Digital
Pathways
at Oxford

BLAVATNIK
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UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

Governing Digital Transformation:
Improving Outcomes in Education Systems

19–22 April 2021 • Online
28 June – 2 July 2021 • Blavatnik School of Government
University of Oxford

Governing Digital Transformation: Improving Outcomes in Education Systems

Overview

Digital technologies are transforming the world. Digital transformation brings opportunities for low- and middle-income countries to build new industries, improve markets, enhance people's lives, and deliver better services.

One such service is education. Digital technologies have the potential to improve learning and teaching and to reform educational processes. In a global economy increasingly driven by information and innovation, public investments in education technology become key for improving human capital, boosting labour productivity, and enhancing the competitive advantage of nations.

But without well-informed governance and the right broader enabling environment for government-wide digital transformation, education technologies can engender new forms of exclusion, aggravate educational inequalities, and further erode trust in government.

Governing Digital Transformation: Improving Outcomes in Education Systems equips policymakers in developing countries to devise and lead strategies that turn digital disruption into an opportunity for development – with a particular focus on technology in education (EdTech).

In this programme, participants will develop a strong understanding of the complexities of digital transformation, enabling them to balance trade-offs posed by digital technologies, manage conflicting interests among diverse stakeholders, and design relevant regulatory frameworks for improved educational outcomes and successful EdTech reform.

The programme combines the expertise of world-leading scholars and practitioners with extensive opportunities for participants to learn from their global peers, share their own experience, explore solutions to their specific policy challenges, and further build their network.

On completion of the programme, participants will be equipped with the knowledge, tools, and skills needed to play a leading role in their countries' digital transformation processes and EdTech governance. Equally, participants will learn about the problems that can arise, and how to anticipate and prevent digital transformation failures.

Programme details

This is a two-part programme: the first part will be virtual, and the second part will be in person in Oxford.

Dates:
- **Part 1:** 19-22 April 2021, online
- **Part 2:** 28 June – 2 July 2021, in person in Oxford

Participants should be committed to attending both parts of the programme, and there will be tasks set in between.

Faculty co-directors: Professor Stefan Dercon and Professor Christopher Stone

Language: English

Fees: The programme is fully funded. This includes tuition and programme materials for the two courses, as well as accommodation, meals, and flights and extracurricular activities for the in-person week at Oxford (28 June – 2 July).

Programme content

Governing Digital Transformation: Improving Outcomes in Education Systems has been designed specifically for developing countries that are grappling with low human capital, ineffective institutions, and weak infrastructure, which all stand in the way of successful digitalisation and of using technology effectively, and with integrity within educational systems. The programme provides participants with frameworks, tools and skills to address those challenges by unpacking the fundamentals of digital governance and moving quickly towards real-world solutions.

Participants will be engaged in case study discussions, decision-making exercises, simulations, and group work that all contribute to a non-traditional approach to leadership in digital transformation.

This interactive learning experience will help decision-makers in developing countries navigate the thorny problems of digital transformation by enhancing their leadership capacities, reflecting on their own needs, and receiving expert and peer support.

Successful digital reform in education systems relies on a holistic approach to digital governance. In addition to addressing EdTech governance, therefore, the programme challenges participants to be proactive leaders, confident decision-makers, and critical consumers of advice in light of other fundamental and interconnected areas of digitalisation, such as: digitalisation for economic development and inclusion, public service delivery, public procurement and innovation, accountability in automated decision-making, cybersecurity, and data regulations.

Application process

Who should apply?

This programme is open to senior policymakers in government in low- and middle-income countries who are committed to digital transformation and who are in positions to implement change.

Prospective participants would be senior officials (for example head of department, deputy head of department), ministers, deputy ministers, secretary/director generals, or senior advisors to heads of state/government.

Digital transformation affects the whole of a country, and so we are seeking participation from a range of areas of government, such as education, IT and communications technology, finance, planning, or revenue.

How to apply

- Applications open: Now
- Programme website: **www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/ governingdigitaltransformation**

- Prospective participants should complete an application form online and upload their resumé/ CV and a statement of purpose, as described on the application form.

- Admission is selective and is based on applicants' commitment to policy implementation and their involvement in current or upcoming large-scale policy programmes.

- For further information on the programme, please contact the Governing Digital Transformation Programme Team at: **digital.transformation@ bsg.ox.ac.uk**

The Oxford experience

As the top-ranked university in the world, the University of Oxford combines cutting-edge research, unique learning environments, and a global reputation for educating leaders for over 800 years.

We provide world-class, innovative virtual learning and teaching techniques that guarantees highly interactive and engaging experiences for the online week of the programme, with strong technical support for all participants.

During the in person week, participants will have the chance to explore Oxford and its rich history as the oldest university in the English-speaking world. Sessions will take place at the Blavatnik School of Government, one of the newest departments of Oxford. Founded in 2010, the Blavatnik School's award-winning building offers a variety of large and flexible lecture theatres, meeting rooms, and private study areas with full catering facilities that all contribute to an ideal environment for learning and collaboration.

Programme faculty

The programme is designed and delivered by world-leading scholars and practitioners from various diciplines and fields of expertise, some of whom are listed below.

Programme co-director: Stefan Dercon
Stefan Dercon is Professor of Economic Policy at the Blavatnik School and is an economist with a focus on African development. He was Chief Economist of the UK's Department of International Development, the government department in charge of the UK's aid policy and spending, between 2011 and 2017, and is currently Policy Advisor to the FCDO in the UK government. His current research examines the psychological challenges of poverty, the political economy of development, the challenges and opportunities of new technologies, and how to organise and finance responses to natural disasters and protracted humanitarian crises. He was also academic director of the Pathways for Prosperity Commission (pathwayscommission.bsg.ox.ac.uk), which examined how developing countries can foster digital technologies for inclusive growth.

