DISCO Network at U-M Digital Studies Institute to Host DISCO Summit

April 26, 2024

Ann Arbor, MI - The Digital Inquiry, Speculation, Collaboration, & Optimism (DISCO) Network, housed within the University of Michigan Digital Studies Institute, will host the inaugural DISCO Summit, an interdisciplinary symposium about the past, present, and future of the intersection between digital technology, culture, race, disability, gender, and liberation.

The DISCO Summit will take place Friday, June 14th and Saturday, June 15th, 2024 at Weiser Hall on the U-M Ann Arbor campus and will be live-streamed via Zoom webinar. The event is free and open to the public.

The two-day symposium will host speakers from around the world for nine panel conversations about digital racial inequality, histories of exclusion, disability justice, and racial politics within academics, technology, and beyond. The DISCO Summit will be the first in-person convening of the DISCO Network's national network of over 30 scholars — from senior faculty to graduate students. The DISCO Network welcomes scholars, students, artists, practitioners, activists, and community members to attend and engage in intergenerational dialogue, build interdisciplinary connections, and learn about advances in the field of digital studies.

The DISCO Network explores the current post-pandemic digital landscape by both analyzing the ways that the digital state has perpetuated existing social and racial inequalities and envisioning a new anti-racist, anti-ableist digital future. The DISCO Network creates a collective by (1) building an academic pipeline for students and junior scholars interested in pursuing training in critical digital methodologies, (2) creating a mutual support and mentorship network for marginalized scholars, (3) offering lectures, roundtables, and programming about cutting edge digital topics, (4) writing rapid response articles and books on current events in digital racial politics, and (5) bringing a humanistic perspective about race, gender, disability, and technological exclusion to undergraduate students outside of the humanities.

The DISCO Network comprises six labs across five universities: University of Michigan, Northwestern University, Stony Brook University, University of Maryland, and Georgia Institute of Technology. Each lab brings together an interdisciplinary group of faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, artists, and activists who have collectively broken new ground in digital studies, ethnic studies, gender and sexuality studies, technology studies, disability studies, and media studies. The DISCO Network is funded by the Mellon Foundation.

Register here to attend the DISCO Summit. For press inquiries, contact Cherice Chan, DISCO Network Program Coordinator, at chericec@umich.edu.

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