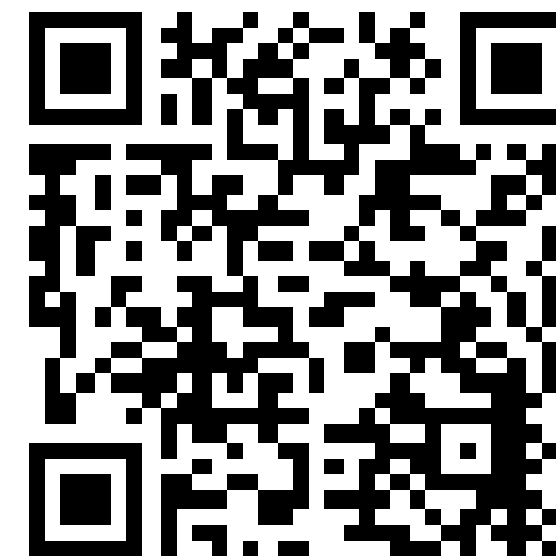


# Stop and smell the rose:

integrating conceptualizations of digital inequality to achieve digital equality

Watch our video here



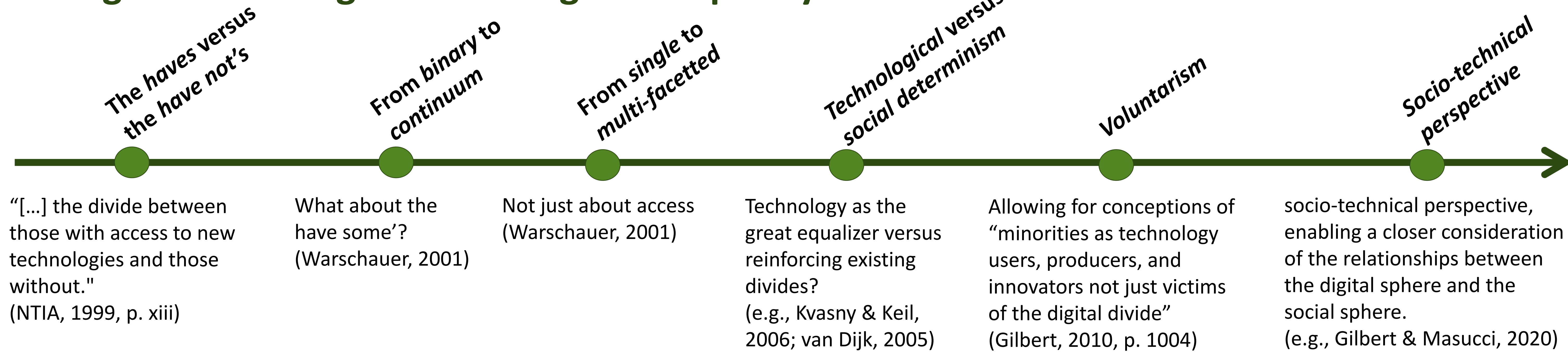
## Introduction and motivation

*“we urgently need to lay the foundations of an inclusive digital economy and society for all”*

(United Nations Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, 2019, p. 3).

It is time to step back and more closely inspect the conceptual underpinnings that constitute novel forms of digital inequality and their co-dependencies. We propose a novel, boundary spanning definition of digital equality and offer a four-dimensional conceptual model – the Digital Equality Rose (DER) – that explores how digital inequalities emerge out of partial overlapping digital equality dimensions. The model is holistic to the extent that it captures both technological and social aspects of digital equality at the individual and structural level.