Sandra Wachter
Professor Sandra Wachter is an Associate Professor and Senior Research Fellow in law and ethics of AI, big data, and robotics as well as internet regulation at the Oxford Internet Institute at the University of Oxford. Her current research focuses on the legal and ethical implications of AI, big data, and robotics as well as profiling, inferential analytics, explainable AI, algorithmic bias, diversity and fairness, governmental surveillance, predictive policing, and human rights online. Sandra serves as a policy advisor for governments, companies, and NGOs around the world on regulatory and ethical questions concerning emerging technologies.

Elizabeth Stuart
Elizabeth Stuart is Executive Director of Digital Pathways at Oxford (www.bsg. ox.ac.uk/digital-pathways) and previously performed the same role for the Pathways for Prosperity Commission, which was co-chaired by philanthropist Melinda Gates, tech entrepreneur Strive Masiyiwa and Indonesian finance minister Sri Mulyani Indrawati. Before joining the Blavatnik School, Elizabeth was director of growth, poverty and inequality at the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), a London-based think tank; director of policy and research for Save the Children UK; and spent seven years in Washington DC running the Oxfam International office. Elizabeth was formerly a financial journalist for the Guardian newspaper and BBC.

Programme co-director: Chris Stone
Chris Stone is Professor of Practice of Public Integrity at the Blavatnik School. Chris has blended theory and practice throughout a career dedicated to justice sector reform, good governance, and innovation in the public interest, working with governments and civil society organisations in dozens of countries worldwide. Throughout his career, Chris has been an advisor to public defenders, police leaders, and public prosecutors, assisting at the creation of the Crown Prosecution Service of England and Wales, the National Prosecuting Authority of South Africa, and the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

Ciaran Martin
Ciaran Martin is Professor of Practice at the Blavatnik School and an adviser to Paladin Capital in the USA and Garrison Technology Ltd in the UK. Prior to joining the School, Ciaran led the UK government's work on cyber security, including the establishment of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) in 2016. The NCSC's approach to intervening to make technology safer and to manage national-level incidents proactively has been lauded around the world and Ciaran has been honoured within the UK, Europe, the USA and beyond for his groundbreaking efforts to combat cyber threats. Alongside secure technology, a constant theme of his has been the promotion of responsible, values-based government in the senior roles he held in the Cabinet Office, Treasury and the security services.

About the organisers

Blavatnik School of Government

The Blavatnik School of Government is a global school with a vision of a world better led, better served and better governed. The School offers a distinctive global approach to public policy, within a rich, multidisciplinary curriculum delivered by world-class faculty. Programmes of study include a full time one-year Master of Public Policy, a full-time three-year doctorate in Public Policy, and a range of executive programmes for leaders in the public, private and non-profit sectors.

www.bsg.ox.ac.uk

Digital Pathways at Oxford

Digital Pathways at Oxford produces cutting-edge research across the fields of public policy, law, economics, computer science, and political science to support informed decision-making on the governance of digital technologies, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries. This knowledge provides the foundations for practical engagement with governments and policymakers: synthesising research into impact-oriented policy advice, and building a network of practitioners and experts in digital governance. It is the successor initiative to the Pathways to Prosperity Commission.

EdTechHub

Clear evidence, better decisions, more learning.

EdTech Hub

EdTech Hub is a global research partnership whose goal is to empower the people making decisions about technology in education. Technology has the potential to help address the global learning crisis. But that potential is not being realised. Policymakers and other decision-makers face an overwhelming choice of technology solutions, are unclear on what works and what doesn't and are forced to make decisions based on low or no evidence. EdTech Hub conducts rigorous academic research and gives evidence-based advice about how to use technology in education. EdTech Hub helps decision-makers inside and outside government can make clear, evidence-based policy decisions to achieve maximum impact. EdTech Hub is supported by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the World Bank.
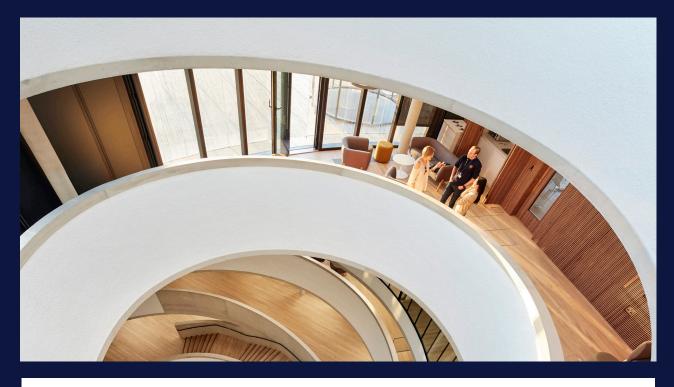
www.edtechhub.org

Dedication

Benno Ndulu

This executive programme is dedicated to the memory of Professor Benno Ndulu.

Benno, a prominent economist and the former Governor of the Central Bank of Tanzania, was a Visiting Professor at the Blavatnik School of Government, the Academic Co-Director of the Pathways for Prosperity Commission (based at the School), and a Senior Adviser on the Digital Pathways at Oxford programme.

Our team at Digital Pathways was incredibly fortunate to have worked with Benno and benefited from his academic expertise, career experiences, and personal wisdom. We feel his loss keenly and keep him in mind as we continue the projects that he worked on with us, among which is this executive programme – he was to have delivered the opening session in the programme.

Executive programmes at the Blavatnik School of Government

For more information, please contact:

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