

Call for Papers for the Special Issue on

The Future of Remote Work: Responses to the Pandemic

Special Issue Editors

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The coronavirus pandemic has significantly disrupted information work across the globe. The rapid and prolonged shift to remote work from home is producing transformational change that will undoubtedly have long-term implications. The new reality of distributed information work challenges and inspires us to revolutionize our work practices and technologies to support the sustainable and robust distribution of people, resources, and knowledge.

There is an urgent need for the research community to come together to address the challenges to productivity, wellbeing, and society that people and organizations are facing. The goal of this special issue on The New Future of Work is to provide a forum to explore where we have come from and to suggest where we should go, if we are to meet these challenges. The issue will showcase timely and novel research on currently disrupted or evolving work practices, to reflect on how past findings shed light on the current situation, and to prepare for a world in which work may be done very differently.

We seek two kinds of contributions

Novel research: Recently completed research (including findings, design concepts, or prototypes) about work relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. This research should be original and should involve data directly drawn from or highly relevant to the changed global work situation arising from COVID-19.

Position statements: Overviews that explore how prior research is relevant to, or might be tested in the light of, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Contributions should include clear calls to action for research, development, or policy. Given the publication of this special issue in mid 2021, authors should ensure that their contribution identifies important long term issues and recommendations.

Topics

We encourage submissions on topics related to the impact of the current global work situation on distributed information work and technologies, including but not limited to:

Accessibility and inclusion: How might work be affected for populations that have specific assistive requirements or those that have limited access to digital services?

Attention: In an already attention-strained world of work, what new challenges arise from hybrid and remote attempts to enable both focused and peripheral attention on one's own tasks, work, and goals, and those of one's group, colleagues, and social network?

Employment, including hiring, onboarding, management, and freelancing: How might both digital and physical services offer new possibilities for employment, and what challenges will be faced?

Fairness, accountability, transparency, and ethics: How might AI assist users and offer enhanced insights for both hybrid and remote work, balancing the need for efficiency and exploration with fairness and sensitivity to users? How might intelligent agents provide trusted support for individuals and organisations?

Managing hybrid and all-remote teams: What special challenges and opportunities might arise to change the nature of management of differentially-distributed teams? How do we facilitate distributed social connection and overcome isolation?

Media and social media influence: How is the new future of work described and made visible in traditional and social media, and what impact might that have on work and wellbeing?

Hybrid and fully remote meetings, and events: How will the differential distribution of people and resources change the way in which live engagement operates, from one-on-one to large events? What disruptive technologies are needed to ensure that remote participants in hybrid scenarios are included? What opportunity and challenges arise in a range of real-time meeting technologies, from traditional video-mediated collaboration to new virtual, mixed, and cross-reality systems? How might they be made robust enough to cope with dramatic changes in usage numbers?

Physical workspaces: How might physical workspaces be redesigned to cope with both a range of 'new normal' outcomes but also be ready for emergencies?

Privacy and security: What new privacy and security needs arise from differentially-distributed workers and resources?

Productivity within and across work roles and domains: How well do we understand productivity and how to measure it? What opportunities exist to redefine productivity from received models and theories? Do we need to reinterpret wellbeing and work-life balance, especially in ways that encompass periods of dramatic change?

Societal implications and confounding factors: What are the wider societal implications for technological changes proposed to cope with both 'new normal' and emergency conditions of work? What new forms of public policy related to hybrid and remote work need to be developed?

We encourage submissions from a variety of fields with a clear and relevant link to distributed information work and technologies, including but not limited to:

- Computer Supported Cooperative Work
- Communication
- Data and Information Sciences
- Design Research
- Economics
- Human-Centered AI

Human-Computer Interaction

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- Human-Computer Interaction
- Human Geography
- Machine Learning
- Management and Organisational Sciences
- Privacy and Security
- Psychology
- Sociology

Timeline

- Short Proposals due: 28th September 2020
- Response to authors: 19th October 2020 (3 week turn-around)
- Full papers due: ~~10th January 2021 (2.5 month turn-around)~~ **8th February 2021**
- Reviews to authors: 10th April 2021 (3 month turn-around)
- Revised papers due: 10th June 2021 (2 month turn-around)
- Reviews to authors: 10th August 2021 (2 month turn-around)
- Final papers due: 10th September 2021 (1 month turn-around)

Submission of Proposals

To help authors find a good fit, we will solicit **proposals**. Proposals should be about 1000 words and provide a clear indication of what the paper is about. Please use the template provided (available [here](#) or [here](#)). Proposals will be evaluated for relevance to the special issue theme, and feedback will be given.

If you already submitted a paper to the Microsoft New Future of Work Conference, then you can use it for your proposal. Please submit that paper along with one paragraph that summarizes the relevance of the topic to the call.

Both proposal and full paper submissions should be submitted to the HCI Editorial site (mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hci). Follow the guidelines and instructions for submissions on the site. There is a place on the submission site to note that your submission is for the special issue.

Full paper Special Issue submissions will be peer reviewed to the usual standards of the HCI journal.

For questions about the special issue, please send mail to si.hci.fow@gmail.com