

COST Action CA19136 - NET4Age-Friendly

International interdisciplinary network on health and wellbeing in an age-friendly digital world

Policies, Technologies, and Entrepreneurship for Digitalization of Society

Training School

26-28 September 2023

University Ss Cyril and Methodius in Skopje, Faculty for Computer Science and Engineering

Venue: Faculty for Computer Science and Engineering (FINKI), ul.Rudzer Boshkovikj 16, Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia

Goal

In today's rapidly evolving world, digital transformation has become a driving force shaping our society, economy, and everyday lives. This training program aims to equip students and researchers with an interest in the healthy living environments with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives necessary to navigate the complex landscape of digitalization, new technologies and drive positive change through innovation, entrepreneurial thinking and policy influence.

The overall objective of the training school is to stimulate an international and interdisciplinary community of researchers and other stakeholders with a comprehensive understanding of the policies, technologies, and entrepreneurship aspects at stake with the digitalization of society. This includes exploring the theoretical foundations, practical applications, tools and technologies, as well as societal implications of digital transformation.

There are several main specific objectives of NET4Age-Friendly COST Action and the Training School:

- **Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Encourage interdisciplinary collaboration among participants from diverse backgrounds, including doctoral students, researchers, policymakers, and industry professionals. By fostering collaboration, the training program aims to facilitate knowledge exchange, foster innovative thinking, and inspire cross-sector partnerships.
- **Develop Analytical and Critical Thinking Skills:** Enhance participants' analytical and critical thinking skills by engaging them in discussions, case studies, and interactive sessions. The program aims to empower participants to evaluate the social, economic, ethical, and policy dimensions of digitalization and develop informed perspectives.
- **Equip Participants with Practical Knowledge and Tools:** Provide participants with practical knowledge and tools that enable them to navigate the complex digital transformation landscape. This includes understanding policy frameworks, leveraging emerging technologies, and developing entrepreneurial and innovation capabilities relevant to the digital era.

- Promote Ethical and Inclusive Digitalization: Emphasize the importance of ethical considerations and social inclusivity in the digitalization process through social innovation and multi-stakeholder engagement. The training school aims to instill a sense of responsibility among participants to ensure that digital transformation benefits all members of society while addressing potential risks and challenges.
- Facilitate Networking and Collaboration Opportunities: Create a conducive environment for networking and collaboration among participants, guest speakers, and experts in the field. The program intends to foster connections leading to future research collaborations, joint projects, and professional development opportunities in the digitalization domain.
- By achieving these goals, the training school aspires to empower participants to become well-rounded scholars and practitioners who can contribute to advancing policies, technologies, and entrepreneurship for the digitalization of society.

Call for Trainees

The NET4Age-Friendly Training School is a multidisciplinary event open to professionals, researchers, and Ph.D. students with a professional interest in the topic. Any interested applicant must complete the [APPLICATION FORM](#).

Criteria for selected trainees

Applicants shall be engaged in an official research program as a PhD Student or postdoctoral fellow or can be employed by, or affiliated to, an institution, organization, or legal entity which has within its remit a clear association with health promotion or disease prevention.

Trainees eligible for reimbursement are from COST Full Member Countries (Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, The Netherlands, The Republic of North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and United Kingdom), COST Near Neighbor Countries (NNC) or Approved European RTD Organizations.

The selected international applicants (trainees) will benefit from a Trainee Grant to participate in the activities of the Training School from the 26th to the 28th of September 2023. This grant is expected to cover the long-distance travel expenses (by train, ferry, bus, plane, or car). Furthermore, the international trainees will receive a fixed daily allowance of 110 EUR, which is expected to cover the accommodation in Skopje, meals and local transportation. Each application will be individually evaluated along with the total grant awarded for the 4 days.

The selected applicants (trainees) from North Macedonia will benefit from a Trainee Grant to participate in the activities of the Training School based on the distance to and from Skopje and the accommodation needs. This grant will be individually discussed and agreed.

Selected trainees shall create an e-COST profile at <https://e-services.cost.eu> including bank details prior to accepting their e-COST invitation. They shall submit via e-COST a completed online travel reimbursement request within 30 calendar days after the end date of the approved activity.

Trainers

- ✓ Ivan Chorbev
- ✓ Carina Dantas
- ✓ Willeke van Staalduinen
- ✓ Mara Diaconu
- ✓ Others to be confirmed.

