



# OPPORTUNITY

20

SCOPE **WITHIN REACH**

## UNCERTAINTIES

Technology, Values

## MEGATRENDS

Borderless World–Fluid Economies

## TRENDS

- Digital Communities
- Future of Purpose & Work
- Human–Human
- Mobilising Innovation
- Cross-sectoral Partnerships

## SECTORS IMPACTED

- Agriculture & Food
- Automotive, Aerospace & Aviation
- Chemicals & Petrochemicals
- Communication Technologies & Systems
- Consumer Goods, Services & Retail
- Cyber & Information Security
- Data Science, AI & Machine Learning
- Digital Goods & Services
- Education
- Energy, Oil, Gas & Renewables
- Financial Services & Investment
- Government Services
- Health & Healthcare
- Immersive Technologies
- Infrastructure & Construction
- Insurance & Reinsurance
- Logistics, Shipping & Freight
- Manufacturing
- Materials & Biotechnology
- Art, Media & Entertainment
- Metals & Mining
- Professional Services
- Real Estate
- Sports
- Travel & Tourism
- Utilities

## What if we designed inclusive networking economies?

# THE 'NETWORK' DIVIDE

As the network-based economy grows and creates opportunities for its participants, design inclusive networks through strategies that emphasise synergy, cooperation, and progress, reducing exclusive dominance and enhancing innovation.





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## WHY IT MATTERS TODAY

Over the past four decades, the internet has brought significant gains in productivity, access to information, and employment.<sup>498</sup> As a network connecting people and organisations locally, regionally and globally, the internet has facilitated global platforms, some of which are the largest companies in the world: for example (with their Global 2000 ranking and market value) Alphabet #7, \$1.34 trillion; Microsoft #9, \$2.3 trillion; Meta #31, \$600 billion; Amazon #36, \$1.08 trillion).<sup>499</sup> Between 2013 and 2018, the number of online platforms in 28 countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) doubled from 541 to 1,096.<sup>500</sup> Measuring online platform activity is complex because of the lack of uniform data across platforms and because many studies rely on single-platform data.<sup>501</sup>

Network models may also enable individuals and organisations to pool resources and gain competitive advantages. Individuals can use them to find jobs, become entrepreneurs, for equity crowdfunding,<sup>502</sup> and for investment opportunities.<sup>503</sup> Even when it comes to research and innovation, open, collaborative innovation networks enable the sharing of knowledge and the creation of valuable innovations for consumers and businesses,<sup>504</sup> allowing companies to expand beyond borders and focus on customers rather than physical assets.<sup>505</sup>

Decentralised autonomous organisations (DAOs), a form of network economy, have grown significantly with treasuries increasing from \$380 million to \$16 billion in 2021 alone.<sup>506</sup> By June 2023, DAO treasuries totalled just over \$18 billion.<sup>507</sup> Even with governance and transparency challenges,<sup>508</sup> DAOs are building communities dealing with issues such as climate change and societal challenges. As an example, VitaDAO, a DAO focused on longevity science, raised \$4.1 million in 2023 and distributed 30% of its tokens to supply its 9,000-member community.<sup>509</sup> Despite governance challenges, they are funding research into life-extending drugs.<sup>510</sup>



## OPPORTUNITY

As network-based economies enabled by technology continue to grow, society gains the ability to collaboratively explore opportunities in research, innovation, and business and to solve a wide range of global challenges. Inclusive networks prevent a scenario in which only a select few dominate and benefit, preventing echo chambers and reducing negative implications for future growth, prosperity, and well-being.

Strategies to create inclusive networking economies include understanding the groups that are most likely to be left out and implementing mechanisms to identify and intentionally reduce relevant barriers to those participants likely to add value who otherwise may have been missed out.

## BENEFITS

Inclusive networks bring diversity, knowledge sharing, and increased opportunities for cross-border, cross-sectoral collaboration, which leads to innovative solutions to challenges and new opportunities. Such networks empower grassroots initiatives and encourage transparency.

## RISKS

Instead of fresh perspectives, dominant views within the network persist. Possible conflicts of interest that might even be economically motivated. Issues related to inequality could still persist.



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