

Balance Network: *'Work-Life Balance' in the Digital Age*

Funding available for network events supporting collaboration and impact 21 July 2015

Background: Digital technologies are part of how we work, rest and play in the 21st century. The rapid pace of technological change has seen both intentional shifts in, and unintended consequences for, our patterns of working and home life, with wide-ranging economic and social impacts. The EPSRC-funded [Balance Network](#) aims to link academics with business, policy and user groups interested in the role that digital technologies are playing in (re)shaping our work and home lives. Within this context, the Network aims to support **collaboration** between academics, industry, policymakers and the public, and to increase direct societal **impact** over and above what may be possible for any individual academic or research project (including feeding research into business development and informing policy). We are now inviting applications for the funding of events which further these aims, and which will form part of the network's programme of activities between November 2015 and April 2016.

What type of activity can be funded? Funding is available for organising a range of events or programmes of events, which could include (but are not restricted to): public events; invitation-only workshops; visiting fellowships with a linked seminar; webinars; seminars series; conference streams and conference hosting. Events must take place in the UK (or online, but be disseminated by a UK-based institution). All funded events will contribute to (and have representation at) *BEYOND BALANCE*, a one-day large-scale Balance Network event taking place on Monday 27 June 2016 in London (further details below).

What themes can activities relate to? The Balance Network is associated with three founding research projects, [Digital Brain Switch](#), [Digital Epiphanies](#), and [Family Rituals 2.0](#). Potential themes for network activities are drawn from across these projects, and include:

- new patterns of working and family life;
- email and social media usage, and their implications for time management;
- attempts to separate life domains, and role switching strategies;
- the emergence of new integration practices, mixing 'work' with 'pleasure';
- the impacts of hypermobility on family life;
- re-examining the concept of 'work-life balance', have we moved beyond this?;
- the everyday use of digital technologies in family life;
- novel research methods, for exploring technology use and domestic life (including mobile methods).

These suggested themes are illustrative rather than prescriptive, and the network is open to all applications addressing any area of the relationship between its core themes of work-life balance and digital technologies.

How much funding is available? The maximum that can be applied for within each application is £6k, and it is anticipated the majority of successful applications will be under

£4k. A maximum of £35k will be awarded in total. Note that at least one co-organiser of each funded event will be required to participate in a session at *BEYOND BALANCE*, and therefore applications should also cost in any travel expenses to London, accommodation and subsistence required for participating in this event, if costs cannot be covered through other means. (Please note we reserve the right to offer funding at a lower level than requested where this is deemed appropriate.)

What items can be funded? Travel, subsistence and event related costs (e.g. venue, catering, reasonable speaker fees, audio/visual support, materials, advertising) can be applied for, but not salaries or purchased equipment (equipment hire in support of events is fine). Costs must be incurred by a UK-based higher education institution for claim purposes. A budget where international travel expenses form a significant proportion of total costs would need to be clearly justified.

Who is eligible to apply? Application leads must be academic/postdoctoral staff or PhD students, based at a UK higher education institution, however non-academic and international partners are welcome. As an interdisciplinary network, we welcome applications from any field. We aim to fund at least one event led by an early career researcher (within 5 years of completing PhD, or a current PhD student). Note that applications led by a student must include a named member of academic staff who will act as project mentor.

BEYOND BALANCE: *how digital technologies are affecting our work, our homes, and everything in between*, 27 June 2016, Savoy Place, London: All events funded will feed into this large-scale, one-day network event, co-hosted by the Institution of Engineering & Technology, bringing together leading thinkers and practitioners. The day will include presentations of the latest research and innovations in the area, and provide a forum for discussion of key implications for technology developers, employers, policymakers, and researchers. Each of the funded events will feed into a session of up to 45 minutes during the day. This could, for example, take the form of a panel discussion chaired by the event organiser with three attendees as panel members, however the precise format of this session is very much open to event organisers to shape. For latest details of the event, see [this page](#) on the Balance Network website.

Final report: All funded events will be required to produce a 2-4 page report (including 200 word summary) within three weeks of their activity, detailing the aims of the event, what happened, and the key outputs. These will be published online, with the 200 word summaries included in the printed programme for *BEYOND BALANCE*. Further details on the suggested structure of the report will be sent with offer letters.

How do I apply? To request an application form please email stephanie.cziczo@anglia.ac.uk. The completed form should be signed by your Head of Department and submitted, together with any accompanying letters of support, by **5pm on Tuesday 15 September 2015**. The application form has an (approximately) 2000-word limit and asks for: lead applicant/collaborator details; a 100 word overview of the proposed activity; further details including proposed dates, expertise of the organising team and key organisational milestones; details of the intended audience and advertising strategy; budget; expected outcomes, in particular relating to *collaboration* and *impact*; dissemination strategy for any outputs, and evaluation; and a proposal for a session at *BEYOND BALANCE*.

What is the review process? Each application will be peer reviewed by two reviewers, who will then submit their scoring to two further reviewers who will oversee the whole procedure, to provide consistency. The criteria used during the review process will be: 1) relevance to network's themes and academic grounding; 2) relevant expertise and track record of organising team (relative to career stage); 3) clear identification of audience and evidence of demand for activity; 4) how activity will build collaborations and/or achieve impact (e.g. societal, economic, policy related); 5) strength and clarity of outputs; 6) consideration of how the activity will link with the wider Balance Network, including strength of proposed session at BEYOND BALANCE; and 7) realistic budget which reflects value for money.

Timeline:

Invitation launched – **Tue 21 July 2015**

Deadline for applications – **5pm Tue 15 September 2015**

Offer letters sent out – **Fri 9 October 2015**

Funded events and activities take place – **November 2015-April 2016**

Report submitted with invoices – **within 3 weeks of activity end date**

BEYOND BALANCE, with panel discussions based on funded events – **Mon 27 June 2016**

Final expenses submitted associated with BEYOND BALANCE – **by 15 July 2016**

The [Balance Network](#) sends out monthly updates on funding opportunities, news, events and publications. To join the mailing list, send an email with your name and organisation to stephanie.cziczo@anglia.ac.uk.