



# The world is changing We need to talk

We need to have  
Brave Conversations

SOUTHAMPTON | MONDAY 6TH JULY, 2020

PART OF THE 12TH INTERNATIONAL  
ACM CONFERENCE ON WEB SCIENCE 2020

Humans, Values, Technology  
Web Science in Practice

The seeds of the post-Covid19 world are being sewn every day and bit by bit we are getting a glimpse of what "life-post-Corona" might look like.

Never before in the history of humanity have we all been faced by the same challenge and been fully aware of it though our digital communications. But this Pandemic has not left cities in ashes, or bodies strewn in battlefields as other events have ... the world has gone in to hibernation whilst we all stay at home and furiously tap on our keyboards and connect via Zoom.

If ever there was a need for a Brave Conversation it is now! As [WebSci20](#) goes online so does our next Brave Conversations and with it comes the opportunity to address the digital world from the inside, being forced to immerse ourselves online in order to connect. What does this mean for our humanity? Our mental health? Our learning? Our medicine and work-life ... the future of our cities, our transport systems and how we see ourselves as a species relating to the natural environment?

Brave Conversations was created to bring Web Science to mainstream conversations that occur in everyday life. It's objective is to demystify the world of emerging technologies and enable an exploration of the impact that these technologies will have on everyday life - our selves, our communities, our societies and our planet. It has always sought to ask difficult questions, to challenge mindsets and to empower those who attend to think more inquisitively about their digitally mediated lives.

This time we will explore what the Covid-19 means for all of us as our 'human centric' perspective is challenged on many levels.

As a core part of this we will deliberately create a space where everyone can be brave, can say the things that they know need to be said, and be prepared to apply intellectual rigour to challenging ideas that might take us to uncomfortable places.

**"And in today, already walks tomorrow."**  
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge

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## Background

In 2008 a group of people from industry, government, academia, and the community sectors came together to create the first Brave Conversations (then called the Meta conference) to create a forum for people to discuss and debate the emerging issues related to humans and their use of digital technologies.

At about the same time a group of luminaries from the Web world were creating Web Science in order to focus interdisciplinary research on precisely the same thing.

Since that time the world has changed and in the last few months has changed almost beyond recognition!

We can all feel that the world ahead is very different from the world behind and for many we have had the time to step back and consider what this might mean.

Brave Conversations will seek to provide all with the opportunity to engage in a robust and challenging dialogue and debate with others from diverse backgrounds about what sort of future we want to create now that the world as we know it has been upended.

“We ... need to be prepared for the internet that we know to evolve unpredictably, and work to ensure that it remains beneficial for humankind.” Professor Dame Wendy Hall & Dr Kieron O’Hara, “Four Internets: The Geopolitics of Digital Governance”

## BRAVE CONVERSATIONS SOUTHAMPTON

**WHEN** Monday 6th July from 9 am to 12pm  
UK time (GMT + 1)

**WHERE** Online - Logon details will be sent to all participants prior to the event.

## REGISTRATION & TICKETS

**Tickets:** <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/brave-conversations-southampton-online-tickets-105774012920>

**More Info:** [www.braveconversations.org/southampton-2020/](http://www.braveconversations.org/southampton-2020/)

## Objectives

The goal of Brave Conversations is to challenge everyone who participates - regardless of what background they come from, or what their skillset and expertise are - to more fully explore and understand the interplay between humans, the technologies we have created and the societies which will emerge from the Pandemic.

We want to empower people to think about what their future lives might be like as a result of this global reset, and to embrace the opportunity to make it all worthwhile through making more informed choices as to how we participate as commercial actors within the economy, and how we operate as digital citizens and exercise our political rights, and how we interact with our environment.

Each of those decisions begin on an individual human level - our bodies and our minds - and then emanates out to our families, communities, societies and from there to nation states. We are all responsible for the world we are creating and never has there been a time when we have more potential to influence the changes around us. But we need to be given the space for robust debate and respectful curiosity, learning from each other, playing with ideas, and asking the questions that are both confronting and potentially will take us to uncomfortable places.

## How it works

The best way to learn is through experience and the act of playing with ideas.

We have deliberately chosen to hold our first fully online Brave Conversations as a part of the 2020 Web Science Conference in Southampton in order to fully immerse ourselves in to the online world and explore both it’s limitations and its benefits. Themes will emerge which will include the Geopolitics of Digital Governance, the future of globalisation and inequality, and the further of work.

Brave Conversations will frame many of the subsequent conversations at the Web Science Conference but also be an opportunity to speak to a broader audience from all walks of life, and for the first time, on a global scale.