demographics (age, gender, education, labour market status etc.) and inequality are particularly welcome. We invite papers from the social sciences and humanities that address, among others, the following topics:

- The role of marginalized peoples on platforms - as consumers, clients, and as workers within platform companies, and/or as platform workers
- Intersectional studies on platform work (race, gender, class, etc.)
- Critical studies of algorithms and data
- The role of the local in global platforms and businesses – local politics, labour markets, identities, geography
- Reputation, reviews, discrimination and equity
- Policy analysis or interventions targeting diversity, inclusivity, and sustainability

LAW, LAW & ECONOMICS

We invite academics and stakeholders, such as law and policymakers, representatives of the temporary staffing industry, platform companies, and workers, to present papers across a range of legal research topics. In particular, we welcome papers that explore alternatives for hard law regulation, such as soft law, local or regional pilots, the 'right to challenge', and self-regulation:

- Papers that reflect empirical legal studies linked to one of the suggested topics are also most welcome
- Stimulating entrepreneurship and protecting workers in the platform economy
- Legal classification of platform work in labour law, taxation law and consumer protection law
- Social security systems and the platform economy
- Discrimination in the platform economy, both in relation to workers and consumers
- Occupational health and safety in the platform economy
- Liability and risk: current practices, alternatives and implications for allocating liability and risk
- Taxation: the impact of tax design choices on the direction of the platform economy and possibilities to decrease the informal economy through platforms
- Consumer protection law and/or competition law: impact on establishing a level playing field
- Dispute resolution: role of arbitration, courts, and regulation



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SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Those wishing to participate in the conference by presenting a research paper or report are requested to submit an extended abstract (around 800 words) by Monday September 30th. Applicants should include their title, institutional or organisational affiliation, and indicate the division to which their work belongs (business & economics, sociology & humanities, or law). Abstracts should be sent to stockholm@reshapingwork.net. You may also contact Johan Eklund (johan.eklund@bth.se) with any questions you may have about contributions to this conference. Notification of acceptance will be sent by October 31st.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The Reshaping Work Nordic conference will take place on February the 20th and 21st, 2020 in Stockholm, Sweden. For practical information, please consult our website reshapingwork.net. To ensure you stay up-to-date, please sign up for our newsletter or follow us on Facebook & Twitter.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Johan Eklund, Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum and Blekinge Institute of Technology (Head of Scientific Committee)

Joakim Wernberg, Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum (Business and Economics)

Martin Andersson, Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum and Blekinge Institute of Technology (Business and Economics)

Hakan Ozalp, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Business and Economics)

Samuel Engblom, TCO (Law)

Anna Ilsøe, University of Copenhagen (Sociology and Humanities)

ORGANIZERS

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