MANIFESTO
"For a (GOOD) Social Tech in Europe" #SOGA
More Social Good in Tech, More Tech in Social Good
For a European Cooperative for Technological and Social Innovation

A: Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, spearheading DG Connect and the Director-General of Technology-related policies.

In Europe, it is estimated that nearly 2 million social enterprises make up 10% of businesses in the EU; more than 11 million people – around 6% of workers in the EU – work for social enterprises. Technological and digital progress must integrate them, inspire them and accompany their social mission, rather than reinforce inequalities without providing solutions. With the support of the European institutions and devices dedicated to this problem, progress can be made.

Between job insecurity and destruction, tax fraud and worker privacy the Tech world is accused of much malice. Sadly, technological progress will favour the promotion of inequalities of all kinds: it will concentrate wealth, putting vast and powerful technology in the hands of very few people who have the highest level of education, privilege etc. Knowledge and truth will only be available to those who have sufficient and developed critical thinking skills that allow them to drink the water from the well. This manifesto is based on a very real fear: Never has technology changed society so quickly.

At the European level, the Social Fund gives priority to the redistribution of vulnerable groups including but not limited to: young workers, the fight against discrimination, the promotion of sustainable employment, combating long-term unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. These areas are mainly supported by the actors of social utility in Europe, supported by public authorities which grant them less subsidies, or disperse them between old and new actors, using a constant budget.

Today, our "historic" associations are under a major extension of their social mission, a decline in their resources and the injunction to initiate a digital transition that is essential to their survival. At a time where public subsidies are being reduced, the competition for funding is fierce solicitation-based communication, resource optimisation and reflections on new business models become unavoidable. Associations are driven to professionalise, to equip themselves to start their digital transition and gain efficiency in service of their social mission. Organisations that work for the common good should be able to be more effective in obtaining the means of their ambitions. Digital tools could significantly improve their impact, but a lack of resources limits their equipment and the training of employees and volunteers. Technology companies can contribute to this challenge.

On the other hand, some companies in the Tech sector are made up of more and more "millennials" in "search of meaning beyond personal enrichment," often committing themselves to philanthropy and social innovation. But too often we find the same primary impetus: the major leaders and employees sincerely want to engage but, ignore the existing information in the sector. The belief that a highly qualified leader can invent effective solutions with high social impact is widespread, but social expertise is often despised. This expertise is a strong component of our European heritage and it is urgent to recognize its value for the associations and social entrepreneurs who have not only mastered the specific needs of their audiences but also obstacles encountered in the field for which they have often

developed solutions. They are the experts in social innovation. The trials they often face is too often ignored with their heightened skills in doing more, with less.

If our companies and innovative associations could come together and collaborate to create social and economic values and solutions in a short amount of time, it is a safe bet that many solutions would emerge. The examples are plentiful. However, social and digital innovation are starved for spaces of collaboration and exchange. No matter their size, companies and innovative associations should be encouraged to collaborate and invent together solutions for a more equitable and sustainable world.

We have regularly noticed a remarkable absence of socially useful actors in all events dedicated to tech and future prospection. We seek for them to be more represented because their digital transition is vital to our European social model and can inspire the lucrative players in the sector.

We, European citizens, want a more digital and inclusive Europe, with social innovation as a marker. We want a Europe that fosters links between all economic players that values the creation of social morals as well as technological progress. The new generation knows no border between social, political and professional commitment. Progress and growth will require more social justice, equity and autonomy, for all citizens to choose a model of society in which everyone will "do their part" and be recognized as having potential.

Therefore, we want our European institutions to recognize and push the innovative social initiatives that exist in Europe to support research and development, to integrate them and make technological and social innovation a strong pillar in the European economy.

Below are several proposals which already exist but need to be pushed to elevate the European scale:
- Organise an annual European Forum on Social Innovation with exhibitions, meetings with creators/innovators and awards
- Extend the budget for the European research program to finance the joint action of associations and the tech community
- Create a new division within the European institute for Innovation and Technology dedicated to social good https://eit.europa.eu/
- Push communication on the digital transition of associations and social entrepreneurs
- Encourage contributions from the business world to the digital transition of associations (devices that already exist, push and democratize them)
- Support assistance programs for technological acceleration of projects with high-social impact (with dedicated funding)
- Open tech incubators with high social impact that encourage and create diversity
- Integrate social issues in the training of developers and engineers
- Pass social enterprise to 20% of GDP of jobs/employees of all countries
- Industrialise the fusion between technology and social innovation by utilising the skill-overlap for the emergence of social innovation stars
- Organise a "Davos for Social Innovation" in 2018
- Expand and publicise "Erasmus Young Entrepreneur" by promoting exchanges between entrepreneurs

The Social Good Accelerator program will be a space of dynamic exchange and networking at Web Summit 2017 in Lisbon. As well as other programs, we offer a Think & Do Tank comprised of associations and committed companies.