

Contact Tracing Apps: Promising Tool in the Fight against COVID-19?

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Virtual Panel Series

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Leopoldina
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Moderator

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, mobile software applications have been developed worldwide. Such apps are part of a wider array of digital tools for the prevention and control of infectious diseases. The main aim of contact tracing apps is to identify persons who may have had physical contact to infected persons, and thus may become infected or ill. Whilst such apps do not exclude the risk of infection, they can play a crucial role in the prompt containment of the pandemic.

In Germany, the official tracing app was released for download on 16 June 2020. The authorities have opted for a decentralised data storage on the user's smartphone. Other countries took different approaches and developed centralised digital tracing systems using a variety of tools, including mobile device tracking, bankcard payments information, facial recognition and big data-generated behavioural patterns.

Overall, contact tracing apps have raised many questions in the context of COVID-19, from app development to ethics, privacy and security, and about the app's effectiveness. This virtual panel discussion compares different international approaches and experiences from a scientific perspective. Specifically, it raises the following questions:

1. Which are the main approaches in digital contact tracing and how do these translate into app development?
2. Which are the main privacy, security and acceptance concerns of digital contact tracing?
3. How can digital contact tracing be helpful in the relaxation of restrictions on public and economic life?

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<https://bit.ly/2ZbytjC>

Prior registration is necessary.

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