



# DISCO SUMMIT 2024

The DISCO Summit is an interdisciplinary symposium with nine panel conversations about the past, present, and future of the intersection between digital technology, culture, race, disability, gender, sexuality, and liberation. This event is free and open to the public. The DISCO Summit is hosted by the DISCO Network, a collaborative, intergenerational group of scholars across five universities (University of Michigan, Northwestern University, The University of Maryland–College Park, Stony Brook University, Georgia Institute of Technology) dedicated to envisioning a new anti-racist and anti-ableist digital future.

## HYBRID EVENT

**LOCATION: WEISER HALL, 10TH FLOOR, UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-ANN ARBOR + ZOOM**

Masks will be provided at the event space. Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) services will be provided. Email [chericec@umich.edu](mailto:chericec@umich.edu) with questions.



### REGISTRATION REQUIRED



### Thanks to our co-sponsors



## DAY 1

### Digital Optimism

**Lisa Nakamura, Ray Fouché, Stephanie Dinkins, André Brock, Remi Yergeau, Catherine Knight Steele** 9:00 am – 10:15 am

Optimism is the belief that the interval between the now and liberation is where we can act. Digital optimism is the recognition that there are elements of life that vivify and energize in the here and the now, despite and amidst the digital purgatories that we endure. Sometimes that energy is found in stillness; sometimes in refusal; and sometimes in moments of catharsis or joy. This panel will explore the concept of digital optimism as it appears in DISCO's collaborative writing and work together

### Digital Frictions

10:30 – 11:45 am

**Remi Yergeau, David Adelman, Jeff Nagy, Aimi Hamraie, Jaipreet Virdi, and Mara Mills**

In their manifesto on crip technoscience, Kelly Fritsch and Aimi Hamraie (2019) impress upon us that access production is a "frictional process," one that requires "acknowledging that science and technology can be used to both produce and dismantle injustice." This roundtable explores the frictional intimacies, practices, and material conditions of what it means to do the digital. In particular, panelists will consider myriad ways in which accessibility holds the potential to burn, grate, spark, and tug at new imaginings of crip futures.

### Digital Black Feminist Pleasure and Pain Online

1:00 – 2:15 pm

**Catherine Knight Steele, Rianna Walcott, Francesca Sobande, and Kishonna Gray**

The experiences of Black women online serve as a harbinger of what digital culture affords and what is to come. This panel thinks through the relationship between pleasure and pain in the online lives of Black women and how Black feminist methods, epistemologies, and strategies may point us toward a better digital future for us all.

### Little Memes: Storying Race, Gender, and Disability in the Digital Studies Classroom

2:30 – 3:45 pm

**Remi Yergeau, Huan He, and Toni Bushner**

How do students' stories about themselves or others—their anecdotal relations—inform their burgeoning understandings of digital inequality and related concepts? In this session, we reflect on student interviews and instructor experiences drawn from a study of five U-M Digital Studies classes focused on race and disability.

### Black Digital Optimism in an Age of Despair

4:00 – 5:15 pm

**André Brock, Kevin Winstead, Brandy Pettijohn, Apryl Williams, and Ngozi Harrison**

This panel will discuss what social media activity looks like for Black folk at a time when economic disparity, geopolitical extremism, and the ongoing pandemic loom behind every post, tweet, video, and podcast.

## DAY 2

### Black Innovation

9:00 – 10:15 am

**Rayvon Fouché, Aaron Dial, Ron Eglash, Michael Bennett, Aria Halliday, and Tonia Sutherland**

Black folks have a tradition of being innovative in ways not understood and expected by traditional markets, dominant cultural formations, or information platforms. As the world is enamored, fascinated, enraptured, troubled, or simply confused by the potentiality of generative AI, is there a place and a role for Blackness to participate, contribute, or intervene? How can Blackness and Black innovation and creativity disrupt expected technoscientific futures?

### Digital Possibilities

10:30 – 11:45 am

**Stephanie Dinkins, Hagar Masoud, Ria Rajan, Cezanne Charles, and Audrey Bennet**

"Digital Possibilities" presents an intergenerational panel of arts practitioners who explore the critical role deliberate exploration and practical research play in understanding and shaping digital technologies and culture. The panel showcases the transformative power deeply engaging digital technologies can have on molding practical, aspirational, and equitable understandings of self and society.

### Majority World Digital Infrastructures

1:00 – 2:15 pm

**Lisa Nakamura, Huan He, Jasmine Banks, Marisa Duarte, Ivan Chaar Lopez, and Meryem Kamil**

Digital infrastructure shapes access, representation, and cultural politics. Indigenous, Asian and Southeast Asian, Palestinian, U.S. Mexico border, and women of color uses of digital networks are often represented as niche or marginal, sequestered in area studies, ethnic studies, and women studies, yet the U.S. and Western Europe are the numerical minority.

### Legibility and Community

2:30 – 3:45 pm

**Huan He, Kevin Winstead, David Adelman, Aaron Dial, Jeff Nagy, Rianna Walcott, and Brandy Pettijohn**

As junior scholars, the Digital Inquiry Speculation Collaboration Optimism (DISCO) Network postdoctoral fellows faced unique challenges negotiating the tensions of being legible for academic employment and serving digital studies projects that foster collaboration and community. This panel discusses best practices for being young career scholars in critical identity and digital studies.

# 14-15 JUNE 2024

[www.disconetwork.org](http://www.disconetwork.org)

