**Big Data Analytics and Text Mining: Monitoring and Evaluating Disability and Development for SDGs and CRPD Implementation**

**Organizer: Institute on Disability and Public Policy, American University**

**Co-Organizer: UN DESA/DSPD/Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**1 December 2017**

**1:15 pm – 2:30 pm | Conference Room A, UN Headquarters, New York**

*This event will be hosted virtually at* [**https://tinyurl.com/IDPD-Side-Event**](https://tinyurl.com/IDPD-Side-Event)

**Overview**

Monitoring and implementing major global policy frameworks for persons with disabilities is critical after agreement has been reached on the frameworks themselves. This is the case currently with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This side event will present concrete examples in which big data and text mining research can contribute to monitoring, evaluation and implementation of the SDGs and CRPD, and contribute to the upcoming 2018 Flagship Report on Disability and Development for the UN General Assembly.

Computational text mining has the potential to extract key trends and concerns among voices of decision-makers and experts working on disability as well as persons with disabilities worldwide. Over the past year, IDPP, in collaboration with UN DESA, has demonstrated the efficacy of these techniques by analyzing CRPD State Party Reports and Shadow Reports to identify global priorities and progress in implementing the Convention. IDPP has also analyzed the annual reports of major international development organizations to evaluate progress on inclusion of persons with disabilities in line with the goals and targets of the SDGs.

Social media has exploded as a discussion and information dissemination platform for all, including persons with disabilities. Text mining studies of Twitter messages can identify key trends in these worldwide discussions. Recent research has identified the main topics among Twitter messages exchanged in relation with the Mental Health Day.

Finally, smartphone and online applications can crowdsource information across the world about accessibility to built environment of cities. The *Accessibility Cloud*, a platform that compiles information crowdsourced by major accessibility smartphone and online applications, already contains data about one million places classified according to their accessibility for persons with disabilities.

During this side event, experts will discuss the findings from these studies as well as debate the impact and implications of big data analytics and text mining on national, regional, and global levels. They will present recommendations for using these innovative forms of data analysis to create more focused and evidence-based implementation mechanisms. Finally, the moderator will open the floor for questions and feedback on the studies and projects.

**Program and Speakers**

**Moderator: Ambassador Luis Gallegos,** Chair, Joint Advisory Board, Institute on Disability and Public Policy; Chair, G3ICT; Senior Fellow, UNITAR; Former Chair, UN Task Force to Negotiate the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; Former Ambassador of Ecuador to the United States

**Dr. Maria Martinho**, Social Affairs Officer, UN DESA/DSPD/SCRPD

* Dr. Martinho will provide an overview of the opportunities and challenges of innovative sources of evidence to inform disability policy-making. She will illustrate these issues by an example of using social media to assess gender balance in leadership positions among persons with disabilities.

**Dr. Derrick L. Cogburn,** Associate Professor, Information Technology and Analytics, Kogod School of Business; International Communication and International Development, School of International Service; and Executive Director, Institute on Disability and Public Policy, American University

* Dr. Cogburn will describe what is meant by the terms big data and analytics, and describe some of the methodologies and techniques used to analyze large scale text-based data sets, including social media, speeches, published articles, email archives, and reports. He will present the findings from his research on State Party Reports and Shadow Reports to assess priorities and progress in implementation of the CRPD, and provide an overview of how his team is text mining for disability content in implementation of the SDGs.

**Ms. Chiara Bargagianni,** Data Scientist, The AvantGarde Group / CeRTeM and University of Genoa, Italy

* Ms. Bargagianni will present her own research on using the social media platform Twitter to identify key topics discussed during the Mental Health day.

**Mr. Jason DaSilva,** Founder, AXS Map

* Mr. DaSilva will present the smartphone and online application AXS Map which crowdsources information on accessibility of places open to the public in any location worldwide. He will also discuss how this application could be extended to monitor accessibility of schools for persons with disabilities.

**Mr. Holger Dieterich,** Creator, Accessibility.cloud

* Mr. Dieterich will present the Accessibility Cloud, a platform that compiles information crowdsourced by major accessibility smartphone and online applications, contains already about one million places classified according to their accessibility for persons with disabilities.