



Call for Papers

New frontiers of International Business and Human Rights Law in the face of Technological Innovations

IG on International Business and Human Rights Annual Workshop

19th ESIL Annual Conference

4-5-6 September 2024 Vilnius, Lithuania

Technological innovations and scientific discoveries have generated significant transformation within society. Both emerging and more established technologies, such as automation, information technologies, artificial intelligence or robotics or big data technologies, harbour great promise for fostering societal development, well-being and prosperity. Yet, they also raise important challenges due to their impacts on human rights, environmental protection, and ethical implications. In light of this, and in line with the overarching theme of the 19th ESIL Annual Conference on Technological Change and International Law, this year's annual workshop of the Interest Group on Business & Human Rights aims to explore the relationship between technologies and international law from the perspective of business and human rights.

We invite contributions that examine different aspects and questions at the intersection of technological developments, business, and human rights. These may include the role of businesses and/or other actors in addressing or promoting the use of technology to protect human rights or in creating frameworks for ensuring technologies do not undermine human rights; the different approaches to regulation and policy in this field currently adopted or being considered; or the emerging challenges, particularly as related to uncertain risks from technologies, and potential solutions and initiatives that could guide international business

towards a harmonious integration of technology and robust respect for human rights. The workshop aims to initiate discussions on adapting international legal norms to address protection, responsibility, accountability, monitoring, and sanctioning, considering the inter, multi and transdisciplinary intersections of international business, human rights, and technological transformations, and providing participants with an opportunity to contribute to shaping this dynamic infosphere.

The IG on International Business and Human Rights welcomes contributions on, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) examinations of the transformations in international law resulting from new technologies that influence the global relationship between human beings and business;
- 2) how these transformations could impact fundamental rights of individuals and consumers and what vulnerabilities may arise;
- 3) detailed identification and tracking of the legal and ethical implications of technological innovations on international business and human rights;
- 4) proposals for solutions to ensure a balance between progress and the protection of human rights; and
- 5) evaluations of the adequacy of and current or future adaptations in international law concerning business practices.

Simultaneously, the workshop encourages legal debates relevant to issues such as: data privacy versus protection of individual rights; safeguarding indigenous knowledge and traditional cultural expressions in the global economy and beyond; the impact of artificial intelligence in international business when autonomous decisions are made and how responsibilities can be established in this context; how the use of blockchain technology can influence international transactions; the social responsibility of businesses in the technological era, considering the effects on employees, communities, and the environment; the incidence of new developments on specific industries and their relevance to health, energy, and education; as well as international standards and the harmonisation, updating, and monitoring of compliance with legislation on a global scale.

We also very much welcome contributions taking critical or inter, multi and transdisciplinary approaches to the topic.

Date/ time and Location

Date: Wednesday 4th September (exact time tbc)

Location: Vilnius, in person and online

Selection

The aim of the Workshop is to foster an interdisciplinary exchange with leading experts from diverse disciplines and communities of practice.

ESIL selection criteria:

- Originality
- Methodology
- Relevance to the theme
- Geographical and gender balance

We also aim to ensure balance between more senior scholars and early career researchers. The IG co-conveners will decide and inform submitters about the results by the end of April 2024.

How to Submit

Submission deadline: 20th April 2024

Please, email your CV and abstract in pdf (max 400 words) to: esilighbhr@gmail.com indicating in the object of your email "ESIL IG BHR Call for Papers".

Programme

We aim to organize the presentation and discussion of the selected papers into different thematic blocks. A detailed programme of the workshop will be circulated and published by the end of May 2024.

Early-Career Scholar Prize

Early career scholars may apply for the Early-Career Scholar Prize. The prize is awarded by the ESIL Board.

Young scholars who may wish to apply for this prize should indicate this in their abstract submission, if they meet the [eligibility conditions](#) as stated on the ESIL website. The ESIL secretariat must be informed of all selected speakers who wish to be considered for the Prize before 30th April 2024.

Important Information

The Interest Group is unable to provide funding for travel and accommodation. Selected speakers will be expected to bear the costs of their own travel and accommodation. Some ESIL [travel grants](#) and ESIL [carers' grants](#) will be available to offer partial financial support to speakers

who have exhausted other potential sources of funding. Please see the ESIL website for all relevant information about the conference.

All participants at ESIL Interest Group workshops are required to register for the Annual Conference. There will be an option to register just for one day to attend the workshop; however, all participants are warmly invited to attend the entire event.

We wish everyone a successful academic year and are looking forward to meeting you at our annual workshop! For any questions, please email us at: esiligbhr@gmail.com.

Your conveners:

Nina Hart
Belen Olmos Giupponi
Emanuela Orlando
Cristina Popa Tache