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Dialogue and dissent

Residential Institute on
**Frontiers and Frames
for a New Digitality**
2025

Call for Proposals

Organized by School of Digital Justice, IT for Change



Residential Institute on Frontiers and Frames for a New Digitality 2025

Organized by the School of Digital Justice, IT for Change

Supported by the Fair Green and Global Alliance

Dates: March 2025 (final dates to be confirmed)

Location: South East Asia (final location to be confirmed)

Application Deadline: 30 November 2024, 11.59 PM IST

How to Apply?

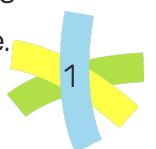
To apply, please complete this [online form](#) by the deadline. For clarifications and queries, write to us at schoolofdigitaljustice@itforchange.net.

Overview

The digital is an overarching phenomenon with cross-sectoral implications for social and economic structures, relationships and materialities, and not always for the better. We have witnessed to crisis after crisis of a digitality gone wrong, as seen in the rise of extreme concentration of wealth and deepening inequalities, the entrenched influence and control of platform corporations across all sectors, the precipitating environmental and climate degradation, the erosion of democratic principles and safeguards, and a rapidly deteriorating public sphere.

Today, there is greater social consciousness about the need to rein in digitalization's current trajectories, alongside heightened concern over the issues emerging from the generative AI boom. This is mirrored in the escalating interest in regulating AI from states, regional blocs, multilateral agencies, and civil society actors. However, these interventions continue to be hindered by the lack of inclusion of voices from social movements and a marked divergence between the concerns of the Global North and the long-term economic justice interests of the Global South.

This divergence affects how CSOs, especially those from the South and at the margins, are able to engage with these processes. They often find themselves crowded out of policy discussions due to the outsized influence of Northern and industry actors. Challenging injustices in the digital era therefore requires new tactics that focus on strengthening Southern leadership. Building an enduring local-to-global movement for change demands perspective building, deepening next-generation leadership in civic spaces, fostering South-South cooperation, and promoting cross-movement dialogue and coalition building—all firmly rooted in a Southern standpoint of equity and justice.



Objectives and Learning Outcomes

IT for Change is pleased to open the call for applications for the second edition of its residential institute on 'Frontiers and Frames for a New Digitality'. With the fault lines of contestation being redefined for social movements across sectors, and the digital becoming a more prominent and inevitable agenda for advocacy, this institute aims to equip civil society actors with the necessary vocabulary, tools, and capacities to effectively frame and approach emerging digital intersections in their work, as well as to develop strategies for effective political organization.

The institute will enable emerging civil society leaders in Global South spaces to:

- Learn about, critically examine, and assess unfolding trends in the political economy and the impact of platformization and AI.
- Make relevant connections and chart solutions and intervention pathways for effective political organization.
- Become part of an ongoing community of activist-scholars, development professionals, and researchers from the Global South to strengthen Southern perspective-building on digital justice.
- Map and identify common struggles across regions, providing avenues for new and collective models of resistance, while enhancing the collective bargaining capacity of the Global South on the international stage.

This institute is part of IT for Change's flagship pedagogical initiative– School of Digital Justice– which aims to further the vision of re-imagining and realizing socio-structural transformation for a just digital economy. The School of Digital Justice seeks to democratize discourse and perspective-building on the digital through legal-institutional, feminist, and political economy approaches.



About the Institute

The institute will introduce participants to the political economy of the digital and provide an overview of critical trends, developments, and debates. Indicative areas we will explore include:

1. Data Capitalism and Intelligence Corporations

- **The Intelligence Corporation:** A primer on the platform business model, data capital, and the new phase of knowledge capitalism, including the transition from the industrial corporation to the intelligence corporation.
- **Historicizing Big Tech's Monopoly:** Exploring Big Tech's market power, the nexus between financialisation and datafication, e-commerce and platform value chains, and the privatization of the digital commons.
- **Global Digital Governance Deficits:** Challenges of enforcing corporate accountability in global data value chains, the legacy of World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).
- **Policy Issues and Responses:** Big Tech regulation and containing market power, recent trends in data policy and governance, and moving toward a rule of law for the digital economy.

2. Feminist Visions of Digital Justice

- **The Digital Economy through a feminist lens:** Feminist perspectives on digital economy, labor and future of work, social reproduction and datafication.
- **Feminist Social Contract for a New Digital Economic Future:** A feminist digital welfare state, gender-inclusive public infrastructures, and transformative imaginaries of the platform economy.
- **Feminist Digital Publics:** Algorithmic hate, platform accountability debates, and feminist techno-political imaginaries for governing the digital public sphere.

