APPRA Conference 2024

Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence for Sustaining Peace and Democracy

Date: 7-10 March 2024; Venue: University of Vavuniya, Sri Lanka.
Application Deadline: 15th November 2023

1. Context of the Conference and Theme:

The research area of leveraging digital transformation and artificial intelligence for sustaining peace and democracy is highly relevant in today's world. As digital technologies continue to advance rapidly, they have the potential to significantly impact various aspects of society, including governance, the economy, and social interactions. Every citizen is aware that digital technologies have transformed our individual and collective lives. Scholars from peace research and democratic theorists have started to take stock of this transformation and to trace how democratic theory and institutions should respond (Bernholz, Landemore, & Reich, 2021). Artificial intelligence has the potential to revolutionise the way we approach peacebuilding and democratic processes. However, there are also concerns about the potential risks associated with these technologies, such as issues related to privacy, security, and accountability (Thiel, 2022). The United Nations has launched a strategy for the digital transformation of peacekeeping to drive technology innovation and maximise the potential of current and new technologies to help peacekeeping missions carry out their mandates, and ensure the responsible use of digital technologies by peace operations (United Nations, 2022).

Democratic peace theorists argue that digital technologies can enhance democratic processes by increasing citizen participation, promoting transparency, and facilitating the flow of information and they are also concerned about the potential risks associated with these technologies, such as issues related to privacy, security, and the spread of misinformation (Reiter, 2019). There is ongoing research and discussion on this topic, as scholars continue to explore the potential benefits and challenges of these technologies for promoting peace and democracy. It is therefore crucial to carefully consider how we can leverage digital transformation and AI in a responsible and ethical manner to promote peace and democracy.

We welcome submissions on a wide range of topics, including but not limited to:

- Impact of Blockchain on human rights, democracy, and the rule of law and peace.
- Innovations and ways of promoting peace and justice.
- Digital Platforms and AI in promoting transparency and accountability.
- Digital Technologies and AI on the media and the public sphere
- Digital transformation to promote economic development and reduce inequality.
- Ethical considerations of using technologies in peacekeeping and conflict resolution practices
- New technologies and Artificial intelligence on democratic processes and institutions
- The challenges and opportunities of regulating AI to promote peace and democracy
- Technological advancements and commitment for Minimization of Ecological Footprint and sustainable practices

- The potential of digital technologies to enhance citizen participation in democratic processes.

The conference also aims to address some of the cross-cutting themes:

- Arts, Performance and Creative Methods to Promote Peace
- Climate Justice, Just Transition and Sustainability
- Conflict Resolution, humanitarian aids, and disaster response on Peace Building
- Dynamics of migrations and mobilities of people
- Entrepreneurship, Empowerment and reconciliation for sustaining peace and Harmony
- Entrepreneurship and Peacebuilding
- Existing challenges to Peace in Asia-Pacific regions
- Indigenous Peoples, Human Rights, and democracy for sustaining peace and reconciliation processes
- Media, Human Rights and Peacebuilding
- Peace journalism, human rights journalism, communicating with communities (CwC) and nonviolent communication.
- Shifting power structures and world orders in international Relations

2. **Application Submission process:**

At this time, we are looking for an abstract of no more than 250 words, along with a short biography of the author(s). Please submit your submission via Online Form [Click Here] **by 15th November 2023**.

The committee will review the abstract submission to decide the selected presentations and panel for the conference. All the selected submissions will be informed via email. After the successful selection of the abstract submission, you need to send us the full paper and presentation by **30 January 2024** to be included in the conference's final program and proceedings. The full papers will go through blind peer review and plagiarism tests for the publication process. We look forward to receiving your submissions and to a productive and engaging conference.

> Conference Title: Digital Transformation and Artificial Intelligence for Sustaining Peace and Democracy
>
> **Date:** 7th – 10 March 2024
>
> **Venue:** The University of Vavuniya, Vavuniya City, Sri Lanka
>
> **Application Link:** https://forms.gle/K1RHeBhvAqENBjcn7

3. **About the Co-organizers:**

The Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA)

Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA) is one of the 5 regional organisations under the umbrella organisation International Peace Research Association (IPRA). These 5 organisations are: Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA); Africa Peace Research and Education Association (AFPREA); European Peace Research Association (EUPRA); Latin American Peace Research Association (CLAIP); and Peace and Justice Studies Association (North America).

