# Tech for Good

## 2020 CEOI WORKING GROUP REPORT

Technology holds enormous potential to address many, if not all, of the world's most pressing problems—global hunger, access to basic health care, or climate change. It also carries the potential to have equally enormous negative effects, such as spreading socially damaging disinformation, reinforcing bias, and accelerating inequality.

As CEOs in the midst of a historically unprecedented pandemic and a concurrent technological transformation, members of the Fortune CEO Initiative recognize they carry a special responsibility to ensure companies adopt policies and practices that maximize technology's positive impacts on society and minimize harmful and unintended consequences.

Over the course of three working group sessions, members of the Tech for Good working group, presented in partnership with Genpact, zeroed in on two issues that rose above the rest because of their urgency and broad consequences for society: the digital divide and the pressing need to reskill the global workforce. Solving these two challenges will require an unusually high degree of cooperation across industries and with governments—and therefore would benefit from a conscious and collaborative effort.

## COLLABORATE TO BROADEN ACCESS TO BROADBAND

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** *We should do everything reasonable, and work with governments at all levels to do everything reasonable, to make broadband internet access universally available.*

Among its many far-reaching impacts, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the pace of digitalization. McKinsey research suggests adoption leaped forward five years in a matter of months. This year, it became increasingly clear that universal internet access is an essential service if all people are to have full opportunity to enjoy the benefits of technology. It has become as essential as food, shelter, and medical care—indeed, even adequate access to medical care is becoming dependent upon access to broadband.

Yet, basic access to internet services has emerged as a significant challenge for vulnerable rural and urban communities, as school shutdowns and corporate facilities closures related to COVID-19 linger. "So many communities do not have the same types of access, and we're seeing that now in today's society," noted one medical industry executive. Even tasks such as disseminating public safety updates about the virus to the general population in a secure, prompt manner have proved difficult, observed several working group participants.

## The Digital Divide
(10 states with lowest adoption rates for low-income households)

| State | Overall Broadband Adoption Rate | Adoption Rate for Households Below 20K |
|---|---|---|
| Mississippi | 73.4 | 49.7 |
| Arkansas | 73.0 | 49.8 |
| Louisiana | 75.6 | 50.8 |
| New Mexico | 76.4 | 53.9 |
| South Carolina | 79.2 | 54.0 |
| North Dakota | 81.3 | 54.0 |
| South Dakota | 80.6 | 54.1 |
| Pennsylvania | 81.5 | 54.2 |
| Maine | 82.0 | 54.3 |
| Kentucky | 78.9 | 54.4 |

Source: Brookings Institution analysis of American Community Survey data

Throughout the discussions, a consensus emerged that expanded access to internet services is a critical problem for companies to overcome to address many different challenges, particularly providing equitable access to training and learning platforms that could address the unemployment crisis and improve the resilience of individuals, businesses, and communities. "A big part of it starts with access to broadband," observed group co-chair Ellen Kullman, CEO of Carbon. "It is such an enabler around reskilling."

> *A big part of it starts with access to broadband. It is such an enabler around reskilling.*
> —Ellen Kullman, CEO, Carbon

Working group members offered several ideas for how corporations might support efforts to expand and ensure access, such as funding free or inexpensive services in collaboration with telecommunications firms or building visibility for local organizations that address this concern. The group considered the importance of collaborating with government agencies that could help bridge the gap, and agreed that state-level partnerships could be most effective. Some participants noted that corporate efforts to improve access shouldn't be limited to broadband initiatives—supporting local or state-level programs that provide underserved communities with devices such as laptops and tablets could be another valuable contribution by businesses. Identifying and getting behind other data services that could be a conduit for digital payment applications or digital identity services should also be a priority, others suggested, especially in emerging economies or rural locations. "There are a lot of people who are excluded, because by definition there is just no solution available," said one financial services executive.

# CHAMPION OPEN PLATFORMS FOR TRAINING AND RESKILLING

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** *We believe technology will be key to addressing this pressing need. We strongly favor creating open platforms that will help assess workers' skills, provide access to skills training, and connect them to better jobs. Training and education programs should be treated as "open access" by companies and made available, at no cost, to all who might benefit. Companies should collaborate with state and local governments to build these new platforms and urge the national governments to provide necessary funding.*

Alongside the issue of inclusive access, the COVID crisis has spotlighted the need for different approaches to training and skills development. As entire industries such as aviation and hospitality struggle to redefine their relevance, layoffs and furloughs are adding up and the case for a scalable approach is clear. Over the past six months, more than 60 million Americans have applied for unemployment insurance, more than the claims filed during the Great Recession of 2008. There is an urgent need for retraining and reskilling, the working group agreed.

