



Grand Challenges

Digital Technology and Democracy

February 24, 2023 – Boar's Head Pavilion

Agenda

9:00am – 9:30am	Check in
9:30am – 9:40am	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ian Baucom, Executive Vice President and Provost• Megan Barnett, Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives
9:40am – 10:20am	Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laurent Dubois, Moderator – Steering Committee Chair• Michael Gilbert – Vice Dean, Professor of Law• Steven L. Johnson – Associate Professor of Commerce• Mona Kasra – Associate Professor of Digital Media Design, Drama/Art• David Nemer – Assistant Professor of Media Studies• Siri Russell, Associate Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – School of Data Science
10:20am – 10:30am	Break
10:30am – 11:00am	Small Group Discussion* – 1 st Round
11:00am – 11:30am	Small Group Discussion* – 2 nd Round
11:30am – 12:00pm	Report out and Final Comments
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch and continuing discussion

Key Questions

1. What do you consider to be the most urgent/important problem or question about the relationship between Digital Technology and Democracy today?
2. What do you see as the most useful avenues of research and interpretation for better understanding this problem or question?
3. How can UVA best strengthen and expand its work in the areas you consider most important?

* Small Group Discussion Options

1. Elections, Security and Trust
2. Empowerment, Participation, Deliberation
3. Law, Policy and Leadership



Steering Committee

Laurent Dubois, Chair (Arts & Sciences)

Nau III Bicentennial Professor, History & Principles of Democracy
Director of Academic Affairs, Karsh Institute of Democracy

Jack Davidson (Engineering)

Professor, Computer Science and
Director of Cyber Defense Program of Study

Bertrall Ross (Law)

Marshall Distinguished Professor of Law
Director, Karsh Center for Law and Democracy

Gabrielle Adams (Batten, Darden)

Associate Professor, Public Policy and Business Administration

Dorothy Leidner (McIntire)

Leslie H. Goldberg Jefferson Scholars Foundation
Distinguished Professor of Business Ethics

Siva Vaidhyanathan (Arts & Sciences)

Robertson Professor of Modern Media Studies
Director, Center for Media and Citizenship

About Grand Challenges Research Investments

The University's Great and Good [2030 Plan](#) identifies five priority focus areas for research. This year, we are focusing on building UVA's research capacity in Digital Technology and Society and Precision Medicine/Health. We have charged faculty steering committees to help determine how best to focus our efforts. They are consulting with deans and faculty across Grounds to identify areas of research where UVA could build on its strengths and address urgent societal problems. We appreciate your participation.

Next steps: Later this semester the steering committees will submit white papers recommending areas of focus. They will describe the urgent question to be addressed, give examples of the type of research that would be conducted, detail UVA's strengths in the area and the gaps that would need to be filled, and explain how UVA might be preeminent in this area. With input from the deans and outside experts, the Provost, VPR, and President will determine which areas to invest in. Please note: Grand Challenges is not a proposal process where a specific project or group of faculty is funded. Instead, it builds research capacity through large strategic investments—in cluster hires and significant research infrastructure (equipment, people, and seed funding) to move the needle. These transformative investments are designed to expand and complement our current research portfolio and to benefit many schools and disciplines across Grounds.

For more information, please visit:

<https://research.virginia.edu/Grand-challenges>

We welcome your ideas and comments:

