

SERVING DIGITAL CITIZENS

The Digital Cities Initiative

By the year 2050, seven of every ten humans will live in cities. Over the same timeframe, rapid technological change will deeply impact existing notions of governance, civic responsibility, justice and equality.

UCLA Luskin's Digital Cities Initiative aims to understand how emerging technologies can be used wisely and effectively in the public realm to drive economic development while enhancing public services for all citizens.

SERVING DIGITAL CITIZENS

INITIATIVE COMPONENTS

Digital technologies hold the potential to enable more informed citizens, more efficient distribution of scarce urban resources and more participatory government practices. At the same time, they may also accentuate a digital divide, privileging those with easy access to technology and excluding those without. This tension will have profound implications for the next paradigm of urban management, public decision-making and participation, social interaction, and social-scientific methodology.

The goal of this project is to examine how emerging digital technologies can be used wisely and effectively in the public realm. Such an effort will entail cutting-edge critical and empirical research, identification of better practices, and potential interventions to identify and evaluate the digital revolution's impacts on the public sphere.

Collaboration & Engagement

UCLA Luskin's research approach aims to systematically determine the greatest needs of a new, digital civic infrastructure that works for government and all individuals. We also seek to understand the cognitive and technical tools necessary to effectively participate in the developing digital environment. We work with partners in local government, private industry, civil society, and philanthropy, as well as across UCLA, to pursue public interest projects.

Research with Impact

We anticipate that scholars will engage in high-impact cross-disciplinary efforts yielding new methodologies, technological tools and avenues of inquiry. This research is intended to be applied toward projects in the public interest highlighting key components of our democratic governance and social justice agenda.

Teaching & Program Evaluation

UCLA Luskin aims to develop a knowledge base and curriculum for our students, focusing on civic technologies and their ethics, context and potential uses. Throughout, our motivation is critical evaluation — Are our intuitions about the impacts of digital technologies on the public sphere accurate or misguided? Have we meaningfully contributed to the public good and made a positive impact on society?

PARTICIPATORY CONVENINGS

This year, in partnership with our research centers, UCLA Luskin brings together thought leaders through the following forums:

- Luskin Center for Innovation: Public Policy for Innovation in the Digital Age series
- Lewis Center: Annual Lake Arrowhead Symposium
- Lewis Center: Annual Downtown Forum
- UCLA Luskin Conference: "Who Owns the Digital City?"

Through ongoing dialogue and partnerships with the private, technological and public sectors, UCLA Luskin is spearheading a campus-wide initiative in this emerging field, serving as a focal point for further inquiry.

Learn more at luskin.ucla.edu