

PRESS RELEASE

The signing of the new agreement consolidates Digital Future Society as a key player in the promotion of technological humanism at a global level

- The Secretary of State for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence, Red.es and the Mobile World Capital Barcelona Foundation sign a new deal to continue the Digital Future Society program.
- The objective is to conduct actions to collaborate in the construction of a digital transformation that promotes a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable society.
- The pact is signed for two years and will have a total financing of 7M€.

Barcelona, 20 July, 2022.- The Secretary of State for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence, Red.es and the Mobile World Capital Barcelona Foundation have signed a new collaboration agreement to continue the Digital Future Society program. The three institutions will work together to lead the space for reflection and analysis of the challenges and dilemmas arising from technological disruption and innovation; explore solutions that will allow us to move towards an equal society; inclusive and sustainable in the digital era; as well as to consolidate Barcelona as a capital of technological humanism within the European Union.

The agreement has a **budget of seven million euros** to develop the program's activities. In this sense, among the main lines of activity it is worth highlighting the **research** and knowledge exchange on some of the ethical, social, legal, environmental or inclusion challenges that emerge in the design, use and governance of digital technologies.

On the other hand, the program also focuses on the identification of innovative **technological and digital solutions**, which help to deal with social, economic and/or environmental challenges.

Another key area of activity will be actions aimed at **empowering citizens** and their territorial impact, with the design and implementation of activities and projects that help to increase the level of digital literacy, to reinforce critical thinking and encourage citizen participation.

Finally, the agreement points out the **organization of events and performances to involve relevant global players** in the city of Barcelona, to analyse key aspects of today's digital agenda.

The new agreement establishes a framework for program development in collaboration with the individual efforts of technology experts, academics, businesses, civic organizations, policy makers, governments, and entrepreneurs, to analyse the ethical, legal and inclusion challenges that spring from digital transformation and have an impact on society. Based on this analysis, the deal proposes joint actions to create common spaces to find solutions and proposals to the challenge of the digital era, with the purpose of influencing the construction of a digital transformation process that promotes a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable society.

Work pillars

The guidelines of action proposed in the agreement explore the most imminent challenges caused by the digital emergency, setting out four key pillars.

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The first one discusses **digital gaps**, understood in the plural as barriers to authentic digital inclusion and that are affecting the most vulnerable social groups. Secondly, the subject matter is raised in relation to the human-machine, which addresses advances in the development and implementation of emergent technologies – such as artificial intelligence, internet of things, distributed energy, sustainable energy, and satellite systems, blockchain... and its ethical challenges.

The third pillar focuses on **technology for sustainability**, stressing on tasting technological solutions with the objective of mitigating the challenges generated by this. The fourth area addresses the **impact of new digital media around virtual environments**, such as the metaverse or immersive reality, which, although they are very recent innovations, raise doubts and questions about ethics, responsibility, and inclusiveness.

The CEO of Mobile World Capital Barcelona, Francesc Fajula, has highlighted "*the importance of consolidating the Digital Future Society as a lever for analysis, debate and connection with the key players of the global digital agenda and position Barcelona as the capital and reference for Catalonia, Spain and Europe in technological humanism*". Fajula has emphasized the need to move towards public-private collaboration and "*face the challenges posed by an accelerated digital transformation, such as the existence of digital divide or the lack of regulation around the use of emerging technologies*".

On the other hand, the Secretary of State for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence, Carme Artigas, acknowledged the clever work of the last years and, moreover, he has pointed out that "*we sign this new agreement coinciding with the moment in which the MWC has confirmed that it will continue to be held in Barcelona until 2030. In this way, we continue to strengthen our commitment to position Spain and the city of Barcelona as a world reference for an unprecedented technological revolution. The Spanish government's commitment is clear: we will only bring the maximum benefit from the digital transformation if it is productive, fair and reaches everyone*".

The general manager of Red.es, Alberto Martínez Lacambra, reaffirmed the importance of continuing to collaborate in projects such as this one, which highlight the efforts of many and varied actors working towards an increasingly digital society. A transformation that, while responding to new needs through emerging technologies, leaves no one behind and always places people at the centre of innovation, investment, and progress.

ABOUT DIGITAL FUTURE SOCIETY

Digital Future Society, an initiative promoted by the First Vice Presidency -Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation- of the Government of Spain, Red.es, and the Mobile World Capital Barcelona Foundation, which seeks to build a more inclusive, fair and sustainable future in the digital age. With this objective, it connects institutions, corporations, civic organizations and academia to generate debate, share knowledge, create solutions for the challenges presented by digital progress and bring them closer to citizens. Digital Future Society works in four key areas: public innovation; trust and digital security; equitable growth; and inclusion and citizen empowerment.

ABOUT MOBILE WORLD CAPITAL

Mobile World Capital Barcelona is an initiative that drives the digital development of society and helps improve people's lives globally. With public and private support, MWCcapital focuses its activity on four areas: accelerating innovation through digital entrepreneurship; the transformation of the industry through digital technology; the growth of digital talent among new generations and professionals; and reflection on the impact of technology on our society. As a whole, our programs positively transform the economy, education and society. MWCcapital hosts MWC in Barcelona and is the founder of 4 Years From Now (4YFN), the business platform for the startup community present at all MWC events around the world.

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