



6. Fourth Industrial Revolution and Digitalisation

INVITATION: Working Group

1. Marine Studies, 2. Aviation and Aeronautical Studies, 3. Automotive, 4. Energy, 5. Space Study and Square Kilometer Array, 6. **Fourth Industrial Revolution and Digitalisation**, 7. Natural Sciences (Biotechnological studies), 8. Health Studies/Medicine, 9. Feminist, Womanist, Bosadi Theorisations, 10. Student Support and Co-Curricular Activities.

Working Group Session

You are cordially invited to the 1st 2026 series of CGS-facilitated Catalytic Niche Area Working Group meetings for 4IR and Digitalisation. The theme for series 1 is “Advancing Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity in Catalytic Niche Area Research”. In this series, we will anchor our 2026 approach by reaffirming the commitment to expansive conceptualisations of, and multidisciplinary avenues of participation into, the catalytic niche areas. Our framing for this session is: Digitalisation as technological, social, ethical, economic and educational transformation.

Readings:

- Floridi, L. et al. (2018) AI4People: An ethical framework for a good AI society. *Minds and Machines* 28. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11023-018-9482-5>
- Couldry, N. (2019) Preface. In: *The costs of connection: how data is colonizing human life and appropriating it for capitalism* <https://oasis.unisa.ac.za/search/?searchtype=t&SORT=D&searcharg=the+costs+of+connection&searchscope=1>

Discussion prompts:

- How do we move beyond techno-deterministic accounts of 4IR?
- What roles do humanities and social sciences play in digital futures?
- How can digitalisation research remain contextually responsive in the Global South?
- How can concepts such as power, coloniality, narrative and ideology help us critically interrogate digitalisation and AI?
- How do ethics, power and coloniality complicate 4IR narratives?
- What does digitalisation mean beyond efficiency and innovation?



Thursday, 19 March 2026
11:00 – 12:00

REGISTER HERE

<https://forms.office.com/r/SmyVaDat2F>

ENQUIRIES:

CGScatalyticnicheareas@unisa.ac.za

FACILITATOR:

Prof Jessica Murray