The APPRA has a mission to contribute to the realisation of the fullness of peace, justice and humanity through peace research; peace education; and peace advocacy. Thus, APPRA focuses to advance interdisciplinary research on the conditions of peace and the causes of war and violence in all their manifestations. To this end APPRA shall facilitate international collaboration designed to assist the advancement of peace research, education and action, and in particular to promote national and international studies and teachings relating to the pursuit of international peace in accordance with the principle of freedom of scientific research; and to facilitate contacts between peace researchers, educators and advocates as well as specialists in conflict resolution throughout the Asia-Pacific region, the aim of these contacts being the enhancement of peace research, peace education and peace advocacy.

The Harmony Centre at the University of Vavuniya (Sri Lanka)

The Harmony Centre was established at the University of Vavuniya on 25th September 2021. The Harmony Centre is working to contribute to the realisation of peace, harmony and humanity through peace research, peace education, and harmony related programs. The Harmony Centre at the University aims to encourage students' efforts in peaceful living, promote inter-ethnic, intercultural, and inter-religious understanding and interactions, and provide comprehensive education for conflict transformation in post-war Sri Lanka. In parts of the North and East, large-scale societal tensions have existed for the past thirty years. The war's conclusion resulted in the abolition of conflict structures, and the government has used the policy framework to re-establish strategic development mechanisms in these areas. The University of Vavuniya was established in 2021 by an order made under section 21 of the Universities Act, No. 16 of 1978 with three faculties, namely, the Faculty of Applied Science, Faculty of Business Studies and Faculty of Technological Studies with ten departments. The University of Vavuniya's foundation in this highly war-affected region gives a new path for growth in these places. The purpose of the Harmony Centre is to promote harmonious existence among students and staff through social, cultural, educational, research and scholarly activities and to function as a catalytic and resource centre for harmony and social cohesion at regional and national level. The University aims to provide, promote, and develop higher education in the region and at the national level. The students are admitted from all over the country and from all ethnicities and all religions. The University is located in Vavuniya, which is a multi-religious location itself.

The Gate Foundation (UK)

Since 2015, The Gate Foundation has functioned as a research group based in the UK and, in collaboration with international think tanks, NGOs, charities, and universities, organised several conferences, seminars, research projects and workshops to advance social and economic development and human rights of war-affected communities, particularly in Sri Lanka. Realising the need to scale up, formalise and institutionalise our activities, The Gate Foundation was registered as a non-profit organisation at Companies House in 2022, in the UK. Since then, in collaboration with local partners, the foundation has made significant progress in developing new pathways and delivery. The Foundation's vision is to become a prominent research and innovation gateway for sustainable development and governance, primarily in war-affected communities in Sri Lanka, by providing research and scientific-based innovative solutions to address socio-cultural, economic and human security issues and challenges.

4. The Conference Organizing Committee:

Co-Chairs:

Prof. T. Mangaleswaran (Sri Lanka), Vice Chancellor, University of Vavuniya (UOV);

Rajib Timalsina (Nepal), Co-Secretary General, Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA);

Kelli Te Maiharoa (New Zealand), Co-Secretary General, Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA)

Senthan Selvarajah (Sri Lanka/ UK), CEO, The Gate Foundation, UK.

Convener:

S.Mathivathany (Sri Lanka), Director, Harmony Centre, University of Vavuniya (UOV)

The Conference Scientific Committee:

Dr. Nesrin Kenar (Turkey)

Prof. Herbert Rosana (Philippines)

Dr. Vidya Jain (India)

Prof. Liu Cheng (China)

Prof. Raguram, University of Jaffna (Sri Lanka)

Prof. Rameez Afthulla, Southeastern University (Sri Lanka)

Dr. Jeyashankar, Eastern University (Sri Lanka)

Ass. Prof. Janine Joyce (Australia)

Buddhi Kattel (Nepal)

Rahime Özgün Kehya (Turkey)

Lalit Jung Shahi (Nepal)

Dr. Sri Nuryanti (Indonesia)

Dr. Manish Sharma (India)

Dr. Aslam Khan (India)

Prof. Heather Devere (New Zealand)