Co-chair Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO of Genpact, suggested creating training and education capabilities that give huge numbers of people—regardless of their previous educational background or where they're physically located—the opportunity to learn new skills. Helping individuals remain productive members of society should be a priority for every company, he said, pointing to the importance of improving resilience at the individual, business, and community level. "I think the community—ranging from high schools to colleges to workforces across the economies—need a much more open platform and open architecture where all companies contribute content."

> *I think the community—ranging from high schools to colleges to workforces across the economies—need a much more open platform and open architecture where all companies contribute content.*
> —Tiger Tyagarajan, CEO, Genpact

While a number of companies, including Genpact, have opened up learning content on a selective basis, several working group members suggested CEO Initiative members could play a role in contributing to an aggregated platform that combines many different sorts of learning content—from refresher courses to highly technical boot camps to micro-credential programs that help individuals find jobs more quickly.

**SUGGESTED RESOURCES**
Case Studies in Resilience
**Community**
**Professional**
**Business**

The idea of becoming corporate champions of and mentors for localized initiatives that provide science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) training, internships, and apprenticeships was also discussed at length. Two organizations that received particular attention during the discussion were Bitwise Industries, a for-profit startup that serves "underdog" cities, such as Fresno, California, or El Paso, Texas, that have decaying industries; and Girls Who Code, the nonprofit dedicated to helping young women develop computer science careers.

Another important step that CEO Initiative members could take is committing to hiring the graduates of such programs, the working group suggested. "There are organizations out there that are doing amazing things," said one CEO. "If we team up in some way or support them, for many, many companies it could be a source of talent."

WITH OUR KNOWLEDGE PARTNER **genpact**
Transformation
Happens Here

## 2020 CEOI Tech for Good Working Group Members

P.V. Kannan, [24]7.ai

Dambisa Moyo, 3M Company

David DeWolf, 3Pillar Global

Vivek Sankaran, Albertsons Companies

Rick Shadyac, ALSAC, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Simon Segars, Arm

Gustavo Sapoznik, ASAPP

Manny Maceda, Bain & Company, Inc.

Brian Garish, Banfield Pet Hospital

Nandita Bakhshi, Bank of the West

Ellen Kullman, Carbon

Richard Edelman, Edelman

Thomas Davidson, EVERFI

Rohit Kapoor, EXL Service Holdings, Inc.

Richard Tsai, Fubon Financial Holding Co., Ltd.

Tiger Tyagarajan, Genpact

TC Chatterjee, Griffith Foods

Janeen Gelbart, Indiggo

Shideh Bina, Insigniam

Nathan Rosenberg, Insigniam

Rashmy Chatterjee, ISTARI

Raj Panjabi, Last Mile Health

Alan H.H. Fleischmann, Laurel Strategies, Inc.

Michael Miebach, Mastercard Inc.

Kevin Sneader, McKinsey & Company

Matthew Putman, Nanotronics

Danai Pathomvanich, NR Instant Produce Co., Ltd.

Charles Magro, Nutrien Ltd.

Judy Marks, Otis Worldwide Corporation

Daniel Schulman, PayPal

Deborah Jackson, Plum Alley Investments

Frida Polli, pymetrics

Kathy Bloomgarden, Ruder Finn, Inc.

David Spreng, Runway Growth Capital

Jean-Pascal Tricoire, Schneider Electric S.A.

Brad Jackson, Slalom Consulting

Jessica Orkin, SYPartners

Rob Lake, The FIVE Network

Taso Du Val, Toptal LLC

Alfred Kelly, Visa Inc.

Mindy Grossman, WW International

Kristin Peck, Zoetis, Inc.

**FORTUNE CEO INITIATIVE**

Collaboration to Change the World
Tech for Good
Workforce Redesign
Equity & Opportunity
Climate-centric Strategies

The Fortune CEO Initiative, launched after an extraordinary 2016 meeting at the Vatican, was created to convene, engage, and reflect the purpose-driven missions of corporate leaders who are committed to addressing societal challenges as part of their core businesses. Our CEO members believe in a simple proposition: that companies can and should do well by doing good in the world.

And today, Fortune CEOI members challenge all corporate leaders to adopt the following actions in four key areas: making technology a force for good, addressing the urgency of climate change and human impact on the environment, ensuring a more equitable society, and preparing our global workforces for the challenges of the future. Core to all of these efforts is collaboration—across the spectrum of business, with governments and nonprofit groups, and even with industry competitors. And so, as part of this year's CEOI goals, we are committed to providing a guide and resource for helping companies collaborate at scale.