

## Call for Papers

IAMCR 2016 Pre-conference, 26-27 July, 2016

### **Children's and young people's rights in the digital age**

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**Abstracts due** (250 words): 15 February, 2016

There is growing momentum behind calls for the recognition of the potential of online and networked media for promoting children's rights. At the same time, researchers, child rights' advocates and internet governance experts are concerned that children's rights are being newly infringed rather than enhanced in the digital age. This raises questions for research, policy and practice:

- Exactly how is the digital impacting on children's rights today?
- What are the challenges to children's rights presented by the digital?
- How might we seize the opportunities that can accompany children's online participation to promote children's rights in the contemporary world?

The question of children's rights in the digital age merits sustained scholarly attention. Within popular discourse, children and young people are frequently configured as riding at the forefront of the 'digital revolution'. But as high-level debates about global internet provision and governance extend their geographic, political and economic scope, the position and experiences of children and young people is often neglected. If children's rights in the digital age have yet to receive attention in the global North, this is even more acute in the global South.

Not only are children's needs and experiences in the digital age often treated as a minority interest but they are also often seen as demanding exceptional treatment from adult society or causing unwarranted restrictions on adult freedoms. Further, current debates frequently emphasise the risks children potentially face online and underline their right to protection. Much less debate focuses on children's provision and participation rights and the opportunities children may encounter online.

It is important to recognise the fundamental nature of the challenges – this is not just a matter of 'digital rights' but of all children's rights as they may be being transformed in a 'digital age'. Nor is it just a matter of the exceptional circumstances that apply to children, for addressing the rights of children and young people also has implications for adult rights in a digital age. How does a consideration of children compel a wider re-examination of the concepts both of the digital and of human rights?

This IAMCR pre-conference seeks to unpack the ways digital media intersect – both positively and negatively – with children's rights today and to reflect on how children's rights might provide a meaningful counterpoint from which to consider the role of 'the digital' in advancing human rights more broadly. To catalyse the debates, we now call for short paper proposals **analysing key dilemmas or tensions shaping children's rights in the digital age. We welcome empirical and/or practitioner pieces.**

### **Papers might address:**

- The ways 'children' and 'the digital' problematize notions of human rights
- The relationship between children's rights and their citizenship
- The tension between 'adult power', 'adult rights' and 'children's rights'
- Comparative analyses of children's rights in the digital age in the global North and the global South
- Children's privacy rights and the role of peers and peer culture
- Youth participation rights and the opportunities of online engagement
- Historical shifts in children's communication rights
- Who is or should be ensuring children's rights online – parents, government, industry?
- How children use creative workarounds to maximize the affordances of available technologies for enhancing their rights
- Evaluating e-learning, health promotion or other behaviour change programmes for children and young people
- How does 'big data' shape contemporary children's rights?
- How can we overcome the effects of inequality and digital exclusion on children's rights?
- Public policy/multi-stakeholder governance regarding children's rights in the digital age
- Legal and policy responses to crimes against children online
- Participatory research on children's rights in the digital age
- The intergenerational dimensions of children's rights

Please submit abstracts by **15 February, 2016** at:

**<http://iamcr.org/leicester2016/preconf/youth-digital-rights>**. Abstracts will be reviewed and speakers formally invited to participate by 30 March 2016.

### **A practical note**

- **26 July.** The preconference will commence at midday on 26 July with parallel sessions of papers selected for presentation. There will be an evening plenary entitled 'Global Kids Online', followed by a reception to which delegates, policy-makers and practitioners are invited.
- **27 July.** There will be parallel sessions of papers selected for presentation on the morning of 27 July. The pre-conference will officially close at midday on 27 July to enable delegates to make the journey to Leicester for the opening of IAMCR 2016 (approximately one-hour train journey).
- There will be a modest preconference fee to cover basic catering costs.