

Opening Speakers



Opening address by Professor Tom Rodden

Professor Tom Rodden is Chief Scientific Adviser for the Department for Digital Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and a Professor of Computing at the University of Nottingham. His research is highly interdisciplinary, bringing together a range of disciplines to tackle the emerging human, social, ethical and technical challenges as computing becomes a ubiquitous feature of our world and we increasingly use personal data and AI technologies.

At Nottingham, he co-leads the Mixed Reality Lab, an interdisciplinary research facility and creative studio that is home to a team of over 70 researchers and media artists with strong links to the creative and cultural industries. He founded and co-directed the RCUK Horizon Digital Economy Research Institute, a university wide interdisciplinary research centre and previously directed the EPSRC Equator IRC which showcased some of the first applications of mobile technologies to support tourism and worked with leading art groups to produce innovative award winning media performances.

Prior to joining DCMS he was Deputy Executive Chair of EPSRC where he was responsible for research strategy and acted as the UKRI lead in both AI and e-Infrastructure, driving several large scale initiatives that span multiple disciplines across UKRI. He is a fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, a Fellow of the ACM and the a Fellow of the BCS.

Reflections from BDFI Academic Co-Directors



Professor Susan Halford

Professor Susan Halford is a Full Professor at the University of Bristol, the Co-Director of the Bristol Digital Futures Institute and Co-Director of the new ESRC Centre for Sociodigital Futures. For many years an organizational sociologist, Susan is well known for her work on the dynamics of organizational change, including digital transformations in the workplace. For the past decade her research has focussed on the politics and practices of digital data, methods and infrastructures, working across the social sciences and engineering, with a focus on questions of knowledge, power and inequality. Most recently, she is working on theoretical and methodological approaches to futures, driving towards inclusive, practical and participatory approaches for collaborative future-making.

She was President of the British Sociological Association from 2018-21 and is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences and the Royal Society of Arts.



Professor Dimitra Simeonidou

Professor Dimitra Simeonidou is a Full Professor at the University of Bristol, the Co-Director of the Bristol Digital Futures Institute and the Director of Smart Internet Lab. Her research is focusing on the fields of high-performance networks, programmable networks, wireless-optical convergence, 5G/6G and smart city infrastructures. She is increasingly working with Social Sciences on topics of digital transformation for society and businesses. Dimitra has been the Technical Architect and the CTO of the smart city project Bristol Is Open. She is currently leading the Bristol City/Region 5G and Open RAN pilots. She is the author and co-author of over 600 publications, numerous patents and several major contributions to standards. She has been co-founder of two spin-out companies, the latest being the University of Bristol VC funded spin-out Zeetta Networks, www.zeetta.com, delivering SDN solutions for enterprise and emergency networks.

Dimitra is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering (FREng), a Fellow of the IEEE (FIEEE) and a Royal Society Wolfson Scholar.