



**UNITED NATIONS  
UNIVERSITY**

## **THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

### **RESEARCH GROUP CONCEPT NOTE**

*APRIL 2017*

#### **About the Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age**

The global gender digital divide is growing: 200 Million fewer women own a mobile phone; 250 Million fewer women use the internet; Only 6% of app developers are women and women hold only 10% of tech jobs in Silicon Valley. Through gathering of data, sharing of knowledge, and direct action, the Partnership will work to change this trend closing the gap by 2030 and meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goal target of empowering women through their use of technology.

In this context, the **Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age** is a multi-stakeholder initiative created to promote awareness; build political commitment, leveraging knowledge, efforts, and resources for the greatest possible impact to achieve digital gender equality at both the global and national levels.

The partnership will focus on: affordable access to technology and the Internet; skills on how to use technology, from basic digital literacy through the entire spectrum of STEM education; and continuing to improve lives and allow women to advance professionally through equal representation within the technology sector.

#### **About the Research Group**

The Research Group is a crosscutting body of the Global Partnership. Lead by the **United Nations University Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS)**, the group employs an evidence-based approach bringing together data, collaborative platforms, and analysis in the furtherance of the goals of the Partnership. The three action areas (Access, Skills and Leadership), which make up key substantive foci of the Partnership, will identify central research questions that will frame the activities of the Research Group in support of the Partnership's efforts towards its targets. Members of the Research Group agree to contribute relevant data as well as subject matter, methodology and analysis expertise. The Research Group's functions will include:

- Developing the broad research agenda for the Partnership;
- Reviewing the goals and knowledge needs for the three action areas and advising on data requirements and appropriate indicators to collect;
- Supporting efforts to source relevant primary and secondary data;
- Providing methodology and analytical expertise to ensure high quality research and appropriate interpretation of the data collected;
- Analyzing the data provided to track progress towards Partnership targets;
- Developing articles, case study reports, white papers, and other research and policy outputs;
- Facilitating knowledge sharing and dissemination of Partnership outcomes to promote learning.



### **About the Research Group Leader**

The Research Group Leader will collaboratively develop the research strategy of the Group based on the needs and priorities of the Partnership. The Leader will develop and host a data sharing and collaboration platform; will assist in coordinating the Group's overall work plans; and will archive and organize various Group outputs including datasets, analytic results, reports and white papers. The Leader of the Group will facilitate dialogue among the Members and will convene biannual virtual meetings, which will be used to discuss strategies, establish targets, and launch evidence-gathering partnerships among the Members. Additional meetings will be organized as necessary.

### **About the Research Group Members**

Any academic or research entity may join the Research Group including universities, private sector organizations, governments and civil society groups with research departments. Members of the Research Group will share an interest in and passion for high-quality research and agree to:

1. Help ensure an evidence-based approach to the work of the Partnership, grounded in data shared across the Group.
2. Contribute one or more tangible inputs from the following list:
  - a. Research funds;
  - b. Relevant data;
  - c. Research analysis, for example drawn from ongoing faculty research;
  - d. Faculty and/or student time, such as designating student and scholar time to specific Research Group projects;
3. Cooperate, through the forthcoming data and collaboration platform, in the elaboration of relevant research questions and puzzles, which will help to inform Group activities.
4. Participate in biannual virtual meetings of the Group.
5. As and when identified, participate in proposal writing and join in Group requests to external parties for resources to support our work.

### **Benefits of Joining the Research Group**

- Contribution to one of the most critical research and policy puzzles of our time;
- Access to research funding opportunities;
- Access to collaboration opportunities with an extensive community of researchers;
- Access to data from the Partnership members;
- Opportunities for knowledge exchange and transfer;
- Opportunities for your work to be featured on UN platforms;
- Opportunities for your work to have significant policy and practical impact;
- Research capacity building and learning opportunities for students and new researchers.



### **Initial Research Priorities**

During the first physical meeting of the Partnership, held during ITU Telecom World 2016, participants identified the following central areas for action:

<b>Access</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Leadership</b>
<i>Strategies &amp; Policies</i>	<i>Recruitment</i>	<i>Digital Entrepreneurship</i>
<i>Affordability</i>	<i>Mentorship</i>	<i>Mentorship</i>
<i>Infrastructure</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Recruitment</i>
<i>Safety</i>	<i>Administration</i>	<i>Retention and Content</i>

Examples of associated research interests include:

- Assessing the effectiveness of existing national policies on gender and technology access;
- Obtaining gender-disaggregated data on the cost of connectivity;
- Determining what types of mentorship programs are most effective;
- Determining what skills training approaches and content are most effective.