



L-r Dr Marios Constantinides, Professor Mark Graham and Dr Marta Cecchinato

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## Keeping up with technology in the workplace

**Northumbria University, Newcastle, has hosted an international symposium exploring how advances in computing and automation are radically changing the way we work.**

The Symposium on Human-Computer Interaction for Work ([CHIWORK 2024](#)) included discussions on peer-reviewed research published in the prestigious ACM Digital Library and keynote addresses from internationally-recognised experts. Understanding human-computer interaction (HCI) is a critical aspect

in helping workers navigate rapid changes in working environments, which might include novel computing devices, interacting with Artificial Intelligence (AI) agents, and the growth of automation.

Among the key speakers, [Professor Mark Graham](#), Professor of Internet Geography at the Oxford Internet Institute, talked about AI as an “extraction machine”. He discussed how research can be deployed to force AI companies to act more responsibly.

Professor Graham said: “Human beings are the often-hidden force that powers AI - both through their labour, and through their knowledge and creativity going into training data. If we want a democratic future, in which people have decent jobs, we need to act now, to ensure that the future of AI is determined by all of us, not just a privileged elite.”

The closing address was made by Dr Saiph Savage, Assistant Professor at Northeastern University and director of Civic AI Lab. Recognised as one of the 35 Innovators under 35 by the MIT Technology Review, her talk introduced her the AI for Worker Collective Action Framework that emphasises the need for worker centric technologies prioritising their well-being.

The symposium was organised by [Dr Marta Cecchinato](#), Assistant Professor in Human Computer Interaction at Northumbria, and [Dr Marios Constantinides](#), Senior Research Scientist at Nokia Bell Labs, Cambridge.

Dr Cecchinato said: “The aim of CHIWORK 2024 was to grow our understanding of how HCI can support work and wellbeing in the future – and how ordinary people can navigate through an environment of such rapid and fundamental technological change. We were delighted to attract so many high-quality speakers and researchers to Northumbria, and for the insightful and engaging discussion they helped to facilitate.” Dr. Constantinides added, “CHIWORK 2024 has successfully set a new benchmark for advancing our knowledge of how HCI and AI research will shape the future of work, creating an environment for publishing blue-sky research.”

Northumbria undertakes globally significant research in the field of [computerised society and digital citizens](#). The University also has a global reputation for research and teaching in AI and was recently awarded £9 million by UK Research and Innovation to establish a Centre for Doctoral Training in the field of AI. To be known as the Citizen-Centred AI (CCAI), it

will focus on the inclusion of citizens in the design and evaluation of AI – helping to make the rapidly advancing technology work for ordinary people.

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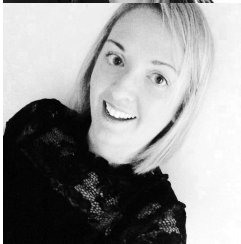


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