

**Workshop Title:** Supporting and Engaging Diverse and Socially Vulnerable Populations with Technology Adoption Amid COVID-19

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**Abstract:** Due to inequities in society, certain populations have faced barriers to education and access to resources, which has been accentuated amid the COVID-19 pandemic. These socially vulnerable populations often include underserved and marginalized groups. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted many inequities and challenges for said populations especially in regards to technology. Due to the inequities present prior to the pandemic and especially in the face of recovery from the pandemic, a fresh perspective is needed. The workshop will provide a forum for people to discuss key issues and lessons learned on technology adoption among socially vulnerable population during COVID-19. By definition socially vulnerable populations may differ from region to region. In the United States, those often marginalized and underserved include people with disabilities, certain racial and ethnic minorities, older adults, and children, among several other. In general, these populations tend to face disproportionate difficulties before, during, and after major disasters. This multidisciplinary workshop will facilitate lively discussions on the implications of these challenges from a variety of disciplines across an international environment.

**Description:**

*Purpose and Intended Participants:* Researchers and practitioners interested in new perspectives on technology adoption among socially vulnerable populations amid a global pandemic. The intended audience will be open to all researchers and practitioners who are interested in single or multi-disciplinary research, especially at the international level.

*Proposed Format:* The workshop will begin with a poll of the participants to assess the types of barriers they think exist among socially vulnerable populations. The remainder of the workshop will consist of a panel discussion among international practitioners and researchers that have worked to address technology adoption among socially vulnerable populations. A host of countries will be represented by the panelists including the US, China, Cambodia, and other countries. To engage workshop attendees, we will have a moderator with prepared questions to ask each panelist. Following the panelists discussion on their experiences, we will open the floor for questions or commentary. This will ensure the workshop is interactive and participatory. The table below presents an approximate outline of the workshop.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timing</b>
Introductions	15 minutes
Poll of Participants	10 minutes
Panel Speakers (Representatives of Various Countries)	2 hours (about 20 minutes each)
Discussion	40 minutes
Concluding Remarks	15 minutes
Total	3.2 hours

**Engagement:** We will start the workshop with an introduction of the aim of the session and outline the agenda. We will then ask participants to engage in a poll to learn about the challenges they believe exist from socially vulnerable populations. We will ask participants to type their names, affiliations and

locations in the chat window. During panel talks, participants will log questions in the online chat feature. We combine their questions with prepared questions to guide group discussion. The feedback from the groups will be combined to provide a base for recommendations for which we can later share with educators, businesses, and governments to aid in improving diversity and remembering socially vulnerable populations along the way.

**Goals or Outcomes:** The goal of the workshop is to introduce new ideas and to encourage discussion around solutions to challenges in addressing socially vulnerable populations and ensuring diversity in technology adoption and pandemic response across different disciplines.

The outcomes of the workshop will include:

- Fresh awareness of key issues facing socially vulnerable populations from various countries.
- Practitioner recommendations and a research framework of key issues, lessons learned, and technology shortfalls and successes during COVID-19.
- Considerations on how we provide professional suggestions for universal technology use and accessibility as we prepare for the future.
- Promote collaboration across countries on research and practices relevant to technology adoption of socially vulnerable populations.
- Act as a starting point for research and practitioner recommendations and as a base for academic papers.

In addition, the workshop organizers will organize a special issue of the same topic in the Journal of Data and Information Management. Workshop presenters and participants are encouraged to submit papers to this special issue.

**Relevance to the iConference:** The workshop is directly relevant to the theme of iConference 2021 “Diversity, Divergence, Dialogue.” The workshop will create a new dialogue on the importance of diversity, especially given the COVID world in which we all live. It will ensure that diversity and technology adoption is understood in terms of awareness of the wide range of key issues and shared values, which will facilitate greater trust and mutual understanding between communities.

**Duration:** We would expect this to be a Half-Day event at the iConference.

**Attendance:** We would expect 20-50 to attend.

**Special Requirements:** We want each participant to have access to the Chat window, and the organizers have access to the polling. If possible, we need live caption service.