Dr. Michael Fusi Ligaliga (Hawaii-Pacific)

Dr. Prisca Delima (Indonesia)

Rumana Mehdi (Pakistan)

Dr. Stella Micheong Cheong (S. Korea)

Roshan Pokharel (Nepal)

Dr. Cahyo Pamungkas (Indonesia)

Chiranjibi Bhandari (Nepal)

Dr. Sr. Chrisia Laura Pinto (India)

Conference Local Teams and Coordinators:

Mr. S. Harikaran, Head, Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Business Studies, UOV

Mr. S. A. Jude Leon, Head, Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Business Studies, UOV

Ms. P. Ruksani, Lecturer, Department of Information Communication Technology, Faculty of Technological Studies, UOV

5. **Conference Registration Process:**

All the conference participants and presenters must register to attend the conference. The registration costs include access to the conference- 4 days, conference kit, tea/coffee breaks, and lunch. The conference committee will provide airport-pick up and drop support on a sharing basis for delegates/participants who will need the services on 6th and 10-11th March 2024. The transfer facilities are subject to confirmation in advance only.

Conference Registration Rate

Categories	Early Bird Rate [Until the end of December 2023]	Normal Conference Registration Rate [Jan-Feb 2024]	On the Spot Rate [March 2024]
Regular Participants	$ 180.00	$ 200.00	$ 250.00
Students and Participants from Low-Income Countries*	$ 100.00	$ 140.00	$ 180.00
Sri Lankan Nationals	Rs. 5000.00	Rs. 7500.00	Rs 10000.00

* The person should have citizenship / residency / work permit/ proof of students to avail the fee for "students and participants from low-income countries". The low Income countries refers to the current list of countries/territories as per the list of low income and lower middle income countries (countries having per capita up to $4465) as per this list.

** **Note:** In case of your cancellation before 30th December 2023, we will be deducting 30% administrative charge plus bank transfer charge to reimburse the payment, and the cancellation after the 30th December 2023, the conference committee will not be able to reimburse the payments.

You can directly pay via your cards to university website link [visit the website of University of Vavuniya/ Conference Call] or deposit via bank transfer in the following account:

Account Name: University of Vavuniya
Bank's Name: People's Bank
Bank's Code: 7135
Branch Code: 040
Swift Code : PSBKLKLX
Account Number: 040-1-003-8-1640087

Alternatively, you can pay the fee directly or through the payment link to the following bank account of the Gate Foundation as per your convenience.

Account Name: THE GATE FOUNDATION
Account Number: 29204186
Sort Code: 54-21-41
Bank Identifier Code (BIC): NWBKGB2L
Bank Name: NatWest
International Bank Account Number (IBAN) : GB59NWBK54214129204186

6. Accommodations:

The university has reserved some hotel rooms at discounted rates in the local standard hotels in Vavuniya city. If you want to book via the conference organiser, you are suggested to pay directly to the university account, and the local conference team will allocate hotel rooms for you on the first-come-first-serve basis upon the availability of those rooms. The local transportations will be arranged from hotel to the conference venue and back only to those hotels booked by the university. More details about the hotels, price and booking will be shared in Oct/Nov 2023 via conference websites. You can contact the conference organising team for more details. The participants can arrange the accommodations on their own. You also have to arrange the local transport from/to conference venue on your own in case of the hotels arranged by yourself. The conference organizing committee is not able to cater transport services to all the hotels except the arrangements made by the committee themselves.

Limited bursaries available for accommodations and/or food on the need basis. Similarly, there are few scholarships available for partial travel support for young scholars from the global south with the generous support from some of our supporters. Those who have not received the travel and other support from the APPRA in the past and participants from the low income and lower middle-income countries will be given the priorities. To receive any kind of full or partial support, conference registration and submission of full paper is must.

7. Support and Donation:

Asia-Pacific Peace Research Association (APPRA) is non-profit regional network of peace researchers, academics, and practitioners. We are regional affiliate of International Peace Research Association (IPRA) in the Asia-Pacific region. We do not have any regular source of income or budget source. Since 1980s, APPRA has been organizing biennial conferences in Asia-Pacific regions to allow hundreds of scholars coming together to discuss various global and regional issues related peace, democracy, justice, security, and development.

