



Colony is a digital platform that provides infrastructure for 'open organizations': self-organizing teams that run via software. It enables a group of people to collaborate on a shared project without needing to trust, or even know one another. Any individual's merit within a colony is calculated through peer review of completed work, and represented numerically on the blockchain. The worker may work on projects and tasks that are part of a larger shared endeavour, and in which she acquires ownership and influence proportional to the value of her contributions.



Cooperatives are increasingly joining the digital platform movement. Co-Tech is a network of technology co-operatives, sharing work and spreading the worker co-op model, with a goal of growing 100,000 jobs in the sector by 2030. Indycube is a new co-op for freelancers that is working with the trade union Community to provide back office services to freelancers, offering a model for how co-ops for the self-employed might develop. The New Economics Foundation have called for the Mayor of London to create 'Khan's Cars': a mutually owned alternative to Uber, which would share benefits with drivers and users.



Two Stanford professors have created a new type of 'pop-up' employer, called a 'flash organization.' These temporary setups execute a single, complex project in ways traditionally associated with corporations, nonprofit groups or governments. Crowdsourcing platforms and online labor markets, such as oDesk, give users access to thousands of workers, on-demand. Flash teams structure expert crowd work to enable users to complete complex and interdependent projects (e.g., app design). Flash teams are instantiated through Foundry, a web platform that gathers workers and manages them as they follow a structured workflow defining each task and how workers interact.

People's Pension Trust Ghana Limited is one example of new social protection schemes targeting 'gig economy' workers. It operates a pension fund that allows people in the informal sector to save for their pension. People can save daily, weekly or monthly with flexible deposits done by mobile money or through existing community based groups and savings groups.



Andela, a Nigeria and New York-based startup, trains developers across Africa and links them with Western companies in need of developers. After six months of paid training, the Andela employees become remote members of software development teams at companies such as Viacom, Mastercard Labs and GitHub. Already 20,000 aspiring programmers across Africa have used its free online learning and training tools. By 2024, Andela hopes to have helped prepare 100,000 software developers in Africa for jobs, including thousands working for Andela.

The gig economy, as if people mattered

Its 2030. Collaborative open organisation platforms have matured and scaled rapidly, enabling new, decentralised ways of working at every level of economies, from informal micro-enterprise to global projects. Meanwhile near-cashless economies have become the norm in many developing countries due to the maturing of mobile payment systems such as M-pesa. Automation is affecting jobs in traditional manufacturing, with the commercial advent of the 'sewbot' and similar technologies. However entrepreneurialism is doing well as the dynamic of increasing decentralisation opens up opportunities in multiple sectors from finance and transport to health, education and the creative industries. In the knowledge economy AI tends to augment rather than replace human ability. Human judgement and creativity is highly valued in the online global knowledge economy, providing opportunity for those able to access it.



