



# WES Online Series: Meaningful Work in the Digital Economy

Wednesday 4 – Friday 6 September 2024  
Online

## Speakers

**Jason Arday** is the 2002 Professorial Chair in the Sociology of Education at the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education. He is a Trustee of the Runnymede Trust, the UK's leading Race Equality Thinktank and the British Sociological Association (BSA). Jason sits on the Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS) National Advisory Panel, the NHS Race and Health Observatory Academic Reference Group and the ITV Cultural Advisory Council. Jason's research focuses on the areas of race and higher education, intersectionality and education, mental health and education, neurodiversity and cultural studies.

**Shoba Arun** is Reader in Work and Organization Studies at Essex Business School. Her research interests have a strong international and comparative dimension with expertise on emerging economies such as India and Africa in the nexus of their global work, neoliberal regimes, organizations and labour markets, migration, digital technology, and global value chains with a focus on social justice and well-being. She has been recently awarded a UKRI funded project exploring autonomy in the garment sector workplaces of Leicester and Dhaka, focusing on workplace control and autonomy. Her recent books include, *Development and Gender Capital in India: Change, Continuity and Conflict in Kerala* (Routledge, 2018); and a (co)edited volume, *Global Migration and Diversity of Educational Experiences in the Global South and North* (2023). She is an Editorial Board member of the *Work, Employment and Society Journal*.

**Katie Bailey** is Professor of Work and Employment at Kings College London and Professor of Leadership and HRM at Northumbria University. Her research focuses on meaning and purpose at work, temporality and interstitial times and spaces in organisations, employee engagement, and strategic human resource management. Katie founded the Meaning and Purpose Network (MaPNet) based at King's Business School, which brings together organisational and HR leaders to debate and discuss the latest thinking on how organisational purpose can be developed, and the challenges of implementation. She has published extensively, and is a co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Meaningful Work* (OUP, 2019).

**James Farrar** is the Founder & Director of Worker Info Exchange (WIE). After leaving a career in tech James became an activist for worker rights in the gig economy. He was a claimant in the landmark worker rights case against Uber recently decided in favour of workers by the UK Supreme Court. James founded Worker Info Exchange having realized that surveillance and hidden unfair algorithmic management would be the next stage in the battle for worker rights in the gig economy. WIE has gone on to successfully litigate against Uber and Ola Cabs to secure worker access to personal data and protection from unfair automated decision making.

**Sara Farris** is a Reader in Sociology at Goldsmiths University of London. Her research focuses on gender, migration, care economies and social reproduction, theories of nationalism and racism. She is the author of *Max Weber's theory of personality. Individuation, politics and orientalism in the sociology of religion* (Brill 2013) and in the name of women's rights. *The rise of femonationalism* (Duke UP 2017). She is the founder and co-convenor of the BSA study group on Care and Social Reproduction, of the Corporate Care Observatory and an editor of *Work, Employment and Society*.

**Ursula Huws** is the founder and editor of the international, interdisciplinary journal *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalisation*. She is an independent writer and researcher and Director of Analytica Social & Economic Research. Previously professor of Labour and Globalisation at the University of Hertfordshire, and Professor of International Labour Studies at London Metropolitan University, she has been carrying out pioneering research on the economic and social impacts of technological change and the changing international division of labour for many years. Her recent books include *Labour in Contemporary Capitalism: What Next?* (2019) and *Reinventing the Welfare State: Digital Platforms and Public Policy*: London: Pluto Press, 2020. Her Forthcoming book is on *The Politics of Unpaid Labour. How Can the Study of Unpaid Labour Help to Address Inequality in Precarious Work*, Oxford University Press.

**Knut Laaser** is a Senior Researcher at the Brandenburg University of Technology Cottbus– Senftenberg and a Senior Lecturer at the University of Stirling. Most recently, he has developed together with Jan Ch. Karlsson a conceptual framework for understanding Meaningful/Meaningless Work as a dynamic continuum that is embedded in the Politics of Working Life. This research was published most recently by Cambridge University Press under the title 'The Politics of Working Life and Meaningful Waged Work'. The book rests on the SAGE-award winning WES Article 'Towards a Sociology of Meaningful Work' that Knut coauthored with Jan Ch. Karlsson. Knut has also published on the Moral Economy of Work and Employment in various journals and is an Editor of *Work, Employment and Society*.

**Marjo Lips-Wiersma** is Professor of Ethics and Sustainability Leadership at AUT. Her research takes place at the nexus of meaningful work, sustainability and hope. Marjo's research on meaningful work is used in a variety of community and commercial organisations around the world and she is chair of the board of the Map of Meaning International (<https://www.themapofmeaning.org>) which, through training and certifying practitioners, helps individuals and organisations to create and maintain meaningful work. Marjo has published in journals such as the *Journal of Business Ethics*, the *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, the *Journal of Management Studies*, *Leadership Quarterly*, *Human Relations*, *Group & Organization Management* and the *Journal of Management Inquiry* and has been a member of several editorial boards.

**Valeria Pulignano** is a sociologist of work and professor at KU Leuven where she holds a Francqui research professorship and research precarious work, freelancing and platformization in the professions. Valeria's research lies in employment (industrial) relations and labour markets, their changing nature and implications for voice at work, precarity and inequality as differences in wages, working conditions, job quality and wellbeing. She is the Principal Investigator for Fairwork Belgium. She is also the PI of the ERC AdG ResPecTMe "Resolving Precariousness: Advancing the Theory and Measurement of Precariousness Across the Paid/Unpaid Continuum". She is Winner of the James G. Scoville Award 2015 from LERA and she holds a Chair Jacques Leclercq at UCL. She has a forthcoming book with Oxford University Press on *The Politics of Unpaid Labour. How can Unpaid Labour help to address inequality in Precarious Work?* Other recent books include *Shifting Solidarities*. (2020, Palgrave-MacMillan); *Reconstructing Solidarity* (2018, Oxford University Press).