Training topics

We are excited that you are part of this program and at the opportunities it will provide to you!

The training will revolve around the following topics:

Policies

- Data Privacy and Protection
- Cybersecurity and Digital Trust
- Digital Governance and Regulation
- Digital Inclusion and Broadband Connectivity
- Digital Rights and Ethical Considerations
- Open Data and Transparency
- Digital Education and Skills Development
- Digital Health and Telemedicine
- Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity
- Smart Cities and Sustainable smart eco-friendly environments
- Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation
- Digital Literacy and Digital Citizenship.

Technologies

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning
- Internet of Things (IoT)
- Big Data Analytics
- Blockchain Technology
- Cloud Computing
- Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR)
- 5G and Next-Generation Networks
- Robotics and Automation
- Edge Computing
- Quantum Computing
- Biometrics and Identity Management
- Green Technologies and Sustainability

Entrepreneurship

- Digital Startup Ecosystem
- Business Model Innovation
- Digital Marketing and Customer Acquisition
- E-commerce and Online Marketplaces
- Digital Product Development and Innovation

- Funding and Financing for Digital Ventures
- Intellectual Property and Legal Considerations
- Scaling and International Expansion
- Digital Transformation in Traditional Industries
- Social Entrepreneurship and Impact Investing
- Agile Entrepreneurship and Lean Startup Methodology
- Leadership and Team Building in Digital Ventures

Discussion

The digitalization of society has become an undeniable force reshaping the way we live, work, and interact with one another. From the proliferation of smart devices and the Internet of Things to the advancements in artificial intelligence, blockchain, and data analytics, digital technologies are transforming industries, economies, and the fabric of our daily lives. In this context, understanding the interplay between policies, technologies, and entrepreneurship is crucial for navigating the complex challenges and harnessing the immense opportunities the digital era presents.

Policies play a pivotal role in shaping the evolution of society, including the challenges that arise from digitalization. They establish the legal, regulatory, and ethical frameworks that govern digital technologies, protect individual rights, ensure data privacy and security, and promote fair competition. But go beyond legal and regulatory aspects: effective policies encourage innovation, foster trust, and balance the need for technological advancement with the societal impact and ethical considerations. Policy initiatives addressing citizen empowerment, multi-stakeholder engagement, trusting communities, ecosystem building and social innovation are essential for creating a sustainable and equitable society with digital inclusion.

Technologies are at the heart of the digitalization of society, driving innovation and enabling transformative changes across various sectors. Artificial intelligence, big data analytics, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things are just a few examples of technologies revolutionizing industries such as healthcare, finance, transportation, and education. These technologies bring unprecedented opportunities for efficiency, productivity, and connectivity but also raise challenges related to privacy, cybersecurity, and the digital divide. Understanding emerging technologies' capabilities, limitations, and implications is crucial for harnessing their potential and addressing associated risks.

Entrepreneurship is critical in leveraging digital technologies to drive economic growth, foster innovation, and address societal challenges. Entrepreneurs are at the forefront of digital transformation, identifying gaps and developing disruptive solutions. They navigate complex ecosystems, embracing innovative business models, digital marketing strategies, and agile development methodologies. Digital entrepreneurship encompasses not only startups but also the transformation of traditional industries as organizations embrace digital strategies to remain competitive. Social entrepreneurship also plays a vital role, utilizing digital technologies to create positive social impact and address sustainability challenges.

By integrating policies, technologies, and entrepreneurship, we can shape a digital society that is inclusive, ethical, and sustainable. This requires collaboration among academia, industry, government, and civil society stakeholders. It calls for interdisciplinary approaches that bridge technological advancements with social and policy considerations. It demands a focus on digital literacy and skills development to ensure individuals can fully participate in the digital economy. It necessitates an ongoing dialogue to address emerging challenges and adapt policies to the evolving digital landscape.

In conclusion, the digitalization of society presents immense opportunities and challenges. To navigate this transformative journey successfully, it is essential to consider the interplay between policies, technologies, and entrepreneurship. By fostering collaboration, embracing innovation, and addressing ethical and societal considerations, we can harness the power of digital transformation to create a better future for all.

Key dates

- ✚ Applications opened: 1st July 2023
- ✚ Applications submission deadline: 1st of August 2023
- ✚ Confirmation to the selected trainees: 15th of August 2023
- ✚ Deadline for e-Cost registration and confirmation: 31 August 2023
- ✚ Training School days: 26-28 September 2023