

# **HACKING EVERYTHING: THE CULTURES AND POLITICS OF HACKERS AND SOFTWARE WORKERS**

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## **Abstract:**

Whether it's geopolitical or security hacking, big-tech's software workers leaking the injustices of their companies, or cryptocurrency geeks gaming the financial markets - people who work with our software and computers, harvest our data, or hack into our systems, are gaining political and cultural significance. This podcast panel invites all researchers who study what it is to be a hacker, computer engineer, or work with computers, software, or digital platforms, and/or what it means to hack technical, individual, state or corporate powers.

As we frame this EASST conference around the politics of technoscientific futures, this panel brings to the fore research around the actors shaping, building, maintaining, hacking, programming, processing or managing the regimes of data collection, knowledge, and control, within the computing systems we use today.

Inspired by research around hacker cultures, such as Chris Kelty's work among free software communities, Biella Coleman's work on the Debian communities (2012) and the politically-motivated hacker collective Anonymous (2014), or Stuart Geiger's embedded ethnography in Wikipedia (2017 with Halfaker) - this panel shines a light on the people who build our opaque and oftentimes contentious technical worlds. By using other modes of knowledge production, we wish to challenge the role of the STS scholar in describing the powers and agencies, and the practices and struggles of hacker or software cultures - a challenge that, in our increasingly complex, commodified technical worlds might never be fulfilled.

As an "alternative format" this panel brings it's panelists in conversations with the panel organizers in the form of a podcast series. Instead of traditional powerpoint presentations, panelists will be asked to present their research in the form of a 15-20 minute minute podcast programme - through dialogue with the panel organizers. While panelists will be given the usual time to speak and present their work, the podcast format as an informed conversation is aimed to create another form of engagement with research, pushing academics to discuss their work with a wider audience. With the panelist's consent, this podcast will also be published and made available after the conference is over.

## **Key words:**

software, hackers, computing