

## Financialisation of development and the digital “revolution”

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The financialisation of development marks a new stage in the technocratic management of poverty and efforts to widen prosperity through a focus on capital and markets (Mawdsley, 2016; Roy, 2010; World Bank, 2016). Within this context, financial access and financial citizenship (Leyshon 2007; Kear, 2013) have become a necessary foundation for building inclusive prosperous societies. The global financial inclusion agenda has unfolded alongside, and is increasingly being propelled by, a proliferation of digital technologies with an estimated 400 million people linked through mobile payments services and undertaking a diverse range of financial activities from making payments to sending and receiving remittances, as well as acquiring insurance and loans (GSMA, 2015). *Digital* financial inclusion, it is proposed, has the potential to address persistent exclusion as solutions shift from ‘bricks and mortar’ to virtual interventions (CGAP, 2017). Arguably this shift masks scholarly critique of instrumental profit driven inclusion initiatives and the call for more progressive potentials for addressing exclusion (Henry et al., 2017).

Digital financial inclusion pushes this diverse agenda in largely uncharted directions underpinned by the proliferation of (new) technologies, logics, policies, and ecosystems. At the heart of this shift to digital technologies is a rethinking of value. This is evidenced by efforts within the development sector whereby poor people and their assets, knowledges and practices are mined as “new sources of value” (Maurer, 2015: 127; Prahalad, 2010; Roy, 2010). Departing from familiar ICT4D discourses about ‘win-win’ solutions that bridge ‘digital divides’ (Mann 2017), academics have begun to unpick the “crusade against cash” (Mader, 2016), the “fintech-philanthropy-development” complex and the governing of the behaviours of the poor (Gabor and Brooks, 2016). There is also on-going work interrogating the political economy of Big Data, and identifying who benefits from the extraction and commercialisation of data in/from global South countries and their populations (Mann, 2017).

While this body of research serves as invaluable entry points, critical and empirical informed analysis that look at the meso and micro levels of digital finance are lacking. This session seeks to address this gap by bringing attention to (i) the institutional, discursive and material engineering (Ouma, 2014, 2016) undertaken to build digital, especially mobile money and financial ecosystems, and (ii) the new social and material realities and practices that are produced by everyday interaction with digital financial services and technologies.

We welcome contributions from early career and established academics, on topics including but not limited to:

- Digital and financialised development futures;

- Digital financial ecosystems: spaces, technologies, regulations and actors/intermediaries;
- Digital financial citizenships and subjectivities;
- Formal/informal economies of digital finance;
- The domestication of digital financial services/technologies: subversion, resistance and reworking;
- Peripheral/subordinated financialisation, debt and the crisis of social reproduction;
- Digital footprints, algorithmic surveillance and the materiality of digital finance;
- The meaning and reworking of value in the digital era;
- Methodological approaches to studying digital and financialised development.

Please submit your abstract of 300 words by **10th February 2018** to Vincent Guermond ([vincent.guermond@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:vincent.guermond@qmul.ac.uk)) and Sally Brooks ([sally.brooks@york.ac.uk](mailto:sally.brooks@york.ac.uk))