3. Digitalization and Future of Work

- **Countering Algorithmic Management:** Data-based worker surveillance, the tyranny of an algorithmic workplace, and the critical role of worker data rights.
- **Decent Work in the Platform Economy:** Examining ILO debates on worker rights in the AI era, new frontiers for decent work in the platform economy, and national innovations in labour regulation.
- **Challenges and Opportunities for Worker Organization and Mobilization:** Unpacking institutional challenges to traditional unionization, lessons from new forms of worker political organizing, and the rise of worker-led digital platform models.

4. Data and AI governance

- **New frontiers for data and AI governance:** Exploring the Global Digital Compact and emerging arrangements for regulation of data and AI.
- **Critical Policy Approaches to Data:** Analyzing key concepts of 'cross-border data flows', data commons for the SDGs, data justice principles, and data stewardship models for the Global South.
- **Comparing data governance approaches:** Investigating trends in US, EU, China, and India; unpacking the idea of technological sovereignty; and exploring data governance for digital industrial policy.

5. Data-enabled Governance and the State

- **The Rise of Digitalized Citizen Infrastructure:** Examining datafication in critical development sectors like health, education, and agriculture, alongside the, marketization of state programs and public services, privatization of public resources, and the concept of government as a platform.
- **Digital Dispossession and Citizen Rights in the Digital Polity:** Analyzing datafication of state and governance systems, the introduction of AI-based automated governance, data-driven surveillance, and their impact on citizen rights.

Who can Apply?

To be considered for a place in the institute, applicants must:

1. Reside and/or work in the Global South.
2. Be proficient in English (the institute will be transacted in English).

The institute is ideally suited for:

- Civil society activists, scholars/researchers, program managers, or development practitioners from the Global South, working on digital rights, climate justice and biodiversity, labor issues, gender justice, trade justice, or international development politics.
- Individuals curious about how digitalization has transformed their fields/domains of research and eager to understand legal and public policy shifts.
- Those interested in exploring intersections of law, technology, and policy, as well as the dynamics of the data economy and its implications for development, human rights, social justice, gender equality, and labor rights.
- People in a position to make concrete, strategic changes within their current roles.

While we prioritize building institutional capacities, we also encourage change-makers who work in an independent capacity to apply.

What to Expect

The institute offers an exciting opportunity for participants to learn from leading activists, thinkers, and experts in the field who will serve as resource persons throughout the sessions.

Through readings, lectures, case-study sessions, and group activities, participants will:

- Broaden their understanding of datafication and digitalization of our economy and society, and define the key challenges for digital rights, global justice and democratic governance in the era of digital capitalism.
- Explore theoretical frameworks on platform economy, digitization of political economic relations and the idea of citizenship within the digital paradigm.
- Gain insights into current policy debates on the digital, and emerging faultlines in the international developmental context.
- Explore further research and advocacy of synchronous projects along with opportunities for collaborative work.
- Meet and develop long-term relationships with a committed community working at the forefront of social change.

Cost

IT for Change will cover lodging and meals for all participants. Accommodation will be provided on a twin-sharing basis.

Organizations nominating team members are encouraged to cover the travel costs for their applicants. A limited number of travel fellowships are available for participants or organizations unable to fund travel. (If a travel fellowship is required, please indicate this in the application form.)

Venue & Accommodation

The residential institute will be held for five days in March 2025 in Southeast Asia (final dates and location to be confirmed). Participants are expected to arrive one day in advance and stay for the entire duration of the course.

All participants must have current and valid travel documents, including a passport and visa.

Applications are open until November 30, 2024. Results will be announced by December 15, 2024.

About the organizer

Founded in 2000, IT for Change (ITfC) is an NGO based in Bengaluru, India, and is in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. For over two decades, ITfC has worked to create a society where digital technologies contribute to human rights, social justice, and equity. Through research, model building, and policy advocacy, ITfC critically examines the digital paradigms of development, aiming to bridge different sectors and movements in the global struggle for an equitable digital society. To learn more about IT for Change, visit <https://itforchange.net/>.

The Residential Institute on Frontiers and Frames for a New Digitality is supported by the Fair, Green and Global Alliance.