APPRA as a regional organization relies on the donations and support from generous individuals and organizations for its academic activities. If you would like to support/donate for the conference or for the travel support for young people from priority area, you can write us: ichr2024@vau.ac.lk & sg.appra@gmail.com. We will keep you as our organizing partner for the conference.

8. Author Guidelines for the conference paper:

Notes:

- At first, we are calling for 250 words abstract submission. By reviewing the abstract, the conference committee will select the papers/panels for the presentations at the conference.
- To be eligible for the publication, all presenters should submit full paper by the end of January 2024.

- We are going to stick with the one-person-one-presentation rule. This does not include the role as panel chair or discussant.
- The full paper is a must for the paper presentation. The paper should be original and must not be under review/ publication process anywhere else.
- All the submissions having more than 20% plagiarism result through plagiarism tests will be rejected.
- Contribution address: ichr2024@vau.ac.lk & appra@gmail.com.

Formatting requirements:

- Full Paper: The extent of the paper is 8 – 14 pages.
- Language of the paper: English
- The detailed contents of the paper are given in the **Template below**.
- Font-size: 14pt (title), 11pt (text) and 10pt (titles of figures and tables);
- Font: Times New Roman
- Margins: 1.5 inch on the left, 1 inch on the top/bottom and right side.
- Line spacing: 1.5
- Left alignment and justified paragraphs.
- The deadline for sending the application (including the Full Paper) is 30th of January 2024. The submission emails are as follows: Contribution address: ichr2024@vau.ac.lk & appra@gmail.com.

Papers will be published in peer-reviewed proceedings with ISBN. A signed Honor and Originality Declaration must be submitted along with the conference paper. The paper should not exceed 14 pages, including results, figures, tables, and bibliography/references. Carefully adhere to the guidelines and the template (see below).

Full Paper Submission Template:

Page-1: Summary Page

Full Name of the Author(s):
Name with initials of the Author(s):   [Write the name you wish to see in the publications exactly here.]
Correspondence Author's contact number and official email:
Institution:
Address:
Title of the paper:
Consent to the acquisition and use of a photograph   By sending this application, you agree to a photograph of yourself during the conference and their use, especially for the conference publication on the website. You can revoke your consent at any time.
  Signature ………………………..   Date of submission: ………………..

Page- 2: Honor and Originality Declaration

Title of the paper:
Author(s):
The author (authors) undertake(s) that the paper is original and does not interfere with the copyright, proprietary, or personal rights of a third party, and is with scientific and publishing ethics. No part of the paper is taken from another author's work without giving a proper citation. All references have been cited. The author (authors) declare-declares declare declared (s) full responsibility for the language quality of the paper and are aware of the fact that the conference organizer and publisher do not assume any responsibility for its language form. The author (authors) understand(s) that an infringement of this declaration leads to exclusion of the paper from the review process by the conference organizer.
Name, Surname, Title:
University, Institute or Faculty, Department:
Address (Street No, City, ZIP code):
Country:
Date and place of signature(s):
Signature(s)…………………………………….

Paper Submission Guidelines

TITLE (Uppercase letters, Centre alignment, Font: Times New Roma, 14 and Bold)

1*Corresponding author Affiliation

E-mail (Italic)

2nd author Affiliation

E-mail (Italic)

3rd Author Affiliation

E-mail (Italic)

(Times New Roman 12pt, Centered)

Abstract

The abstract should state the main objective(s), problem/ issue, used design/methodology/ approach, main findings, and conclusions of the study. The abstract should contain max. 250

words. (Times New Roman 10pt, block-aligned)

Keywords: *3-5 keywords, in alphabetical order, separated by commas* (Times New Roman 10pt, Italic, Block-aligned)

Introduction

This section should focus on the introduction to the topic, and the aim/ objective(s) of the study and the rationale for conducting the study. Do not use subheadings.

Literature Review

This section should address the related theoretical (if any) and empirical literature leading to arguments.

Methodology/Design/Approach

This section should provide enough details on the type of study, sampling, data collection methods, variables, conceptual framework, and hypotheses of the study. For a qualitative type of study, this section can be modified by the author(s). Might not apply to conceptual and literature review papers.

