Call for Papers

ICAfrica 2ⁿᵈ Biennial, 2018

The Africa Regional Conference of the International Communication Association (ICA)

Theme: African Digital Cultures: Emerging Research, Practices and Innovations

Date: 7-9 November, 2018

Organisers: School of Information and Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Legon

Digital technology has become an inherent part of contemporary African life. Fueled by increasing internet penetration, changes have occurred to accommodate a more digital-driven lifestyle across various sectors of African societies. Compared with other parts of the world, Internet use in Africa is still relatively low, but digital technology is rapidly changing how people on the continent communicate with one another, produce and consume goods and services, enact citizenship, and construct narratives about themselves. New configurations in the communication, information and media landscape resulting from digitalization provoke new questions and challenge old assumptions about mediation practices for scholars. Traditional media such as radio, for example, may be still dominant in the information and communication ecology of Africa, but their practices are constantly being impacted and transformed by emerging digital cultures, especially amongst the youth.

The dynamic nature of technology-driven transformations in mediated communication in Africa calls for deeper insights into the cultures forming around the appropriation of digital technologies. In a world in which the face of communication is constantly evolving, we believe Africa can

provide fresh thinking on how people adopt, appropriate and deploy digital technologies in various communicative contexts and the impact(s) that has on their lives.

The School of Information and Communication Studies (SICS) of the University of Ghana, in collaboration with the International Communication Association (ICA) is hosting the 2018 Regional ICA conference on the theme *African Digital Cultures: Emerging research, practices and innovations*. The conference seeks to bring together scholars from within and outside the continent to share their research and perspectives on the cultures forming around conceptualizations, production and consumption of the digital space in Africa. We invite abstracts of empirical and conceptual papers that address the following and other relevant themes for presentation at the conference:

- Transformation of knowledge in a digital era
- Epistemologies, disciplinary developments and pedagogies in digital communication
- Theorizations of the digital
- Gendered cultures and digitization
- Youth cultures and digitization
- Rural digital cultures
- Digitization and marginalization
- Digitization, regulation and governance
- Digital colonization
- Ethical concerns related to digitization
- Newsroom norms and practices in a digital era
- Corporate communications and digitization
- Communication, entrepreneurship and digitization
- Digitization and interpersonal communication
- Audiences and digital culture
- Privacy, publicity, surveillance
- News and disinformation
- New mediation practices in a digital era
- Digitalization and visualization

Special Panels: We also invite abstracts for a **Special Panel** on **R***evisiting the Foundations of African Communication Scholarship* in honour of pioneering African communication scholars.

Besides this, we welcome senior scholars to propose and constitute special panels on issues of interest related to the conference theme.

Submission for Conference: Please submit abstracts of a maximum 300 words by **June 30, 2018** either through the **designated link on the conference website** or to sics@ug.edu.gh.

Abstract acceptance notifications would be issued by **July 25, 2018** and full papers will be expected to be submitted by **October 15, 2018**. Abstracts should include name, institutional affiliation and contact details of author(s) and paper title.

Policy Lab: The Conference will create space for a **Policy Lab** on *Digital Empowerment (Access, Literacy, Safety, etc.)*. The main objective of the policy lab is to improve the synergies amongst researchers, media and communication practitioners, and policy actors. It aims at encouraging research agendas of direct interest to policy constituencies on issues related to the topic of the policy lab and to stimulate demand for research findings amongst potential users in policy and practice. Participation will be open to only a limited number of participants.

Submission for Policy Lab: Please submit a short synopsis of relevant research you are currently developing and which could benefit from feedback from policy makers by **June 30, 2018** either through the **designated link on the conference website** or to sics@ug.edu.gh. Acceptance notifications would be issued by **July 25, 2018.**

Graduate Student/Early Scholar Mentoring Session: There will also be a graduate student mentoring session. We invite graduate students to send in abstracts of their research as well as poster proposals for consideration by **June 30, 2018** either through the **designated link on the conference website** or to sics@ug.edu.gh.

Acceptance notifications would be issued by **July 25, 2018.** A limited number of partial/full sponsorship may be available for covering flights and hotel accommodation.

Key dates

- Abstract submission deadline: June 30, 2018
- Acceptance notification and invitations: July 25, 2018
- Full paper submissions: October 15, 2018
- Conference dates: November 7-9, 2018

NB: Please include the session you are submitting your abstract to in the subject line when using the email option

Venue: University of Ghana, Legon, Accra-Ghana
Kindly visit the link below for further information
http://sics.ug.edu.gh/icaafrica-ghana

Prof. Audrey Gadzekpo
Dean, School of Information and Communication Studies
University of Ghana