

## **Digital revolution: extended reality, e-commerce, crypto, and NFTs. Scenarios and opportunities in digital Africa**

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The global digital revolution displays both similarities and specificities relating to the geographical and cultural contexts in which it develops (Rainie, Wellman 2012; Horst, Miller 2020). Indeed, the impact of digitization processes outlines a fertile scenario to overcome many of the structural problems that crippled Africa in its path toward industrialization first and globalization later (Ritzer, 2007-2015-2016), such as logistics and customs issues. Although there exist forms of digital divide in Africa, many of these are secondary, compared to the opportunities for positive transformation that have been emerging in the last decades (Van Dijk 2020; Fuchs, Horak 2008).

This call for papers focuses on how digitalization impacts the perception of reality in the African context. It aims at exploring the many ways in which reality can be enriched by extended reality, that is, by the opportunities offered by the digital domain in its various forms of augmented reality, virtual worlds, and the metaverse (Anderson, Rainie 2020; Kshetri et al. 2022). It also asks how augmented reality might produce opportunities for innovation, particularly for artists, content creators, and the fashion world as they drive contemporary African excellence.

In the same way, digital payment systems, cryptocurrencies, and NFTs also present possibilities for the implementation of light, liquid, and distributed infrastructures that can trigger valorisation at the local level, and incentivize mechanisms of sharing economy and the sharing of multiple resources – a phenomenon that is especially relevant for emerging markets and economies (Mofokeng, Fatima 2018; Madichie, Hinson 2022). In spite of the recent global burst of the cryptocurrency speculative bubble, the Block Chain technology that constitutes it and NFTs (non-fungible tokens) are the backbone of the next Web 3.0.

When mechanisms are understood and security protocols implemented innovative scenarios are likely to emerge, full of chances to develop community and implement sharing practices, as well as stimulate the artistic and creative market in ways that improve, or overcome, the economic schemes and infrastructures imposed from the past generation.

Finally, grasping the processes of platformization and the spread of e-commerce in the African continent is pivotal to understanding the geopolitical direction of the adopted architecture and the specific context that influences the African continent in cultural terms (Odendaal 2021; Jedlowski 2022; Langley, Leyshon 2022).

This forthcoming issue of *Africa e Mediterraneo* aims at gathering contributions that investigate case studies and innovative processes through proposals provided by artists, influencers, experts, and scholars. Our main focus is the visual arts, photography, cinema, music, digital and multimedia content production, the markets associated with those domains, the world of fashion and the creation of marketplaces, fashion brands or fashion influencers, as well as the spread and membership of digital platforms, plus the opportunities offered by digital or digitally mediated economic transactions that can generate and sustain wealth and trust relationships.

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## Deadlines

The deadline to submit an abstract of no more than 400 words is **\*\*30 June 2023\*\***. The abstract must be sent to [abstract@africaemediterraneo.it](mailto:abstract@africaemediterraneo.it). It will be reviewed by the editors of the issue. The deadline for submitting the finished article, along with a 100-word abstract and short profile of the author, is **\*\*31 August 2023\*\***.

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