## Tracing back the origins of the digital inequality debate

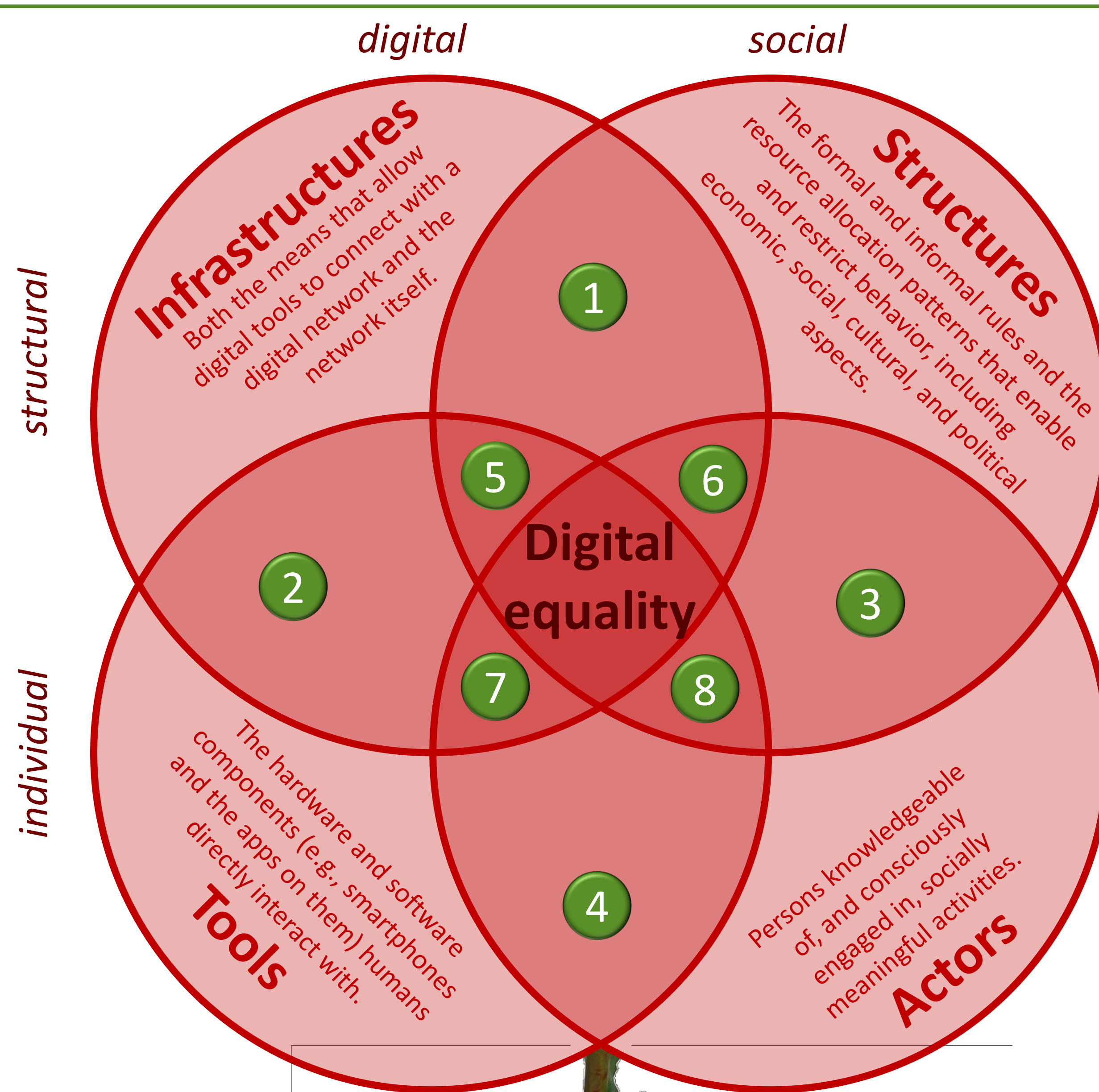


## Research challenge

“we need to stop trying to solve the digital divide problem by “fixing” the digitally disconnected. Instead we need to advocate for a more revolutionary politics of redistribution that restructures the system by which such inequality is propelled and maintained vis-a-vis our cyber technologies (Gilbert & Masucci, 2020, p. 3663).

## A definition of digital equality

A situation in which all members of a social group have control over personal (non)use of digital tools and infrastructures as well as over the consequences of that (non)use.



## Examples

Examples of digital inequalities resulting from partial overlaps

- 1 Digital surveillance
- 2 Digital addiction
- 3 Digital deprivation
- 4 Digital & social isolation
- 5 Lack of skills, mandatory use, lack of control
- 6 Lack of access
- 7 Stratification
- 8 Digital isolation

## Contributions and opportunities

- (1) Refines understanding of digital equality as a delicate, multi-dimensional sweet spot at the center of the rose
- (2) Integrates social and digital sphere on multiple levels to acknowledge new inequalities and better understand interplay
- (3) Synthesizes and conceptually relate existing research on digital inequalities while focusing on digital equality
- (4) Provides anchor for future research to relate emergent findings of new impediments for digital equality



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