

Digital Commons: Infrastructures, Design & the Ethics of Autonomy

**8-10 October 2026
Athens, Greece**

Call for Papers and Panels

Co-organized by the Department of Social Anthropology,
Panteion University & the Institute of Informatics & Telecommunications,
National Center for Scientific Research "Demokritos"

In an age where digital infrastructures shape our modes of living, learning, organizing, and surviving, the notion of the commons offers a potent ground for rethinking how technologies are built, owned, and governed. This conference invites critical dialogue on digital commons not as fixed platforms or technical solutions, but as ongoing, situated struggles over autonomy, access, and collective care.

Drawing from decolonial design, infrastructure studies, anthropology, STS, design research, feminist & indigenous studies, and informatics, the event centers on how communities, scholars, and technologists enact commons through/about/for digital infrastructures. What forms of life do digital commons sustain or suppress? How do marginalized actors repurpose networks, code, and platforms to build systems of mutual support, resistance, and futurity? What design practices enable infrastructural commons to emerge, and how might they be scaled without reproducing extractive logics? How do protocols, software architectures, and governance models embed, contest or refuse particular values? And how does AI and algorithmic mediation reconfigure cultural meaning, heritage, and collective memory within digital commons?

Alongside academic panels and presentations, parallel activities will be hosted at AiTHERION, a hub for public dialogue developed by NCSR Demokritos and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. AiTHERION fosters reflection through technology-driven philosophy exhibitions, public debates, and immersive experiences. These events will promote public dialogue and encourage cross-disciplinary and civic engagement.

Core themes include:

Infrastructural Commoning, Law & Governance

From local networks and cooperative clouds to peer-to-peer architectures and autonomous tech collectives. Exploring how infrastructures can be reclaimed and reimagined beyond market logics, and how legal frameworks, ownership models, and platform regulation shape or challenge these practices.

Designing Otherwise & Ethics/Accountability

Participatory, feminist, and pluriversal approaches to digital systems. Care and harm in design; ethics of participation and exclusion; algorithmic bias and fairness; collective data stewardship and privacy in commons-based infrastructures.

Value, Labor, and Ownership

Commons-based and open-source production models; platform cooperativism and postcapitalist economies. The shifting boundaries of waged/unwaged, visible/invisible labor, and the politics of collective ownership, regulation, and sustainability.

Anthropologies of Mediation & Cultural AI Commons

Cultural biographies of infrastructure and code as mediators of affect, belonging, and resistance. AI in heritage and cultural institutions; algorithmic mediation of memory and identity; community-based digitization; participatory design of cultural AI. Questions of bias, erasure, epistemic justice, and the imaginaries of counter-hegemonic cultural AI.

Technopolitics & Epistemic Justice

Indigenous, migrant, and activist appropriations of digital tools for sovereignty and autonomy. Struggles against extractive paradigms, surveillance, and enclosure. Design as a contested site where alternative futures and value systems are articulated.

Interdisciplinary Constellations

Collaborations between anthropology, design, informatics, and adjacent fields. Bridging ethnographic insight and technical implementation, and cultivating shared vocabularies for critical and socially responsible digital practice.

Formats of Contribution

We welcome proposals from anthropology, Science and Technology Studies (STS), Human Computer Interaction (HCI), design studies, indigenous & feminist studies, information systems, media studies, cultural studies, and adjacent fields. Contributions from activist networks, community organizations, and laboratories are particularly encouraged.

The working language of the conference is English.

Individual Papers/Contributions (max 20 minutes)

Apart from standard conference formats, individual contributions may also include short films, audio essays, or participatory/speculative design proposals presented within the 20-minute slot.

Submission should include:

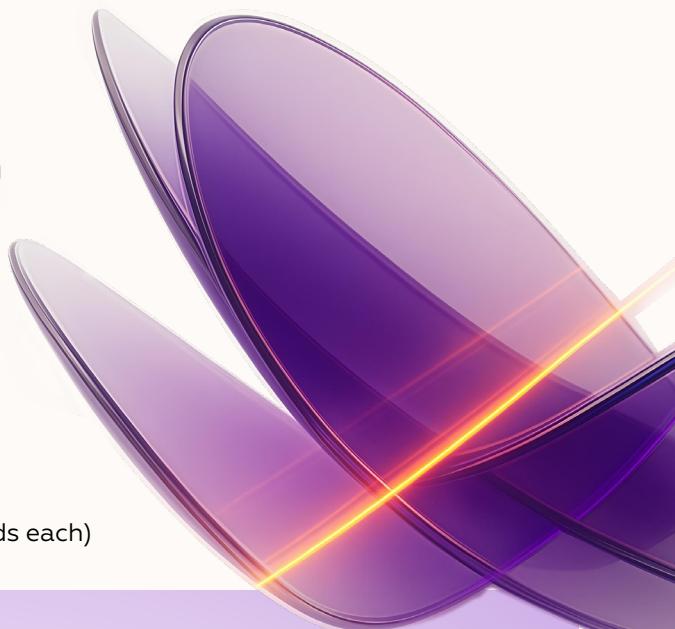
- Paper/Presentation title
- Abstract (250–350 words)
- 3–5 keywords
- Short bio of the author (max 150 words)

Panels (4–6 papers, max 20 minutes each)

Panel proposals should bring together 4–6 papers addressing a shared theme, theoretical problem, or empirical domain.

Submission should include:

- Panel title
- Panel rationale (up to 500 words)
- 4–6 paper titles & abstracts (250–350 words each)
- Name and contact details of panel organizer(s)
- Short bios for all organizers and participants (up to 150 words each)



Practical Information

The conference will take place in person in Athens, Greece.

Submission deadline: 15 February 2026

Proposals should be submitted on the form available at the conference

website: www.digicommons.org

Attendance is free of charge. No registration fees apply.

Notification of acceptance will be sent within 45 days after the final submission deadline. Participants needing proof of acceptance for administrative or funding purposes may request an official acceptance certificate through the submission form.

Following the conclusion of the conference, a proceedings publication is planned to document and disseminate selected contributions.

At this stage, the conference cannot offer travel or accommodation grants. Participants are therefore advised to plan their attendance using their own funding sources. Should additional sponsorships become available, relevant updates will be announced on the conference website.

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Additional information

For additional information, please visit
the conference website: www.digicommons.org
Inquiries should be addressed to info@digicommons.org