Results and Discussions

This section may be divided into subsections or may be combined. Can use Tables and Figures where appropriate. Comparing and contradicting the findings with prior studies can be addressed.

Conclusion and contributions

This section should clearly explain the main conclusions drawn from the findings of the study. Write the contributions as well.

Acknowledgments

All acknowledgments (if any) should be included at the very end of the manuscript before the references. Anyone who contributed to the research or manuscript, but who is not a listed author, could be acknowledged (with their permission). It can also include the details of the funding used in the study.

References and bibliography

American Psychological Association (APA) style referencing should be used throughout the manuscript (for both in-text and end references). Follow the link to see the APA referencing:

https://www.mendeley.com/guides/apa-citation-guide/

Other important points to be considered:

1. **Headings**

Level	Format
1	11pt, Centred, Bold, Title Case Heading The text starts with a new paragraph. Highest level of headings for major new sections.
2	11pt, Aligned Left, Bold, Title Case Heading The text starts with a new paragraph. One level lower, for splitting major sections into subsections.
3	11pt, Aligned Left, Bold Italic, Title Case Heading The text starts with a new paragraph. More specific subsections.

2. **Figure/ Table captions:** Times New Roman 10pt. Figures and tables should be numbered as follows: Figure1, Figure 2, … etc, and Table 1, Table 2, .. etc.
3. **Examples for referencing:**

Citation of a book

1. Jackson, L. M. (2019). The psychology of prejudice: From attitudes to social action (2nd ed.). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000168-000
2. Sapolsky, R. M. (2017). Behave The biology of humans at our best and worst. Penguin Books.

Citation of a journal paper

1. Grady, J. S., Her, M., Moreno, G., Perez, C., & Yelinek, J. (2019). Emotions in storybooks: A comparison of storybooks that represent ethnic and racial groups in the United States. Psychology of Popular Media Culture, 8(3), 207–217. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000185
2. Jerrentrup, A., Mueller, T., Glowalla, U., Herder, M., Henrichs, N., Neubauer, A., & Schaefer, J. R. (2018). Teaching medicine with the help of "Dr. House." PLoS ONE, 13(3), Article e0193972. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193972

Citation of a paper published in conference proceedings.

1. Kushilevitz, E., & Malkin, T. (Eds.). (2016). Lecture notes in computer science: Vol. 9562. Theory of cryptography. Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-49096-9
2. Bedenel, A.-L., Jourdan, L., & Biernacki, C. (2019). Probability estimation by an adapted genetic algorithm in web insurance. In R. Battiti, M. Brunato, I. Kotsireas, & P. Pardalos (Eds.), Lecture notes in computer science: Vol. 11353. Learning and intelligent optimization (pp. 225–240). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-05348-2_21

Citation of electronic publications

1. American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Just-world hypothesis. In APA dictionary of psychology. Retrieved January 18, 2020, from https://dictionary.apa.org/just-world-hypothesis
2. Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Semantics. In Merriam-Webster.com dictionary. Retrieved January 4, 2020, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/semantics

Citation of websites

1. U.S. Food and Drug Administration. (2019, November 15). FDA approves first contact lens indicated to slow the progression of nearsightedness in children [Press release]. https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-contact-lens-indicated-slow-progression-nearsightedness-children
2. Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. (n.d.). Asbestos in your environment: What you can do to limit exposure [Fact sheet]. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/docs/limitingenvironmentalexposures_factsheet-508.pdf
3. American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2017). Nursing shortage fact sheet [Fact sheet].http://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/News/Factsheets/Nursing-Shortage-Factsheet-2017.pdf

Suggestions for the Presentations at the conference:

- Each presenter will get 10-12 minutes for the presentation.
- Have one main idea per slide.
- Limit yourself to no more than 4-5 major bullets per slide.
- Less is more – maximum of 30 words per slide.
- Use font size of at least 22 pt.
- Use sans-serif fonts.
- Check for spelling and grammar.
- Use high contrast colors.
- Graphs are better than tables.
- The suggested structure for the slides is: Title/Cover Slide (1 Slide); Introduction/Background/Context (1-2 Slides); Methodology (1-2 Slides); Results/Findings/Discussions/Arguments (3-4 Slides); Conclusion (1 Slide).
- Aim for maximum 7-8 slides only to become precise and focused on the topic of the presentations.