



INDIANA UNIVERSITY BLOOMINGTON OSTROM WORKSHOP

COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Susan Ariel Aaronson

International Affairs, George Washington University

Monday, February 14, 2022: 12:00 – 1:00 pm EST

Virtual via Zoom: [Click here for link to Zoom meeting](#)



Data Strategies, Competitive Advantage, and Trust

In the 21st century, data became the subject of national strategy. This paper examines these strategies in order to better understand what these policymakers hope to achieve. Some of these strategies may be designed to achieve comparative or competitive advantage. But data is different from other inputs: it is plentiful, easy to use, and many different people can use and share it without using it up. Moreover, there are many different types of data. Finally, companies can easily transform troves of personal data into proprietary data. Yet these same troves of data can have a public good function.

We examined 52 nations and found ten governments issued national data strategies, delineating how various types of data could contribute to their nation's social and economic development. Some of these plans make it quite clear that these nations hope to achieve competitive advantage in data-driven sectors. Many nations also use these data strategies to build trust in their policies. Our review highlights the importance of trust to a future built on data.

Susan Ariel Aaronson is a Research Professor at GWU, where she directs the Digital Trade and Data Governance Hub. The Hub trains policymakers and the public in data-driven change, data governance and digital trade and is currently mapping the governance of 3 types of data under a Tufts/Mastercard grant. [Hub webinars are free and open to all](#); previous events are available on the [YouTube site](#). Aaronson is the author of 6 books and numerous articles on international economic and human rights issues. She is also a Senior Fellow in Economics at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

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