



Accountability in the AI Production Network: Introducing the Fairwork Action Research Project

- Speaker:** **Professor Mark Graham**
University of Oxford
- Chair:** **Assoc Professor Lin Weiqiang**
Department of Geography, NUS
- Date/Time:** Thursday 26 March 2026, 3pm
- Place:** Geography Earth Lab, AS2 #02-04

ABSTRACT

The talk introduces Fairwork, an action research initiative developed to confront the challenge of exploitative working conditions in the digital economy. First applied in the gig economy, the project has evaluated more than 800 companies worldwide, creating a publicly accessible benchmark based on five core principles of fair work. The model combines independent assessment with direct engagement, using clear standards to translate scrutiny into measurable change. This approach has led dozens of companies to implement over 400 pro-worker reforms. These include commitments to minimum or living wages, GDPR-compliant data practices, access to sickness insurance, contracts aligned with local labour legislation, anti-discrimination protections, elected worker representation, and collaboration with worker associations. Beyond documenting improvements, the talk reflects on what this experience reveals about power, leverage, and the practical limits, and possibilities, of embedding fairness into platform and AI production systems.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER



Mark Graham is the Professor of Internet Geography at the University of Oxford. He directs the Fairwork project, an action-research initiative that has encouraged and pressured companies to make hundreds of pro-worker changes to millions of jobs. His most recent book, *Feeding the Machine*, focuses on the human labour that powers Artificial Intelligence.

Convenors

Professor Brenda Yeoh | Professor Petra Tschakert | Prof Lu Xi Xi | Assoc Prof Lin Weiqiang