Critical Perspectives on Data Access for Research

We invite abstract submissions and expressions of interest for an

[international workshop on Research Access to Digital Infrastructures (RADI)](),

hosted by the University of Amsterdam

***on 16 March 2023**.*

The RADI workshop will bring together a diverse crowd of academics with different backgrounds and perspectives, and is aimed at critically exploring key issues relating to the regulation of access to data for research and provide a platform to discuss ongoing work. This workshop is organised in tandem with a hands-on workshop on Research Access in the Digital Services Act (DSA), 15 March.

Throughout the last decade, concerns have been growing over the (lack of) transparency of digital infrastructures. Notably, (academic) researchers have decried the many obstacles preventing them from observing and scrutinising privately-held data. At the same time, the EU regulator has put forward a barrage of legislation purported to boost transparency and facilitate data access, primarily in light of internal market goals. Yet, data access for research only features in the margins of these (proposed) data regulations, if at all. Still, the observability of digital infrastructures is vital, not just from a market perspective or for holding power to account, but also for scrutinising the (individual and societal) impact of these infrastructures and observing the world in general. There is a clear need for critical and global reflection on how new data access rules shape research agendas but also on the positionality of different actors in these debates.

The RADI workshop aims to provide a platform for critical reflection on these matters. It will bring together a small group of scholars with different backgrounds and levels of seniority, to conduct in-depth discussions. In order to achieve this, the workshop will primarily centre around work-in-progress of selected participants. We therefore **invite people from different disciplines to submit short ideas and provocations to be workshopped at the event**. We particularly (though not exclusively) welcome perspectives from the following communities and fields: critical legal studies, science and technology studies, law and political economy, critical data studies and digital humanities. Selected authors are expected to develop their ideas into a draft paper that will be shared and discussed during the workshop. Building on this, the papers can then be further developed for publication in a curated international peer-reviewed publication.

Limited spots are also available for people who wish to participate, without submitting any work-in-progress. Indeed, in order to ensure the quality of discussions and allow for adequate preparation time,

only a select number of submissions will be workshopped. If you are interested in **participating without submitting a working paper**, please let us know as well.

We are interested in understanding how academics examine questions of data access, both within the EU and globally, in order to ascertain what kind of strategies to acquire and use data meaningfully as well as ways of resisting power that are being developed in different jurisdictions. Submissions can (but do not have to) relate to any of the following issues and themes:

- Opportunities and challenges of the law as a tool for observing digital infrastructures
- The relationship between current discourse on data access for research and the right to science and academic freedom
- The political economy of data access for research and the multifarious power dynamics between academia, private/public sector and civil society
- The paradigms and assumptions that (policy) discourse on data access for research is based on
- What is rendered (in)visible by data access regimes
- The role of data access and academia in light of the politics of knowledge production
- Privileging of certain geographical and institutional contexts of new data access regimes
- Critical perspectives on academia's data production, data use and data ownership
- Responsibilities of academia in data access regimes, beyond legal and methodological duties.
- Implications of regulators outsourcing accountability mechanisms to academia via access regimes
- Agenda-setting power afforded by data access regimes (to public bodies, private sector, …)
- Types of dependencies created by data access on academics/ researcher communities

IMPORTANT DATES

- ➤ Abstract submission / expression of interest: **16 January 2023**
- ➤ Notification of acceptance: **5 February 2023**
- ➤ Submit draft papers: **28 February 2023**
- ➤ Workshop: **16 March 2023**

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- ➤ You can participate in the RADI workshop in two different ways: as an author or as an active participant. **Authors** whose abstract is accepted, will have their draft papers workshopped. **Participants** will read and comment on the draft papers.
- ➤ **Authors:** please submit an abstract of around 250-400 words (references not included). Make sure to also include your name and affiliation.
- ➤ Authors are expected to submit **draft papers** two weeks before the workshop, which will be shared with the other participants. There are no strict form requirements, yet, these papers should at least contain a central idea, thesis or provocation in light of being further developed into a full paper or essay.

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➢ **Participants** who do not submit an abstract**:** please express your interest by a short motivation (based on the expertise and/or ambitions or interests) of less than 300 words.
➢ We will **cover accommodation and (international) travel expenses** of invited (draft) paper authors. Limited funding for other participants is also available. The workshop is not sponsored by third parties and all funding is institutional.
➢ We hope to publish the workshopped papers in an international, peer-reviewed publication in 2023/2024.
➢ **Submit your abstract or expression of interest via this link**
➢ This workshop is preceded by a tandem event on Research Access in the Digital Services Act (DSA), 15 March 2023. This workshop will more concretely explore the implications and tensions of the DSA's regulation of access to data held by large platforms and search engines. Participants to the RADI workshop are also encouraged to apply to this tandem event, and can do so by visiting: www.ivir.nl/dsadata/.

Organisers
Jef Ausloos (University of Amsterdam – IViR)
Siddharth Peter de Souza (Tilburg University – TILT)

https://www.ivir.nl/radi/