

For a Digital Enlightenment Movement

The Spirit of the Enlightenment

The rallying cry of the 18th Century Enlightenment movement was a declaration of commitment to ideals such as:

- Knowledge should be shared as a public good, not hoarded as a private possession;
- People are capable of thinking for themselves, and as a result, society flourishes and develops optimally when all its members, regardless of status, collaborate in its design and governance;
- Intellectual and scientific inquiry should be pursued in service to all.

The period produced a seismic intellectual and societal shift that allowed innovation and creativity to flourish. Those same forward-thinking, egalitarian principles will help us realise the potential that digital technology promises for the 21st Century.

If citizens do not have the ways and means of their self-government, the best designed policies, the most sophisticated strategies, the more well-wishing programs may be ineffective or perverted in their implementation.

Manuel Castells
The Rise of the Network



The Enlightenment Metaphor in Action

At DEF, we believe that people should enjoy the kinds of autonomy and freedom online that they do offline. The first priority of our mission is to establish and support the position and rights of the individual in relation to the rest of society. This means understanding how current and future digital technology can best be used to express our Identities in the digital world - taking into account the core values we cherish in our societies now.

Our multi-stakeholder approach seeks to understand how businesses, institutions and governments can become more effective and fit-to-purpose through relationships with digitally empowered individuals. We aim for a profound new dialogue to replace the 'truthy' clichés about 'competing interests that so often justify stagnation and inefficiency.

Our activities are sharply focused on finding game-changing solutions that stimulate innovation and sustainable evolution and, therefore, are beneficial to all.

We will continue to:

- Help people better understanding policy implications and the societal impact of rapidly evolving digital technologies;
- Facilitate novel forms of multi-stakeholder, multi-level, and multi-disciplinary collaboration;
- Align uses of technology with basic values and social needs within a flexible but robust legal framework;
- Engage key policy- and decision-makers;
- Create interfaces between technologists and policy-makers, identifying new technology solutions that have the potential to transform ways of thinking and ways of doing;
- Spur commonsense action with evidence-based strategies to strengthen trust and acceptance of products, services and digital infrastructure.

What was accomplished in DEF's first year

1st Annual Forum on Governance in the Digital Society, June 2012, Luxembourg

The conference was opened by Vice President Viviane Reding of the European Commission, Minister Francois Biltgen of Luxembourg, Mario Campolargo, director at DG CNECT (European Commission) and the President of DEF, Professor George Metakides.

Intensive panel debates encompassed:

- Governance and Security of the Digital Infrastructure;
- Technology, Law and Democratic Legitimacy;
- Data Protection and Privacy Globally;
- Management of Personal Data and Trusted Services in the Cloud.

Digital Enlightenment Yearbook 2012

J. Bus, M. Crompton, M. Hildebrandt and G. Metakides (Eds)

This 332-page book illustrates the broad spectrum and multidisciplinary nature of the issues at stake.

DEF published this first edition with scientists from technology, law and social sciences as well as policy-makers giving their views on the many problems of digitisation in society.

More details are on the DEF website.

From the Yearbook 2012

As access to the Internet provides new capabilities that become constitutive of human thought and social life, we conclude that urgent action is needed in promotion and defense of the Internet and the Web.

Sir Tim Berners Lee e.a.

It is essential that personal data and their market value appear on the radar screen of European legislators and supervisors in the areas of competition policies and consumer protection policies.

Sophie In't Veld (MEP)

Organisation and membership

Board Members

Jacques Bus *Secretary-General*
Advisor DigiTrust.EU, NL

Kim Cameron
Distinguished Engineer Microsoft, CA

Malcolm Crompton
Managing Director IIS, AU

Willie Donnelly
Vice-President Research, WIT, IRL

Mireille Hildebrandt
Professor at University Nijmegen, NL

George Metakides *President*
Professor at University of Patras, Greece

Elly Plooij-van Gorsel
Former Member European Parliament, NL

Bjorn Ottersten
Professor at University Luxembourg, LU

Reinhard Posch
Professor at Graz University, AUT

Kai Rannenberg
Professor at Goethe University, DE

Honorary Members

Sir Tim Berners Lee
Professor at MIT, US

Ann Cavoukian
IP Commissioner, Ontario, CA

Masao Horibe
Em. Professor Hitotsubasi Univ, JP

Michael Kirby
The Hon Michael Kirby, AC MMG

Hamadoun Touré
Secretary-General ITU, CH

Collaborating to Advance the Enlightenment Conversation

DEF collaborates with other organisations dedicated to like issues, sharing similar commitments, including:

■ TDL (Trust in Digital Life). The TDL consortium believes trustworthy ICT solutions must become a commodity enforced by citizens and law. The binding factors of consortium partners are their shared vision, cross-sector research activities, and communication through shared use cases, experiments, and demonstrations in realistic, complex and scalable scenarios and contexts. Find out more at www.trustindigitallife.eu

■ Computers, Privacy & Data Protection Conference, with the aim to bring together academics, practitioners, policy-makers and civil society so they can meet, exchange ideas and discuss emerging issues of information technology, privacy, data protection and law. Find more at: www.cdpconferences.org

■ The European Identity & Cloud Conference (EIC) organised by KuppingerCole Analyst Services. The EIC focuses on identities and access management, their governance and risk management to facilitate innovation- and corporate-value oriented, secure, privacy maintaining information management in businesses, in the cloud, in mobile and social computing. Find out more at: www.kuppingercole.com

For a start, online information can empower citizens. Giving them the facts they need to make informed decisions: whether it's about their travel, their energy use, or their healthcare.

And that information can also help them hold their governments to account.

Neelie Kroes, EC Commissioner

Making 2013 a Pivotal Year

In 2013, we will refine and enhance our most productive activities from 2012 to include:

- Workshops, seminars and Digital Enlightenment Forum 2013 (scheduled for 17-19 September 2013 in Brussels);
- A Digital Enlightenment Yearbook 2013;
- Further development of our website to make it accessible and compelling;
- Increased opportunities to network and cooperate with other organisations;
- Recruitment of members to help the organisation provide a better, more stimulating, accessible and effective platform (both online and offline).
- Provide issue-based white papers to political decision-makers and the media.

We will also introduce a new Crowdsourcing initiative. Our goal will be to use crowdsourcing to bring DEF closer to our other like-minded groups. It can:

- Increase transparency in representation;
- Help us avoid 'groupthink' bias by tapping into a more diversity;
- Gain deeper insights in stakeholder's needs;
- Promote understanding and empathy;
- Expand the size of our talent pool;
- Use the crowd as a catalyst.

Only a democratic polity can ensure an economy that works as if people mattered, and a society at the service of human values and the pursuit of personal happiness.

Manuel Castells
The Rise of the Network Society

Digital Enlightenment Forum Website

Today, visitors of our website can access a range of publications and presentations by leading professionals from diverse disciplines in both public and private sectors.

We are working on changes that will facilitate people to help shape our digital future to share knowledge and have impact. We envision a true platform for collaborative work, discussion, and social innovation.

Call to Action

We have put together what we believe to be a solid foundation. Now it is time to build on it momentum and passion for a Digital Enlightenment Movement among a broader audience. We will both advocate for and model digital democracy.

Increasing numbers of people want to participate in this movement to help determine their own digital destiny. They will truly engage if they think they can participate in meaningful ways. Our mission is to ensure that DEF enables this with new platforms where they can contribute and, eventually, feel and confirm that they are making a difference.

Contact

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